

Will the National State of Disaster be renewed at the eleventh hour?



By [Katja Hamilton](#)

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The time has come for the President to make his plan to end the National State of Disaster public so that we can see exactly where we are in the process.



Source: [Pexels](#)

This is the message of Premier Alan Winde who was responding to yesterday's announcement by President Cyril Ramaphosa on Adjusted Alert Level 1 Covid-19 Regulations.

This follows meetings of the National Coronavirus Command Council (NCCC) and the President's Coordinating Council (PCC) which received updates on the management of Covid-19 in South Africa.

The information gathered through the system used by the Department of Health has reported that South Africa has exited the fourth wave nationally.

Cabinet elaborated on its changes related to isolation and quarantining with immediate effect. These changes are, that those who test positive with no symptoms do not have to isolate. Persons who test positive with symptoms now have their isolation period reduced from 10 to 7 days, and contacts do not have to isolate unless they develop symptoms.

Removal of social distancing for learners in schools

Cabinet also announced that there will be a return to full schooling for all grades in South Africa, and that the 1m social-distancing regulation for learners in schools has been removed, bringing an end to rotational timetables.

"A continuation of a rotational timetable would have hurt our poorest communities the most, resulting in a generational catastrophe," Winde said



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He said he welcomed the announcement by President Cyril Ramaphosa, by way of a press statement last night, that there will be a return to full schooling for all grades in South Africa.

"A continuation of a rotational timetable would have hurt our poorest communities the most, resulting in a generational catastrophe. We need our children in class for as long as possible, if we are to reverse the detrimental impact that the pandemic has had on their learning.

"Health data has made it clear that we have reached an 'endemic' stage"

"I am however concerned that there is still no clarity on the normalisation of our Covid-19 response, by ending the National State of Disaster.

Winde said in October last year he had called on the President to table a 'road-map' that would set out a clear process to end "this very extreme measure"

"Since then, our health data has made it clear that we have reached an 'endemic' stage, with significant immunity in our country. This means that we can respond through existing public-health measures.

"Understandably, normalising this response does require preparation - but one must ask why it is taking so long to do when this was first brought to the attention of the President three months ago.

"It will be completely unacceptable to renew the declaration on 15 February 2022, when it is set to expire because the National Government is not yet ready."

The Minister of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs (CoGTA), Dr Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma has in terms of section 27(5)(c) of the Disaster Management Act, 2002 (Act No. 57 of 2002), Gazetted the extension of the National State of Disaster on Covid-19 until 15 February 2022.

ABOUT KATJA HAMILTON

Katja is the Finance, Property and Healthcare Editor at Bizcommunity.

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