

Failure to ensure your passengers wear masks can cost you

Motorists can be fined as much as R1,000 failing to ensure passengers wear masks in a vehicle under the current State of Disaster Act.



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Magistrates across the country are releasing updated admission of guilt penalties. Of particular importance for motorists, is the failure to ensure your passengers wear masks while in a vehicle. Motorists can be fined as much as R1 000 for breaking this law under the current State of Disaster.

While Covid-19 continues to spread, South African drivers need to treat face masks in the same way that they would a seatbelt. “A driver who wants to ensure that their passengers are protected from unnecessary harm should a crash be unavoidable, will always ensure that every passenger has a seatbelt fastened.

“In the same way that you ensure safety belts are secured before starting, ask passengers to put their face masks on as well. If you struggle to drive with a mask yourself because it fogs your glasses, purchase a mask that prevents this. Research is showing that the wearing of face masks is one of the strongest defences against the transmission of the virus. Even if a hefty fine is not enough to convince you, the importance of not contracting the disease should.” says the managing director of MasterDrive, Eugene Herbert.

When it comes to travelling with people with whom you share a home, the law appears to be open to interpretation. “If you are pulled over, however, you should wear a face mask when speaking to the police officer. As such, keep your mask close at hand for this and in case the officer requests that you wear one with a passenger, irrespective of who they are.

“There have been instances where officers threaten penalties for not wearing a mask with a passenger but there are more cases where the officer simply asks you to wear the mask. If the officer does not simply ask you to wear a mask, explain your living situation. There are more reasonable officers than irrational ones. They don’t make the news or social media because it has no interest factor.”

Other fines that can affect motorists include:

- Fines for travelling outside of curfew which starts at 10pm and ends at 4am.
- Failure of public transport operators to observe maximum load capacities.

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