



Mine Health and Safety Council

MINE HEALTH & SAFETY JOURNEY

MINE HEALTH AND SAFETY COUNCIL'S OFFICIAL e-NEWSLETTER

Newsletter: Revised COVID-19 Guideline for South African mines

GUIDELINE FOR A MANDATORY CODE OF PRACTICE ON THE MITIGATION AND MANAGEMENT OF THE COVID-19 OUTBREAK

In accordance with section 9(2) of the Mine Health and Safety Act, 1996 (Act No. 29 of 1996); an employer must prepare and implement a Code of Practice (CoP) on any matter affecting the health and/or safety of employees and other persons who may be directly affected by activities at the mine. For this reason, the Guideline for a mandatory code of practice on the mitigation and management of the COVID-19 outbreak was developed to assist mines employers as far as reasonably practicable to establish and maintain a COVID-19 prevention, mitigation, and management programme at mines. The guideline was first issued on 18 May 2020 and was later revised in November 2020 in alignment with applicable legislative/ statutory developments, as well as to address concerns and recommendations from the South African mining industry (SAMI) as far as COVID-19 is concerned.

Key amendments to the guideline include the following:

1. Status of mandatory CoP: The guideline and its annexures must be considered as living documents as this will allow for mandatory COPs to be updated as new developments on prevention, mitigation, and management of COVID-19 emerge.
2. Members of a drafting committee: No longer refer to a steering committee but a committee (which will be determined by the mine).
3. Deletion of quarantining of employees returning from epicentres.
4. Clarity on the use of cloth masks at mine's premises and while commuting, as well as the use of specific respiratory protective equipment as per risk assessment.



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5. Mines to align to the latest National Department of Health (NDOH) guidelines on symptom screening, COVID-19 testing in line with Person Under Investigation (PUI) criteria, and isolation and quarantining (14 days of isolation has been removed in the guideline).
6. Addition of the employer's duty to inform employees on necessary health and safety measures they need to apply when using biometric systems, occupational hygiene equipment, and handling of surfaces and mining equipment.
7. The appointments and responsibilities of the COVID-19 compliance officer and a COVID-19 steering committee have been clarified in line with the Disaster Management Act Regulations (as amended).
8. Reporting to the DMRE (Principal Inspector of Mines) on COVID-19 will be done using the DMRE COVID-19 data reporting templates (attached on the link provided/ or on the MHSC website).
9. All new cases will continue to be reported within 24 hours to the DMRE and all investigations of confirmed COVID-19 positive cases in terms of section 11(5)(a) (ii) and (iii) of the MSHA will be done within 30 days and a copy of the report (template attached on link provided) delivered to the Principal Inspector of Mines.
10. The employer is to consolidate all daily DMRE COVID-19 reports into a weekly report (previously monthly report) which must be reported to the Principal Inspector of Mines.
11. Annexures: The employer is referred to the latest documents regarding Criteria for persons under investigation and COVID-19 Notifiable medical conditions case definitions.

The guideline and its attachments are downloadable on the MHSC website by clicking here: [Rev1: Guideline for the COVID-19 Mandatory Code of Practice – MHSC](#)

Stakeholders are encouraged to continually update themselves with new/emerging reliable information on COVID-19.

#EveryMineWorkerReturningFromWorkUnharmedExceptionEveryday#TogetherApartWeWillBeatCOVID-19

