

Enquiry: SS. Samuel

Ref. no. S/4

TO: ALL EMPLOYEES



education

Department of
Education
FREE STATE PROVINCE

Special Leave due to risk factors for severe COVID-19 (comorbidities)

- 1.1 For the duration of the national state of disaster as a result of the COVID-19 outbreak, a Head of Department must grant special leave to an employee due to risk factors for severe COVID-19 as outlined in paragraph 1.2.
- 1.2 The following are considered risk factors for severe COVID-19 (Department of Health)

Risk Factor	Detail	Definition
Age	People 60 years and older with comorbidities	Aged 60 years or older with one or more disorders or conditions.
People of all ages with the following underlying medical conditions, particularly if not well controlled:		
Cardiovascular Disease	Moderate/ Severe Hypertension	Moderate hypertension: systolic BP 160-179mmHg and/or diastolic BP 100-109 mmHg. Severe hypertension: systolic BP ≥ 180 mmHg and/or diastolic BP ≥ 110 mmHg.
	Congestive cardiac failure or other serious cardiovascular disease	Confirmed clinical diagnosis of congestive cardiac failure or other serious cardiovascular disease
	Cerebrovascular disease, including stroke and transient ischaemic attack	Confirmed clinical diagnosis of cerebrovascular disease.
Respiratory Disease	Pulmonary Tuberculosis – untreated or in early treatment	People who have not completed the intensive phase or first two months of treatment in line with the National Department of Health Standard Treatment Guidelines.
	Moderate to severe asthma	Asthma which requires treatment with high dose inhaled corticosteroids plus a second controller (and/or systemic corticosteroids) to prevent it from becoming ‘uncontrolled’ or which remains ‘uncontrolled’ despite this therapy.
	Chronic Obstructive	Confirmed clinical diagnosis of

Private Bag X20565, Bloemfontein, 9300

Old Saambou Building, Room 417, Cnr. Charlotte Maxeke Street and Aliwal Street, Bloemfontein

Tel: (051) 404 1955 Fax: (086) 4553122

Risk Factor	Detail	Definition
	Pulmonary Disease (COPD)	COPD
	Other severe chronic lung pathology, including cystic fibrosis and bronchiectasis	Confirmed clinical diagnosis – irrespective of severity.
Kidney Disease	Chronic Kidney Disease	eGFR < 45
Pregnancy	Third trimester pregnancy	Estimated to be further than week 27 of pregnancy
Immunosuppression	Poorly controlled type II Diabetes Mellitus	HBA1c \geq 7.5% within last 6 months
	Cancer undergoing active treatment	Currently undergoing chemotherapy and/or radiotherapy
	Human Immunodeficiency Virus with advanced immunosuppression	HIV positive persons with CD4 count < 200 cells/mm ³ who are ART-naïve or who initiated ART within last 3 months
	Chronic immunosuppressant use	Chronic use of corticosteroids of >20mg prednisone per day or equivalent, methotrexate, biologicals or other immunosuppressants.
	Transplant	On chronic immunosuppressants
Metabolic syndrome	Severe obesity	Body mass index (MBI) of 40 and higher

1.3 An employee referred to in paragraph 1.2 must submit the necessary documentation (adequate medical reports) to the Head of Department.

1.4 The confidentiality of the information submitted must be maintained.

1.5 The Head of Department may subject the application to the Health Risk Manager or a Health Professional for assessment.

1.6 An employee granted special leave due to risk factors for severe COVID-19 will be required to continue working remotely to perform specific functions.

NB: All Teachers and support staff submit to their **Circuit Manager**,
: All District officials submit to their **District Directors** and
: All Head Office officials submit to **Director Human Resources Administration**, Mr S. Samuel at: S. Samuel@fseducation.gov.za.


SUPERINTENDENT-GENERAL: EDUCATION
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