INFORMATION-GUIDE
MANAGING COVID-19 AT WORK & GUIDELINES ON EFFECTIVE REMOTE WORKING

The world has been impacted by the COVID-19 virus, and it is all of our responsibility to try prevent the spread of this virus. As your team of People Experts, we are here to help you navigate this. We created this document to provide some guidelines and clarity on how to manage COVID-19 at work. We will discuss the different options with each of you, and help you navigate and implement this in the business.

Firstly, it's important to get some context on the different terminology that is being used at the moment. Here are the practical differences between Self-Quarantine, Self-Isolation and Working Remotely:

- **Self-Quarantine** is used to separate and restrict the movement of a healthy person who might have been exposed to COVID-19. According to the Centre for Disease Control, the period of quarantine is 14 days from the last day of exposure. Employees will need to self-quarantine if they have been in contact with a person who has a confirmed case of COVID-19, even if they do not display any symptoms yet. We also recommend self-quarantine if an employee have been in contact with someone who has travelled, especially from a high-risk country. This does not just mean 'staying at home during work hours', it means isolating within your own home and not going to gyms, shopping centres, public places, etc.

- **Self-Isolation** means that the employee is staying indoors and avoiding all social contact. This must happen if the employee has symptoms of COVID-19 (outlined below). The employee needs to self-isolate if they have symptoms of COVID-19, before they are tested for it and while they wait for the test results. This too does not just means isolating within your own home and not going to gyms, shopping centres, public places, etc.

- Organisations can opt for **Remote Work** during this time as a precautionary measure. Remote work can be put in place before anyone in your organisation has been diagnosed with COVID-19 and it is a precaution used to try and keep the virus from spreading. Working remotely is an organisation's decision to minimise interaction, and is an organisation-wide decision to be made.

- If your organisation **does not have the ability to work remotely,** then it is important to consider the parameters that can be put in place to ensure a healthy work environment (this will be outlined later in the document).

All employees are required to **self-isolate** if the following occurs:

- The employee has displayed the following symptoms with regard the COVID-19 virus with sudden onset of at least one of the following - **Fever of 38+, dry-cough, shortness of breath, sore throat, headache, chills.**

All employees are required to **self-quarantine** if the following occurs:

- If the employee was in close contact with a confirmed or possible case of COVID-19 OR if they have returned from a high risk country OR been in contact with a person who returned from a high risk country.

The self-quarantine and self-isolation period must last for **14 days** and during this time the **employee will be required to work from home if possible.** If the individual has been self-quarantined or self-isolated due to points 1 and/or 2 above, then he/she is still required to conduct work as per normal, under the remote working conditions (outlined below). As the employee will be working from home and will be executing daily duties remotely, **this will have no impact on leave balances (i.e. no leave needs to be submitted if you are working).**

Should **the employee be diagnosed with COVID-19 during this period**, it will then be regarded as **Sick Leave** and the employee will need to do what is required in order to recuperate. The employee will be required to have a **letter from a registered medical practitioner** to confirm that they have tested positive for COVID-19.

If Employers ask employees, who are unable to work remotely, not to come to work then they are required to continue to pay their employees. **Employees who have not exhibited any symptoms are entitled to their full pay if they are asked not to come to work and if they cannot perform their usual work duties remotely.**

Quick Tip:
The requirements for self-isolation and self-quarantine need to be added to your organisation's policies as soon as possible. You need to share this with your employees via email and it is also best to communicate this to them in writing or on notice boards. The more this information is shared, the better.

WORKING REMOTELY
EMPLOYER & EMPLOYEE GUIDELINES TO MAXIMISE THE BENEFITS OF REMOTE WORKING

There are a number of businesses who are able to continue their day-to-day business through remote working capabilities. **Working remotely requires there to be a number of conditions so that it can be done effectively** (e.g. laptops, Wifi or 3G for when there is Load Shedding). We have put together the below link, which we will be keeping open for all our clients to use to gain insights into whether their employees have the tools and resources to work remotely. Please share it with your teams freely and let us know if you want to use it, so that we can draw the relevant information for you as share it once the organisation has completed it fully:

https://withferva.typeform.com/to/l9FwO7

If businesses have given the go-ahead for remote work, employers and employees have a number of responsibilities to ensure that they continue to deliver work as per what would be expected when at the office. A number of our clients already have remote work as part of their organisational culture, and for these clients, it will be easier to transition into full-time remote work. For the clients who do not currently use remote work, we have added a number of tips and guidelines to help you with this.

Importantly, working remotely takes a little time to get used to. Things like communication and organisational culture often suffer most, which is why it is important to make use of the technology available to help keep things in check. Outlined on the following page are some tips for leaders and business owners if they decide to go ahead with remote work.

Quick Tips

Things to keep in mind to ensure working remotely enables high performing teams:

- *Teams and individuals should try keep to their routines in terms of meetings – if they have daily stand-ups, continue to run them via video or telephonically. The same applies for all other meetings.*

- *As a leader, you may need to set up a weekly or bi-weekly meeting to ensure that your teams are communicating, especially if they rely on each other for deliverables. Teams who sit together usually communicate more than they realise, and you don't want the remote working policy to negatively impact their work. Scheduling these touch-points will be valuable to keep things on track.*

- *If you have project management tools, make sure that you continue to use these during the remote working period. If you have not considered using these tools before, this is a great way to keep track of what teams are working on.*

- *Leaders should check-in with each member of their team more regularly than what you already do. A quick daily check-in and a longer one-on-one weekly meeting may be required. This will enable you to see how they are doing, how the work is going and to discuss the work that is on the horizon. It is important that these check-points happen so that everyone is aware of what work is happening and where challenges are arising, so that these can be solved. It also helps to keep teams connected.*

- *Have a team Slack or WhatsApp group to post general discussion points. People generally don't want to be bombarded on multiple channels, so select the one that is most popular.*

- *Think about your values and organisational culture - these are the guiding principles that help you make decisions and define how we act. Just because you have opted for remote work, it doesn't mean that townhalls/first-fridays and other rituals can't happen. Also spend time reflecting on how you can integrate your organisational culture into remote working life (we will guide and help here).*

- *If you work with clients, communicate to them that you have opted to work remotely and that it will have little impact on the work that is currently taking place. Ensure that each account manager/key client contact discusses the required deliverables with their clients and if/how this will be impacted. It is important that this is done up-front.*

- *Ensure all meetings with clients or suppliers continue as per how they have been scheduled, however, ensure these are done using video calling facilities. It will be valuable for the key account manager/client contact to check-in with their clients more regularly than they usually would. Weekly project or status updates could also be valuable.*
- *Some clients may still insist on face-to-face meetings. You are responsible for asking (in the right way - like we always say, it's not the what, it's about the HOW) the relevant questions and discussing the issue.*

Employees responsibility during the Working Remotely period:

- If the employee is working remotely or in self-quarantine, it is critical that the employee video-call or call the leader to discuss the work that needs to be delivered during self-quarantine as well as the deadlines and output linked to this;
- The employee must continue to produce the work that they would do during the normal course of work;
- Ensure that the employee still looks professional in all video meetings with teams, clients and suppliers;
- Escalate any requests that can't be completed while the employee is working remotely. It is critical to advise and escalate to the leader as soon as possible so that they are informed and decisions can be made;
- Adhere to all company policies and procedures;
- Have a stable internet connection or a 3G source of data during load shedding (this information should be gathered using the link we provided, and employers should assist with this where possible so that ongoing work can occur);
- The employee must be available during normal working hours and remain online;
- The employee must be available to correspond via telephone calls, electronic mails, mobile messaging and video conferencing;
- Adhere to timelines and complete work tasks as required;
- Be in regular contact with their leader;
- If the employee is unable to work from home due to circumstance, they will need to apply for annual or unpaid leave. Unless the individual has tested positive for COVID-19 it will then become sick leave (however this requires a letter from a registered health care provider). This needs to be discussed with the leader and submitted through the usual mechanism for leave requests.

BUSINESSES THAT CAN'T WORK REMOTELY
CREATING A SAFE SPACE FOR OUR TEAMS

For the **businesses who cannot function without people being at work** (e.g. warehouses, retail, manufacturing etc), please refer to the document by the World Health Organisation (Getting your workplace ready for COVID-19) on how to make organisations safer. It has great tips on what to do before, during and after meetings and gives guidelines on how to keep your business safe. For these businesses we do think that education is key and it is also critical to ensure there are gloves and anti-bacterial wipes and sanitisers to ensure the working environment is as hygienic as possible. **For these clients, we will offer support on this, as it depends on the nature of your organisation.**

The Checklist for Making Your Office as Safe as Possible for Employees:

☐ At the entrance of your office ensure that there is hand sanitiser to be used by anyone entering the space on their hands before entering the office – this includes employees and clients.

☐ Bathrooms should be equip with antibacterial soaps and graphic reminders to wash hands for 20 seconds

☐ Ensure that every employee has a personal hand sanitiser above 70% alcohol that they either keep on their desks or on themselves at all times.

☐ Employees should wipe down all used equipment including laptops, desktops, telephones, cell phones and other daily used equipment at least 3 times a day

☐ For employees who handle inbound materials (eg. in a Warehouse) ensure that they wear disposable gloves, that they do not touch their face whilst using the gloves, and that they dispose of the gloves once used.

☐ Prior to meetings being booked, room sizes should be reviewed to ensure that they are not overcrowded and that for example rather 4 people are in an 8 seater.

☐ If you have an open place office, try and space employees from one another by a minimum of 2 metres so that they are not in close contact with others

☐ Common areas like bathrooms, kitchens, lunch rooms, play rooms and canteens are to be cleaned at multiple intervals throughout every day.

☐ Fingerprint access should be reconsidered as the potential of it to spread germs.

We hope that these guidelines and the key tips will help you navigate this. We will contact each of you to put a plan in place on how we can support you in navigating this and ensuring that we can support your people, teams and business during this time.

If you have any questions or concerns that you'd like us to address, please share with us and we can address them.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE GET IN TOUCH WITH YOUR LEAD CONSULTANT AT FERVA OR YOU CAN CONTACT US AT BIANCAPITT@FERVA.CO.ZA OR YAELROSEN@FERVA.CO.ZA