

STATEMENT FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF TRADE AND INDUSTRY

26 March 2020

ONLINE BIZPORTAL TO REGISTER BUSINESSES THAT PROVIDE ESSENTIAL GOODS AND SERVICE DURING THE LOCKDOWN PERIOD

As of Thursday, 26 March 2020, more than 10 000 companies have already registered as providers of essential goods and services. Most of these have been in food supply, medical and pharmaceutical services and transport services. We will provide further update on communication platforms as to the number of registered businesses during the lockdown period.

The regulations issued by the Minister for Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs provide for a form or certificate to be issued by companies who provide essential services to their workers, to be carried when traveling to and from work

Many companies have requested that they log their details with Government during the lockdown period.

We have thus introduced a portal at the website run by the Companies and Intellectual Property Commission (CIPC) to log company details only where companies comply with the regulations issued by the Minister for Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs on 25 March 2020 in Government Notice 398 of Government Gazette No. 43148 (“lockdown regulations”).

The website can be found at www.bizportal.gov.za.

The system is currently running with full functionality. We ask that companies be patient through the registration process, as there are large volumes presently being experienced. No companies will be prejudiced by any delay in the system. The service will continue to run tomorrow and beyond and it is not a requirement that companies complete registration before the lockdown begins.

Only companies permitted in terms of the lockdown regulations will be allowed to continue operating through the period. Possession of a CIPC certificate does not constitute permission to operate during the lockdown. Companies must be guided by the regulation as to whether their business operations constitute essential services. Any misrepresentation of information is a criminal offence and will be prosecuted. Already we have seen companies selling on-premise consumption of alcohol registering through the platform. Other examples include non-essential grooming for pets. We will advise these companies that this is not permitted and may take further action if required.

Companies may issue letters to their workers independent of the registration process, which must be done ahead of the lockdown at midnight tonight.

CIPC officials who are administering the www.bizportal.gov.za

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