



9 March, 2020

Dear Melrose Arch tenant

Today, the Department of Health announced that the third case of coronavirus ('covid-19') had been detected in South Africa, after a group of 10 people from Hilton, KZN, returned from a holiday in Italy at the beginning of March. The three patients were all part of the same group. However, health officials have said there is no need to panic but have advised people to take precautions to be on the safe side.

As the situation continues to develop, we would like to provide you with some additional information to assist you and your employees.

How does coronavirus affect you?

Coronavirus infections typically manifest as symptoms of the common cold or flu. While covid-19 is a new disease that has not been previously identified in humans, symptoms are generally mild to moderate and can include fever, cough, difficulty breathing and pneumonia in both lungs. However, coronavirus is more infectious than the flu and appears to strike with much higher severity in certain vulnerable groups. It appears to be most harmful to old people or those with underlying health problems that make them more susceptible to infection or pneumonia.

What should you do to avoid contracting or spreading coronavirus?

As with any infectious illness, the best way to prevent it is to practice proper hygiene:

- Avoid contact with people who are sick.
- Stay at home when you are sick.
- Wash your hands regularly with soap or an alcohol sanitiser, and avoid touching your face and eyes with unwashed hands.
- Cover your mouth and nose when coughing or sneezing – cough or sneeze into the crook of your elbow.
- As added precautions, avoid travel, especially to known hot spots, and avoid sports events, concerts and mass gatherings.

The World Health Organisation (WHO) states that only those who are already coughing and sneezing, or taking care of others who are coughing and sneezing, should wear a mask.

How can you protect your business and employees from coronavirus?

All employers should be ready to implement strategies to protect their workforce from coronavirus while ensuring continuity of operations.

- All sick employees should stay at home and away from the workplace. Once a doctor books a staff member off work, employees should not be allowed to return to work early, even if they are starting to feel better.
- If a staff member has returned from a country that is at higher risk for coronavirus, they should not attend work if they work in an environment with vulnerable people.
- Respiratory etiquette (covering your mouth and nose when coughing or sneezing) and hand hygiene should be encouraged.
- Commonly touched surfaces – work stations, countertops, door knobs, etc – should be cleaned thoroughly regularly.
- Employees should avoid all non-essential travel to know hot spots. These include mainland China, Iran, Italy, South Korea, Cambodia, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Japan, Singapore and Thailand.

All employers need to consider how best to decrease the spread of acute respiratory illness and lower the impact of coronavirus in their workplace in the event of an outbreak in South Africa. They should identify and communicate their objectives, which may include one or more of the following: (a) reducing transmission among staff, (b) protecting people who are at higher risk for adverse health complications, (c) maintaining business operations, and (d) minimising adverse effects on other entities in their supply chains.

Prepare for possible increased numbers of employee absences due to illness in employees and their family members, as well as closures of crèches and schools due to high levels of absenteeism or illness.

- Employers should plan to monitor and respond to absenteeism at the workplace. Implement plans to continue your essential business functions in case you experience higher than usual absenteeism.
- Cross-train personnel to perform essential functions so that the workplace is able to operate even if key staff members are absent.
- Assess your essential functions and the reliance that others and the community have on your services or products. Be prepared to change your business practices if needed to maintain critical operations (for example, identify alternative suppliers, prioritise customers, or temporarily suspend some of your operations if necessary).

If any of your employees are diagnosed with a confirmed case of coronavirus, please advise Melrose Arch Precinct Management immediately.

How prepared is South Africa for coronavirus?

Health Minister Zweli Mkhize has assured South Africans that the government is prepared to deal with an outbreak of coronavirus, with hospitals on alert. Screening is in place at all the country's major airports to detect passengers with possible infection entering the country. The National Institute for Communicable Diseases (NICD) has a 24/7 toll-free number for the public that deals with coronavirus questions: 0800 029 999.

If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact Melrose Arch Precinct Management on (011) 684-0002.

Yours faithfully,

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OPERATIONS MANAGER