



COVID-19

SASS CIRCULAR: 2nd Edition

24 March 2020

TO: ALL SHERIFFS, DEPUTY SHERIFFS AND STAFF

URGENT NOTICE FROM: THE SASS PRESIDENTS DESK

President Ramaphosa issued a statement last night and announced that the National Coronavirus Command Council decided to enforce a nation-wide lockdown for **21 days** with effect from midnight on **Thursday 26 March 2020 until 16 April 2020**.

This decision was taken as a result of the rising number of infections despite the implementation of a state of disaster approximately a week ago.

Colleagues,

We are currently awaiting urgent guidance from the Department of Justice and the Board for Sheriffs on the status of court and sheriff services in relation to “essential services”, however it is clear that our offices will not continue to operate as usual and that our staff will have to stay home, as directed by the President.

Therefore, we will have to close our offices and it is anticipated that sheriffs will be expected to provide services for emergencies, for example, the execution of court orders relating to COVID-19, Protection orders, matters that prescribe, etc.

We cannot deny the devastating financial impact on each and every sheriff’s office, its staff and its existence, but we need to stay calm and take the necessary steps and precautions to mitigate the impact of this tragedy. This has now become a matter of life and death and we call upon the profession to cooperate.



South African Sheriff Society (<http://www.sassoc.co.za>)

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For this purpose, we made a **to-do list for the next 3 days** which you might find useful.

These are **guidelines** only and the list is not exhaustive:

- Divert land lines to cell phones or have voice message with emergency contact details for the time the office will be closed.
- Have notices at the office with emergency contact numbers for your office.
- Send notices to courts and local attorneys with emergency contact details.
- Have a contact person and number of somebody at courts.
- Ensure prepaid electricity and water of the office is paid and loaded.
- Ensure your alarms, CCTV and security systems are in place and operational (office and stores).
- Run month end and dispatch statements to attorneys.
- Attend to VAT payments, if applicable.
- Arrange access to office emails / fax, by setting up mailboxes on your laptop, alternatively activate an “out of office” reply on your mailbox.
- Cancel all sales in execution scheduled for dates within the 21 days lockdown and request further instructions from mandator.

Staff absence: We are investigating whether the 21 days (**13 working days**), while the country is on lockdown, is considered as leave and we will provide confirmation to members.

Outstanding information:

- Sass will make enquiries on the financial assistance offered by Government, as announced by President Ramaphosa and provide feedback to members.
- Sass will make enquiries on details of the tax and VAT relief and/or extensions announced by President Ramaphosa and will provide feedback to members.
- Sass will communicate with members on WhatsApp groups to update you on any news and developments.

We once again call upon you to refer any important information that you might have received and feel that it would be of value to the profession, so that we can forward to all members.

We now strive for the safety of our staff and all citizens of the country and pray for hope in this difficult time.

Further information will follow.

Regards

Petro Roodt

President

“SASS THE ORGANISATION OF CHOICE”