COVID-19 Protocols for Travel and Developments from Port Health Services

NIOH COVID-19 TRAVEL MEDICINE

MS PAM MASILELA

18 March 2021

health

Department:
Health
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

BACKGROUND

Port Health Service has a mandate of preventing, controlling and providing a public health response to the international spread of disease and other public health risks at the Points of Entry (PoE).

Defined as the **first line of defense** to protect the citizens of RSA against the health risks associated with cross-border movement of people, conveyances, imported cargo.

Provided in South African ports of entry incl. air, sea and land ports of entry by Environmental Health Practitioners (Port Health Officers) supported by Nurses in some points of entry and other health professionals.

- Port health is responsible for early detection of suspect cases through implementation of Multi-layered screening measures and response interventions to any suspect case.

- Monitor compliance to COVID-19 legislation.

- **Ports of Entry: 72**
- **Port Health services in 37 Ports of Entry**

11

8

53

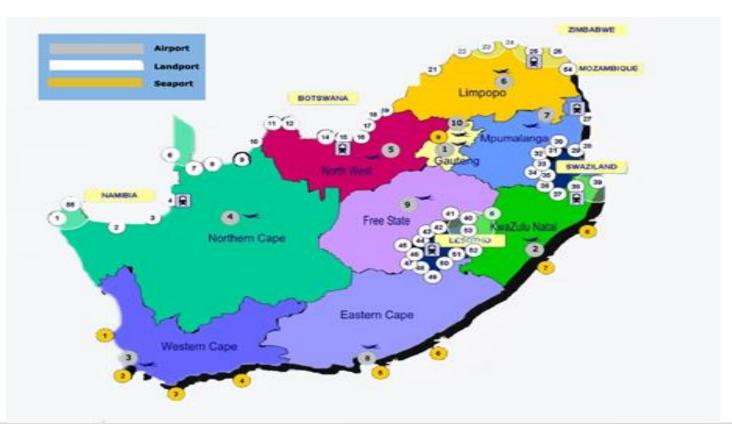health

Department:
Health
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

MULTI-LAYERED SCREENING AND RESPONSE

Active surveillance and screening for travellers entering and exiting the ports of entry.

Monitoring arriving conveyances in line With IHR requirements

Completion and assessment of travel health questionnaire

Temperature screening to determine if they have an elevated temperature

Interim isolation to prevent possible onward transmission

TRAVELLER SCREENING

Travellers subjected to primary screening measures – visual observation, temperature screening and completion and analyses of traveller health questionnaire

Visual Observation – Traveller looks visually unwell

Traveller has answered yes to questions in traveller health questionnaire

Traveller has elevated temperature

Traveller looks unwell
or
Traveller has indicated signs and symptoms on traveller health questionnaire
or
Traveller has elevated temperature

Traveller referred to secondary screening

Traveller subjected to secondary screening including medical assessment and in depth interview – decision made after outcome of secondary screening

TRAVEL REQUIREMENTS

PERSONS EXITING THE REPUBLIC	• All persons exiting the Republic must be subjected to screening, incl. completion of THQ. • Persons found to have an elevated temperature or symptoms consistent with COVID-19 must be subjected to a medical examination which may include testing. • Based on the outcome of the medical examination, decision on whether or not the person is allowed to exit the Republic must be made.

PERSONS ENTERING THE REPUBLIC	• All persons entering the Republic must be subjected to screening, incl. completion of THQ.
	
	• Persons found to have an elevated temperature or symptoms consistent with COVID-19 must be subjected to a medical examination which may include testing.
	
	• A person entering the Republic must on arrival at the point of entry, provide to the port health official the following:
	  ❖ A completed Traveller Health Questionnaire; and
	  ❖ a valid negative COVID-19 PCR test result obtained not more than 72 hours from the date of departure.

TRAVEL REQUIREMENTS

PERSONS ENTERING THE REPUBLIC	▪ A person who is not in possession of a valid negative COVID-19 test result will be subjected to antigen testing at their own cost. ▪ Persons entering the Republic are encouraged to install the COVID Alert SA mobile application on their mobile phones. **EXEMPTIONS**: ▪ The following category of persons are exempted from producing PCR Test result; • Daily commuters from neighbouring countries who attend or teach at a school in the Republic; • Children below the age of five years; • Cross border freight operators • Medical evacuation crew and; • Airline crew.

health

Department:
Health
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

TRAVEL REQUIREMENTS

PERSONS ENTERING THE REPUBLIC	▪ Frequent travellers must comply with testing and quarantine requirements but the initial results presented on entry for subsequent travel, remain valid for 14 days. ▪ Airline crew permitted to layover by the Department of Transport may do so at a facility identified by the employer and must provide port health with details of the facility. ▪ Monitoring of crew in the layover facility is the responsibility of the employer.
Cargo and Crew vessels	▪ Ship crew who intend disembarking in the Republic, must produce a valid negative COVID-19 test result not older than 72 hours from the date of signing onto the vessel. ▪ A crew member who is not in possession of a valid negative COVID-19 test result will be subjected to mandatory quarantine at an approved facility at the employers cost.

health
Department:
Health
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

Contact tracing & WHO Alert and Notification

South Africa as a member state of World Health Organization (WHO), is required to notify WHO in line with IHR, 2005 on any the situation that may constitute a PHEIC.

- South Africa is on the community transmission epidemiological scenario: cases picked up linked to air travel

- Port Health communicates all Port of Entry incidents to the cluster Communicable Disease Control as the Country's IHR focal Point .

- The IHR focal point on behalf of the country ensures that all information is reported to WHO in line with the reporting standards.

- Adequate reporting by member states assists WHO in continuing to track the evolving pandemic situation, sounds the alarm when needed, share expertise, and mould the kind of response needed to protect populations from the consequences of epidemics.

Communicable Disease Control also takes lead in contact tracing

Information that is collected on identified travellers is communicated to the relevant CDC coordinator for contact tracing

Prompt reporting of cases to Port Health and CDC is important for Disease Surveillance as well contact tracing

health
Department:
Health
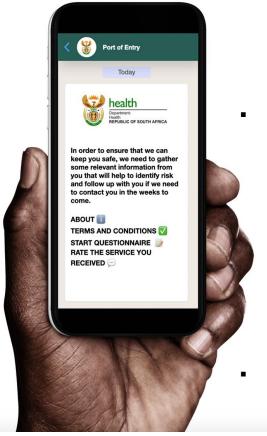**REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA**

HYGIENE MEASURES IN POINTS OF ENTRY

- Resources to enable public hygiene measures should be provided in airports.
- Provision of handwashing facilities and hand sanitizers
- Adhering to social distancing requirements (floor markings, stickers, visuals)
- Compliance officer to ensure adherence to hygiene standards incl. social distancing
- Environmental cleaning and disinfection
- Wearing of masks by all persons (airport facility and onboard aircraft)
- Provision of receptacles for disposal of PPE and other infectious objects
- Contracts in place for collection, transportation and disposal of HCRW generated at the airport and onboard.

health

Department:
Health
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

Strengthening COVID-19 screening and surveillance

Digitized Travel Health Questionnaire

- Digitized Traveller' Health questionnaire has been developed and currently being piloted in 3 Points of Entry (ORTIA, CTIA & Beitbridge) in South Africa – part of efforts to strengthen active screening and surveillance at ports of entry in South Africa.

- *The Clinton Health Access Initiative (CHAI) has bee instrumental in providing technical support for the development of the THQ.*

health
Department:
Health
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

COORDINATION & COLLABORATION

- Coordinated and collaborative approach required to ensure successful implementation and enforcement measures in containing spread of COVID-19.

- Fosters communication and cooperation from stakeholders
  - Coordination and response structures with Port Health representation:
  - NATJOINTS
  - PROVJOCS
  - Outbreak response teams
  - BMA national and border structures
  - National Transport Facilitation Committee
  - Port specific stakeholder forums
  - Prior communication to travellers as preparedness for exit screening

  "Now is the time when we must intensify our efforts and deepen our cooperation" quote from President of the Republic speech during one his address to the nation.
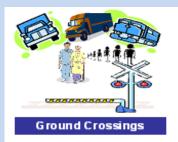
health
Department:
Health
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

12

CAPACITIES FOR PHEIC

Public Health Emergency Contingency plan

Provide assessment & care for affected travellers, isolation, treatment.

Provide space, separate from other travellers to interview suspect or affected persons at the airport.

Provide access to required equipment, personnel with protection gear for transfer of travellers with infection/ contamination

Ground Crossings

To apply recommended measures, disinsect, disinfect, decontaminate, baggage, cargo, containers, conveyances, goods, postal parcels etc

To apply entry/exit control for departing & arriving passengers

health
Department:
Health
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

13

Thank you for your attention!

THANK YOU