



CITY OF JOHANNESBURG

Metropolitan Centre, 158 Loveday Street. Braamfontein
P O Box 1049, Johannesburg, 2000
Tel: +27 11 407 7557
Fax: +27 11 339 5704

**Statement of the Executive Mayor of Johannesburg, Cllr.
Geoffery Makhubo, on COVID-19 Interventions**

18 March 2020

The Executive Mayor of the City of Johannesburg, Cllr Geoffrey Makhubo, yesterday, 17 March 2020, convened an urgent Mayoral Committee meeting as a response to the pronouncements of President Cyril Ramaphosa around the management and spread of the COVID-19.

In the recently released figures by the Department of Health, we have noted that the majority of cases reported and confirmed are within the Gauteng province and the City of Johannesburg in particular.

Given that the City has a population of 5, 5 million residents, mostly located in high density settlements and with a significant population located in informal settlements, this warrants the implementation of drastic yet responsible interventions to prevent a potential rapid spread that could affect millions in a short space of time and with devastating effects on the capacity of our health facilities and personnel to respond.

As a City we are organized into seven (7) regions which also cover key nodal points such as the Johannesburg inner-city, Ennerdale, Fourways, Lenasia, Midrand, Randburg, Roodepoort, Sandton and Soweto.

These are areas wherein there is a high concentration of people, businesses and settlements.

The City's approach is thus to prevent, contain and manage the spread of the COVID-19 through efficient and equitable deployment of resources to regions and the most vulnerable areas, particularly areas of high volumes in human traffic and informal and densely populated settlements.

The Mayoral Committee in line with the above background has thus taken the following decisions:

1. The 79 Clinics within the City have received protective equipment and personnel have been briefed on how to manage and handle suspected and/or otherwise confirmed cases of COVID-19 in line with the national and provincial guidelines and protocols.
2. Clinical teams are being deployed to support the elderly and vulnerable persons through-out the City. This includes assisting the tracking and tracing efforts of those who have potentially been exposed to persons confirmed as infected with the virus.
3. All events approved by the Joint-Operations Centre of the City have since been cancelled and approval provided, revoked. This is in line with the Presidential pronouncement on events and gatherings exceeding 100 persons.
4. The Joburg, Soweto and Roodepoort Theatres have been directed to postpone all shows and activities until further notice.
5. All public swimming pools, recreational and civic centers, stadiums, libraries and sporting facilities are to be closed until further notice including the Johannesburg Zoo.

6. Metro Bus and Rea-Vaya bus services are to drastically scale down operations in accordance with a principle of one person per two seater and two people per three seater bench. All busses will be sanitized once every 24-hours and washed twice a day. Sanitizers will be provided for commuters on busses and at ticket offices and depots. Cash payments for trips are suspended and commuters are encouraged to get tags, which will be issued free of charge during this period.
7. Our Tourism Information Centres will be closed from 18 March 2020 until the City has finalized the provision of protective equipment and protocols for employees employed at the Centres in Nelson Mandela Square, Johannesburg Park Station and Sandton Gautrain and in Soweto.
8. Our Disaster Management Centre has been activated and will be monitoring the implementation of our counter measures and response to cases reported and suspected cases. All City departments will deploy resources to the Centre to provide 24-hour monitoring and support over an initial period of seven (7) days.
9. The City has also decided to **strongly** encourage bars, nightclubs, taverns, restaurants, cinemas and other areas of public entertainment to immediately cease operations and limit themselves to providing off-premise consumption.

The Johannesburg Metropolitan Police Department (JMPD) has been directed to monitor and enforce strict adherence to the guidelines outlined as per the declared National State of Disaster.

The City welcomes those establishments that have on their own accord taken the necessary preventative measures to cease operations in light of the COVID-19.

The key-interventions outlined above will be supported by several service-delivery initiatives by the City to ensure that we provide an end-to-end support system to the prevention, containment and management services of the city in relation to the COVID-19.

To this end, Johannesburg Water will provide emergency water supply to informal settlements to support the call for increased personal hygiene and an increased frequency in the servicing of VIP toilets in informal settlements. Additional teams have also been put on stand-by to immediately respond to water interruptions and sewerage leaks.

The Johannesburg Property Company (JPC) as well as the Johannesburg Social Housing Company (JOSHCO) have been directed to identify sites and facilities that can be utilized in support of clinical services for the self-isolation and quarantine of persons whose permanent residence arrangements are not conducive to effectively self-isolate and quarantine. This is specifically to support the poor, homeless and vulnerable.

“As a City we have come to accept that we are the epicenter of the COVID-19 in our country, given the number of cases that have been confirmed and as such we are taking all the precautionary measures to guarantee the safety of our residents and employees.”

“We encourage residents to be responsible, resilient and to not undermine the potential impact a widespread and rapid infection rate of the virus could have on the residents of the City and our economy. We must, immediately and without second-thoughts, amend our daily routines, forego unnecessary travel, avoid restaurants and other places of entertainment, take due care for our personal hygiene and be vigilant to signs of infection and symptoms” said Mayor Makhubo.

The City will continue to deliver services as required and all employees will be provided with additional protective equipment and briefed on methods to limit exposure to the virus.

The City's revenue and licensing centers will also continue to operate in line with new safety protocols aimed to protect front-line employees and our customers. Residents are encouraged to pay for services as per norm and may do so online and via accredited pay stations and providers.

All other employees of the City, whose work may be executed from home and is non-essential as approved by the relevant managers, will be released to work from home as of 20 March 2020.

“As a City we cannot over-emphasize the need for calm and restraint and cooperation with the authorities as we seek to prevent and reverse the upward trajectory of infections. This includes strict adherence to the set-out guidelines on gatherings and events, including funerals as outlined by the province” concluded Mayor Makhubo.

END.

For Media Enquiries

Mlimandlela Ndamase

Director: Mayoral Communications

MlimandlelaN@joburg.org.za

083 480 0014

#COJDMC COVID-19 Joint Operation Centre 24/7 number is

010 224 0932