



health

Department:
Health
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

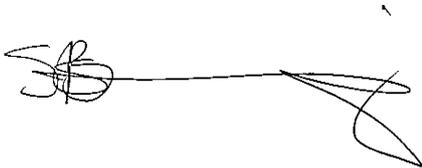
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**TO:
HEADS OF PROVINCIAL HEALTH DEPARTMENTS
DISTRICT AND PRIMARY HEALTH CARE MANAGERS
COMMUNICABLE DISEASES AND SCHOOL HEALTH PROGRAMME MANAGERS**

NSC CANDIDATES WHO ARE INFECTED WITH OR EXPOSED TO COVID-19

1. The Department of Health has agreed to work with the Department of Basic Education to ensure that National Senior Certificate (NSC) examination candidates who test positive for Covid-19 or who are close contacts of Covid-19 cases can write their NSC examinations, providing that they are well enough to do so.
2. The information in this circular pertains to individuals who have tested positive for Covid-19 and who have not completed the mandatory ten days of isolation, as well as to close contacts of Covid-19 cases who have not completed ten days of quarantine. The number of cases is expected to be small, and each case should be dealt with in an individualized manner. This will require close collaboration between health and education officials at provincial, district and local levels.
3. Such candidates are expected to self-isolate at home or in an isolation/quarantine facility in line with current guidelines, and will only be permitted to leave isolation/quarantine in order to write their examinations.
4. Candidates will write at an alternate venue and under secure conditions which comply with the examination regulations. The following should be noted:
 - 4.1. The alternate venue should ideally be well-ventilated and must allow for appropriate physical distancing. The venue should be cleaned daily in line with protocols outlined in Department of Basic Education Covid-19 protocols.
 - 4.2. Compliance with physical distancing and non-pharmaceutical interventions such as wearing of masks, hand-washing and other hygiene practices is critical. Compliance must be ensured before, during and after the examination.
 - 4.3. Invigilators should comply with all non-pharmaceutical interventions, and should be provided with medical masks.
 - 4.4. The Department of Education remains responsible for conducting and overseeing examinations and will provide guidance regarding the collection and management of examination papers.
5. Arrangements must be made to ensure that candidates do not pose a transmission risk to others during travel to and from the examination venue. Candidates can walk to the venue or use private transport. Where these options are not possible, health and education officials should work together to provide alternative arrangements.

6. It should be remembered that the majority of infected candidates will be asymptomatic and will be unaware that they are infected. Therefore, the key to limiting transmission during the NSC examination is to ensure consistent and universal implementation of non-pharmaceutical interventions including physical distancing, wearing of masks and appropriate hygiene practices. Candidates should be regularly reminded of the importance of complying with these practices before, during and after examinations, and during the entire examination period.
7. Whilst educational officials remain primarily responsible for conducting the NSC examinations, all health officials are urged to provide advice and assistance in order to ensure that all candidates have the best chance of successfully completing their examinations.

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a stylized 'S' and 'B' followed by a long horizontal line and a large, sweeping flourish.

DR SSS BUTHELEZI
DIRECTOR-GENERAL OF HEALTH
DATE: 08 NOVEMBER 2020