

# **Minister Fikile Mbalula: Updated public transport directions on Coronavirus COVID-19 Alert Level 3**

---

**16 Jul 2020**

**In addressing the nation on 12 July 2020, President Ramaphosa warned us that “the storm is upon us.” Indeed, the devastation of the pandemic is sweeping across our country at an alarming speed. The choices we have to make as a nation have become that much harder, as we try to walk the tightrope of preserving human life while gradually resuming economic activity to ensure sustainable livelihoods.**

**As a sector, we carry the burden of enabling economic activity whilst containing the spread of the virus, through our various modes of transport. We have no doubt, that public transport could pose a real threat to the efforts towards containment of the rapid spread of the pandemic.**

**It is for that very reason, that having duly and widely consulted, we have put in place additional and more stringent measures, as we incrementally resume public transport operations across various modes.**

**In playing our part towards halting the rapid spread of the pandemic, it is imperative that we strengthen compliance with health protocols and tighten the hand of law enforcement.**

**We are all enjoined in the obligation to arrest the spread of the virus and preserve human life. Government will therefore not tolerate conduct that places the lives of public transport users at risk. Violation of the Regulations and any of the Directions we are issuing today is a criminal offense and law enforcement authorities will act without fear or favour.**

**Over the last few weeks we have been engaging in intense discussions with the taxi industry on the devastating impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and the significant losses the industry continues to incur.**

**We engaged with the taxi industry leadership in good faith and we found each other on many areas, but there are areas where we differed. However, the door remains open for further engagements on issues where we are not in agreement.**

**We have also held productive engagements with the Banking Association South Africa on further relief measures they can extend to the taxi industry. We are happy to indicate that the banks have been responsive to our proposals to provide appropriate financial relief. Individual banks have their own procedures and measures in place and will make appropriate pronouncements in this regard.**

**Various Banks have offered repayment holidays and re-determination of the terms of agreement with individual borrowers. The Banks will also in due course communicate their decisions to the borrowers and the public in this regard on their COVID-19 related relief measures.**

**Public transport facilities/ranks**

**While the rules relating to disinfecting and sanitizing public transport facilities, as well as social distancing have been in place, we have now placed the responsibility to enforce this squarely on the hands of the owners of such facilities.**

**Equally, these owners may not allow any member of the public to enter their facilities without wearing a cloth face mask, homemade item, or another appropriate item that covers the nose and mouth. Similarly, drivers and other employees must wear such faces masks or appropriate item that covers the nose and mouth, together with a face shield.**

**In his address, President Ramaphosa announced that Taxis undertaking local trips will now be permitted to increase their capacity to 100%, while long distance taxis will not be allowed to exceed 70% occupancy, on condition that new risk mitigation protocols related to masks, vehicle sanitising and open windows are followed.**

**To this end, bus, taxi and e-hailing, meter taxis, shuttle services, chauffer-driven vehicles and scholar transport vehicles are permitted to carry 100% of licensed carry capacity for any trip not regarded as long distance travel. Long distance travel refers to any trip that is 200 km or longer.**

**Commuter rail is permitted to carry 70% of licensed carry capacity.**

**Following extensive consultation stakeholders, we noted the need to increase on the loading capacity within the public transport sphere. We further noted the need to tighten the mitigation measures linked to the increase in the loading capacity. Consultations with health experts was undertaken and their additional recommendations in the face of the increased loading capacity were duly considered and accepted.**

**The introduction of the additional measures to curb the spread of the virus in a 100% loaded public transport vehicle includes the following:**

- **All operators must ensure that public transport vehicles are sanitized before picking up and after dropping off passengers.**
- **All public transport vehicles windows must be kept 5cm open on both sides.**
- **All public transport vehicles must be fitted with window jammers or blockers in order to keep the windows 5cm open.**
- **Operators must ensure that all public transport vehicle doors, window handles, arm rests and hand-rails are sanitized after every load.**
- **Passengers must be encouraged to sanitize after they enter the vehicle and after getting off the vehicle.**
- **Any marshal or security officer who interacts with members of the public in a public transport facility must wear a cloth face mask or a homemade item or another appropriate item that covers nose and mouth and together with face shield.**
- **Passengers in public transport vehicles are obliged to wear a cloth face mask or a homemade item or another appropriate item that covers nose and mouth throughout the journey.**
- **No person or passenger will be allowed to use any form of Public Transport or enter a building, place or premises if they do not wear a cloth face mask or a homemade item or another appropriate item that covers nose and mouth.**
- **All public transport operators must put measures in place to adhere to physical distancing to curb the spread of the virus.**

**Intra-provincial, metropolitan areas and district public transport is permitted to operate without a requirement for a permit.**

## **Long distance travel**

**Long distance travel is permitted for a person permitted to travel between provinces in terms of Alert Level 3. Permits as prescribed in the Level 3 Regulations remains a compulsory requirement. Law enforcement authorities have a duty to enforce compliance with the law. This is a necessary evil whose sole purpose is to curb the spread of the virus across Provincial epicentres. Our commitment to preserving human life cannot be sacrificed for expediency.**

**Mini and Midibus Taxi vehicles may not carry more than 70% of their maximum licensed passenger carrying capacity for long distance intra-provincial travel and permitted inter-provincial travel.**

**Long distance bus services are permitted to carry a maximum of 70% of their permissible passenger carrying capacity for intra-provincial and permitted inter-provincial travel. Long distance rail operations and travel remains prohibited.**

## **Transportation of liquor**

**Transportation of liquor is only permitted for movement from a manufacturing plant to storage facilities, as well as transportation from manufacturing facilities to exit ports for export. However, transportation of liquor for sale, dispensing and distribution to customers is prohibited.**

## **Operating licences and accreditation certificates for tourist transport services**

**The validity period for all public transport operating licences and accreditation certificates for tourist services that expired during the lockdown period will be deemed valid for a further period of 90 days. This is to enable the Provincial Regulatory Entities (PREs) and the National Public Transport Regulator (NPTR) sufficient time to deal with the backlog and allow affected operators to renew their operating licenses and accreditation certificate for tourist services.**

## **Additional domestic airports to resume operations**

**Following our announcement on 29 June 2020 on the domestic airports permitted to resume operations. I am happy to announce that the following additional airports have met all the requirements and will resume operations on 21 July 2020:**

- **East London Airport**
- **George Airport and**
- **Kimberley Airport.**

**More information:**

**Ayanda Allie Paine**

**Cell: 072 566 0827**

**Issued by: Department of Transport**