



SEFAKO MAKGATHO HEALTH SCIENCES UNIVERSITY

HUMAN RESOURCES PROTOCOL TO MANAGE COVID-19

1. PURPOSE

This serves as a protocol to manage human resource practices based on the decision by the University to contain the spread of the disease, and the announcement that all contact lectures/practical/clinical sessions and assessments are suspended with immediate effect and that employees will work from home, unless the operations require otherwise.

2. OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this protocol is to:

- 2.1 Contain the spread of the disease
- 2.2 Ensure the health and safety of our employees
- 2.3 Provide guidance and structure in relation to the '*work from home*' principle
- 2.4 Ensure continuity of operations in respect of essential, urgent and priority matters

3. OPERATIONAL GUIDELINES AND PRINCIPLES

The following **rules and restrictions** will come into effect for all SMU employees:

- 3.1 SMU is **changing its operations to work from home, with effect from Thursday, 19 March 2020**, until further notice. Wednesday, 18 March 2020, is to be treated as a normal and full working day.
- 3.2 All SMU **employees are requested to stay at home** unless the operations require otherwise. Employees will work from home, and options for remote work such as email, telephone calls, Skype calls, etc, shall be used to the extent possible. The details of these work arrangements will be agreed upon between the employee and their line manager.
- 3.3 Line managers **must within the next 72 hours identify all urgent and priority matters that will be undertaken remotely**, and this becomes the performance delivery plan over the period.

- 3.4 All employees **must** be available during their normal contracting working hours. Availability is not just by way of telephone or email contact, but also if physically needed.
- 3.5 While working from home (WFH) employees' responsibilities, amongst other things, is to:
 - 3.5.1 Adhere to all the University's policies and procedures
 - 3.5.2 Maintain accurate and up to date records of hours worked within normal span of hours
 - 3.5.3 Take reasonable precautions necessary to secure the University's equipment
 - 3.5.4 Check in with their line managers as determined by the line manager but at least once a day. For some categories of employees, the line manager will have to put reporting mechanisms in place
- 3.6 While working from home (WFH) the line manager's responsibilities, amongst others, is to:
 - 3.6.1 Monitor the WFH arrangements to ensure the agreed work outcomes are consistently being delivered.
 - 3.6.2 Review and sign on records of hours worked / deliverable as required
 - 3.6.3 Monitor and review the WFH arrangements on a regular basis
 - 3.6.4 Schedule communication meetings, including - methods of disseminating information to employees
- 3.7 All employees **must** provide a contact number to their line manager. This is to ensure that the University can make contact in relation to their health and safety, but also to ensure that the normal work instructions can be conveyed.
- 3.8 In the event that an employee missed a call from his/her line manager, it is their responsibility to contact them back, even if it means sending a *"please call me message"*.
- 3.9 Work instructions and delegations remain intact as if an employee is in the office.
- 3.10 Emails and messages must be attended to within an agreed upon timeframe between the employee and line manager.

- 3.11 No employee can refuse to attend to a reasonable and lawful instruction to carry out work remotely on the basis that the University is 'closed.' The University has primarily changed its operations to work from home.
- 3.12 Should employees not be available when such contact is made, and have not applied for leave, this will be recorded as unauthorized leave (unpaid leave).
- 3.13 Employees, who may wish to take leave during this period, must request leave in the usual manner through their line manager.
- 3.14 The University will ensure that essential, financial, administrative and maintenance processes are undertaken. This will entail amongst others:
 - 3.14.1 Essential services such as Security Services must be available to attend to operations, as appropriately coordinated by their line manager.
 - 3.14.2 Employees of the Finance Team will have to be available to come on to Campus, appropriately coordinated, to carry out critical work in relation to the Audit, Payroll, etc.
 - 3.14.3 Employees of the Human Resource Team will have to be available to come onto Campus, appropriately coordinated, to finalise certain recruitment activities, payroll claim processing, statutory reporting and other critical projects.
- 3.15 Employees of the Technical Services Team will have to be available to come on to Campus, appropriately coordinated, to ensure occasional cleaning of the respective buildings, maintenance of the gardens and other areas.
- 3.16 The necessary social distancing rules will apply in the rotation of teams and the number of employees on the work floor, where employees have to come onto Campus.

In addition to the above, the following orientation and recommendations should be noted:

- 3.17 To reduce the risk of potential transmissions, all colleagues are encouraged to limit social interaction also in their private life outside of the job.
- 3.18 Implement strict hygiene measures, in particular no-touch policy, frequent hand washing, covering your mouth and nose with a tissue, sleeve or flexed elbow when coughing or sneezing.
- 3.19 If an employee or a family member experiences flu-like symptoms such as coughing and breathing difficulties (with or without fever) they should exercise self-isolation. If necessary, they should contact their doctor, first by telephone, to have the symptoms clarified and to discuss further steps (including the option of testing). Alternatively, they can call Campus Clinic or the NICD toll free line.

- 3.20 If an employee tests positive for COVID-19 or comes into contact with a known COVID-19 positive individual or an individual they had contact with that has now tested positive, they must immediately inform their line manager so that the University can take the necessary precautions.

4 CONCLUSION

- 4.1 These restrictions will have a significant impact on our work and private lives. However, the public health threat that COVID-19 poses to the country can only be overcome if all of us takes his/her responsibility seriously and significantly reduces social interactions and follows strict hygiene measures.
- 4.2 Not all the details of how we will work over this period can be covered in this protocol. A lot of the details will be left to the line manager and respective teams to develop solutions that will work for them.
- 4.3 On the health front, the University's Task Team on COVID-19, working together with the District Outbreak Response Team, will issue protocols and related guidelines.
- 4.3 If you have any questions, please raise it with your line management and the HR team.

PLEASE BE SAFE!

12. APPROVAL AND DATE OF EFFECT

Approved by : **MANCO on 17 March 2020.**

Signature: _____



Designation: _____

ED: HUMAN RESOURCES