



## JM GUMEDE TALKS TO US ABOUT COVID-19

Ms Yolanda Mahlamvu had a chat with Mr J Mzwandile Gumede about how the Office of the Premier is handling the COVID-19 epidemic.

You were recently appointed as a COVID-19 Compliance Officer at the Office of the Premier, what are the duties of a COVID-19 Compliance Officer?

**Response:**

The Director-General, Dr Nohlanhla O. Mkhize as an Accounting Officer for the Office of the Premier is required in terms of Section 8 of the Occupational Health and Safety Act, 1993 "OHSA" to provide and maintain, as far as reasonably practicable, a working environment that is safe and without risks to the health of employees.

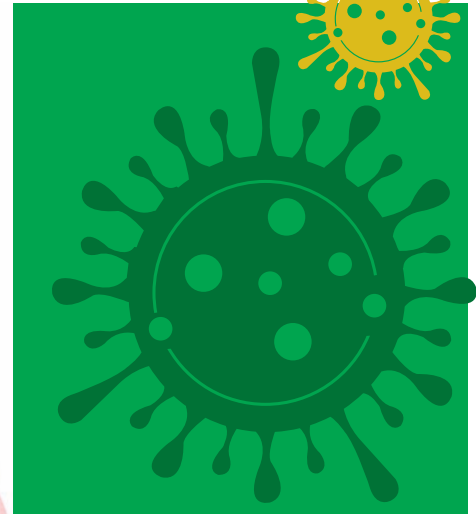
In order to carry out her mandate, the Director-General has designated an employee as the Compliance Officer for the Office of the Premier guided by the COVID-19 Guidelines contemplated in the National Disaster Management Act and the Department of Public Service



and Administration (DPSA) Circular 18 of 2020, Section 2.1.3.

The role of the COVID-19 Compliance Officer can be summarized as follows:

- Develop COVID-19 Recovery and Mitigation Plan for the Office of the Premier.
- Ensure that all health and safety measures to curb the spread of COVID-



19 in the workplace are adhered to.

- Manage the confirmed cases of COVID-19 in the workplace.
- Conduct risk assessments and ensure that the identified risk mitigation activities are implemented.
- Compile progress reports to the Director-General and the Premier on the implementation of COVID-19 Recovery and Mitigation Plan

## The Office of the Premier recently adopted a return to work strategy, can you briefly tell us about the strategy?

**Response:**

On 23 April 2020, the President of the Republic of South Africa announced a risk adjusted strategy through which government will take a deliberate and cautious approach to the easing of the current lockdown restrictions.

The strategy is premised on the need to balance the resumption of economic activity with the imperative to contain the virus and saving of lives.

The Department of Public Service and Administration (DPSA), Circular 18 of 2020, outlines the Public Service return to work guidelines after the easing of the national lockdown and implementation of the new 5 levels of lockdown. The easing of the lockdown does not negate the need to contain the spreading of COVID-19 and is meant to

counter a rushed reopening that may be followed by a resurgence of the virus and another hard lockdown.

The Director-General and the Office of the Premier Executive Committee (EXCO) embarked on the exercise to determine the employees who will be returning to work and those employees who will continue to work remotely and detailed activities and conditions to be met in designating the two groups of employees.

The Office of the Premier did not shut down during the National Lockdown. During the National Lockdown Level 5, the Core Team which included support staff was appointed to ensure that the Office of the Premier continue to operate. Working remotely was introduced to the rest of employees.

Employees classified as vulnerable as epidemiologists have concluded are at high risk of obtaining COVID-19 virus, those over the age of 60 years and those with co-morbidities were recommended not to return to work and instead work remotely.

During National Lockdown Level 4, All Senior Management Service (SMS) members and the critical support personnel identified by their respective SMS members were directed to return to work, in addition to the Core Team.

The returning employees had to be curbed to a maximum of 30% to avoid congestion in the workspace. When National Lockdown Level 3 was announced, additional employees were ordered to return to work, guided by the state of readiness.



## Since the return to work how many COVID-19 cases have been reported and how many recoveries (inclusive of OTP Staff, Contractors and SAPS)?

**Response:**

As at 04 August 2020, 17 confirmed positive cases of COVID-19 had been recorded, 8 cases were active and 9 cases were recorded as recoveries. Fortunately, no death has been recorded.

## In terms of the strategy how do you assist employees from a suspicious case to a positive test results and post recovery?

**Response:**

The Office of the Premier has partnered with the Department of Health in the management of all confirmed positive COVID-19 cases and the stipulated health and safety protocols are adhered to when dealing with the cases.

In addition, the Office of the Premier provides psychosocial support to employees infected and affected by COVID-19 through its employee health and wellness programme. Employees who are in need any health and wellness support are encouraged to access the service directly or through their supervisors and managers.

## Based on your observation what advice can you give to the OTP Staff on how to manage the COVID-19?

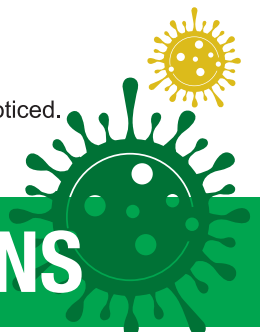
**Response:**

The Premier Mr S Zikalala and the Director-General Dr Nonhlanhla Mkhize provide the required leadership in the Province and in the Office of the Premier to save the lives of all the citizens of the province and the much valued employees of Office of the Premier.

Employees on the other hand has duty to support all the efforts towards preventing the spread of the virus and the loss of lives.

Employees are therefore urged to comply fully with all the measures which has been put in place. The following measures remain critical as we are battling with the pandemic.

- Wearing of cloth face masks correctly all the time.
- Participate in COVID-19 Screening daily including taking body temperature when entering the buildings.
- Regular washing of hands with soap.
- Apply hand sanitizer with more than 70% alcohol; when entering the buildings
- Regular disinfecting of common surfaces like tables, door handles and shared equipment/gadgets
- Observing the required 1.5metres to 2 metres physical and social distancing.
- Avoid congestion and overcrowding in the workplace.
- Keep abreast with COVID-19 prevention and containment information and avoid fake news
- Monitor COVID-19 related symptoms and seek medical advice immediately should the symptoms noticed.
- Assist in fighting stigma and discrimination against COVID-19 affected employees.
- Provide support and comradeship to fellow colleagues who have tested positive for COVID-19.



## OTP BUILDING COVID-19 CHAMPIONS

The Director-General has appointed the following officials as OTP COVID-19 Champions responsible for each building and they work with the Compliance Officer in ensuring that the Office of the Premier complies with all COVID-19 measures.

Moses Mabhida Building	Mrs Mandy Pienaar
Invesco Centre	Mr Oscar Msweli
Provincial Public Service Training Academy in Durban	Mr Duncan Buthelezi
Natalia Building	Ms Thembeke Maseko
The Marine Building in Durban	Mr Mfundo Sibisi
King Support and Royal Household Ulundi & Nongoma	Mrs S. N. Mazibuko

**FOR MORE INFORMATION please contact**

Mzwandile Gumede - OTP COVID-19 Compliance Officer

Director: Employee Health and Wellness

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# KWAZULU-NATAL PREMIER LAUNCHED 2020 WOMEN'S MONTH

Every year, in August, our country marks Women's Month to pay tribute to more than 20 000 women who marched to the Union Buildings on 9 August 1956 in protest against the extension of Pass Laws to women.

KwaZulu-Natal Premier Sihle Zikalala officially launched the 2020 Women's Month on 31 July 2020 under the **"Generation Equality: Realising women's rights for an equal society now"**. During the virtual launch, the Premier touched on many challenges faced by women.

This year's commemoration comes at a time when the country is fighting the COVID-19 pandemic. The pandemic poses serious challenges to women. The COVID-19 lockdown has witnessed an increase in domestic violence and abuse, leaving women vulnerable and in danger.

The main focus for Women's Month will therefore be gender-based violence and discrimination, the advancement of the rights of women and girls in the political, economic, social and cultural spheres of life. The Women's Month will also raise awareness about women's empowerment, skills development, job creation and health issues.



The start of Women's Month will be preceded by the celebration of Pan African Women's Day on 31 July 2020. Pan African Day is celebrated worldwide as a day to celebrate women in Africa on their strides in development, empowerment and impact in the development of the continent and the diaspora.

Highlights for Women's Month in the province will include Women's

Parliament on August 7 and Women's Day on August 9 which include a roundtable discussion hosted by Premier Zikalala on Gender Equality Priorities for 2020.

A number of events have also been lined up to celebrate Women's Month throughout the province.

**Be a part of the generation that ends gender inequality**

## Don't miss Women's Month books collection "A well-read woman is a dangerous creature" Lisa Kleypas

The library is situated on the 1st floor Room A128 at the Training Academy in Glenwood. For any enquiries please contact Ms Nonkululeko Shongwe and Ms Sithembile Radebe [Nonkululeko.shongwe@kznpremier.gov.za](mailto:Nonkululeko.shongwe@kznpremier.gov.za) and [sithembile.radebe@kznpremier.gov.za](mailto:sithembile.radebe@kznpremier.gov.za), Tel: 031 274 4001



Office of the premier library subscribes to SABINET Online journals:-

Netlaw SA legislation (updated and consolidated South African Principal Acts, Rules and Regulations)

Bill Tracker and Parliamentary Documents updated daily (Acts and all the facts on every Bill tabled before Parliament, Committee Reports, submissions to Parliament, speeches by Ministers and other documents sourced from Parliament)

SA Gazettes

African journals

To be able to access journals please call the library for login details

Some of the journals available on COVID 19

1. COVID-19 Pandemic as an existential problem: an African perspective
2. Catalyst Volume 13 Number 1 March Quarter 2020
3. Patient guide - COVID 19
4. Building trust during COVID 19 : value-driven and ethical priority-setting
5. COVID-19 resource page
6. Dealing with COVID-19
7. COVID-19 : a global pandemic
8. COVID-19 and cardiovascular disease
9. COVID-19 and your pocket
10. Prevention of COVID-19 in the workplace
11. UIF benefits in response to COVID-19
12. COVID-19 lessons for agriculture
13. COVID-19 ECHO clinic
14. Effects of the Corona virus on South Africa's regime
15. Labour relations during the corona lockdowns
16. COVID-19 : guidelines for pharmacists in South Africa
17. Colds and flu medicine for office workers : colds and the
18. COVID-19 : no longer status quo for the surgeon
19. Economics in the time of corona - Covid-19

# LESSONS LEARNT DURING COVID-19

**Brian Mahlangu**

The rapid outbreak of COVID-19 has brought up the change in the social conduct and behavior of people in their respective communities.

During the time of lockdown to contain the spread of COVID-19, a balancing act became imperative between the need to maintain social order and safety on the one hand and on the other hand, the need to protect the civic and human rights of the people and justice.

In areas with less movements and density of people, as well as no social events areas, the spread of COVID-19 was not as so rapid as in other areas. During level 5 lockdown, incidents of vehicle accidents on the roads reported and people involved in car accidents were reduced as the traffic flow was very low. Alcohol abuse decreased over the period of COVID-19 in communities in the whole country and more people remain sober.

Young children appreciated and enjoyed the benefits of being home with their parents for a long time during the lockdown meant to contain the COVID-19. Both the demand and prices for PPEs and sanitizers increased and prices of the commodities in some stores became distorted to make profits by business people. This virus has brought about a situation of business unusual whereby many affected countries will of necessity have to revise their plans while also adjusting their budgets.

COVID-19 has made government, civil society and business sectors to demonstrate unprecedented level of solitary in supporting the needy people in their respective poor communities by distributing donated food parcels. In the midst of the disaster management, some sections of greedy business shops have taken advantage of this situation brought about by COVID-19 to unjustifiably increase the prices of food and other items in their shops to make big profits.

As the demand for food increases, suppliers are not coping as such they have deliberately increased their prices of food, sanitizers, masks and gloves, hence these items are sometimes expensive in cases where they cannot be sponsored by the government. In terms normal daily economic activities



and corresponding business financial transactions the lockdown period will be considered as a lost and wasted time at which the economy suffered severely. The more people are screened and tested, the higher the number of infected people. This implies that the number of infected people will increase as large number of people get screened and tested.

All dedicated professionals and people who render essential services in their respective work stations and health centres have so far responded to the call and sustained their discipline in showing unwavering commitment to serve and save the nation from the COVID-19. In some instances in communities other people do not comply with the prescribed norms and guidelines to avoid the spread of COVID-19 infections; thus they put other people at risk of being infected.

The use of technology capabilities as a strength for holding distance meetings has been a good advantage which has enabled leadership and management of many organisations to make important decisions without being physically in one boardroom. During the COVID-19 containment lockdown period, hospitals recorded reduced numbers of incidents of stabbed people who were attended to by doctors in the casualties as a result of alcohol abuse and drug abuse. There has been increased demand and consumption at the household levels during the lockdown period which resulted in the government adoption and

implementation of food relief interventions. There is widespread education and awareness about the manifestations and symptoms as well as the primary health protective measures. Highlighted the poor access to information technology and communications facilities by communities especially in rural areas of the country. Since the eruption of COVID-19 pandemic, there has been more focus on and attention given to interventions for COVID-19 pandemic than in other chronic communicable diseases. The evidence shows that certain percentage of cases are asymptomatic of the infections of COVID-19 which makes it difficult to detect until tested, yet the virus is contagious.

Distance and far remote meetings become a common practice amongst government and private sector officials, using digital instruments and infrastructure of Information Technology Communications at the organisational disposal. Over the period of COVID-19 lockdown, some employees had to adjust to the habit of working at home and they were able to meet the weekly and monthly targets they set themselves.

There are instances of display of abuse of power by soldiers against civilians in places wherever there was no oversight. Those occasions attracted the hardened attitude and wrath of communities who complained about the treatment by the soldiers.

# WOMEN'S MONTH FEATURE: STAFF AT THE CENTRE OF THE GBV FIGHT IN THE PROVINCE

As we commemorate Women's Month, the Premier's Stars had a conversation with Mrs Samukele Khumalo-Dludla, the Deputy Director in the Status of Women Office. Among other duties fighting Gender Based Violence (GBV) forms part of her work.

Mrs Samukele Khumalo-Dludla (38) graduated in 2020 with the Masters degree in Gender with the University of KwaZulu-Natal. She is currently studying towards her PhD with the University of Pretoria.

Tell us what motivated to do your study on GBV, what it entails and the findings? I did a study at KZN Correctional Centres. I had a conversation with prison inmates at Westville and Pietermaritzburg prisons in KwaZulu-Natal. My dissertation investigated the possible reasons behind increased gender-based violence (GBV) between 2009-2012. This was the most sensitive research where I had a one-on-one conversation with the most notorious and famous inmates who are rapists and some of them murderers. This was a very challenging research from start to finish but it was a brave conversation, which called for someone to do, to understand why men abuse or rape in KZN. This conversation with inmates at these two correctional services facilities helped me to understand the reasons why men in particular commit sexual violence against women and girls.

The study was motivated by a continuous increase in cases of gender-based violence especially in KZN. It has been reported that the province has the highest rate of gender-based violence. A lot has been written on GBV and there has not been a research in South Africa where stories of GBV are told from the perpetrator's point of view, especially sexual violence against women and girls. My study also sought to understand the gender norms that informs the attitude of perpetrators towards GBV, the interventions implemented by the correctional services in an attempt to assist those incarcerated for sexual violence against women and girl and possible policy interventions.

To share with you, there were several reasons and factors for sexual violence that my study uncovered, these include financial crisis which disempower women to be involved in abusive and



deadly relationships, background of inmates especially those who were abused as children, influence of alcohol, masculinity crisis, traditional beliefs, economic factors, and socio-cultural factors.

Some respondents pointed out that women abuse the law to get some men behind the bars.

Even if several reasons were noted, most of the inmates initially denied having committed the sexual violence against women and girls, as some felt it was a taboo subject and something shameful. This was then linked to the gender norms amongst the offenders. Inmates however received support from the correctional services where various activities such as skills sharing, victim offender dialogue, anger management, counselling and psychotherapy were implemented so as to assist in change of attitude towards GBV amongst inmates.

**Briefly share the worst GBV case that you handled or witness within your working perimeters?**

I did a case between 2013-15 for a GBV survivor at Abaqulusi. This was a lady who was raped from age 5 until she was 16 years old. When I started intervening in the case, the lady was staying in the bush, with two children, without an ID, obviously without means to get housing, and the children not receiving any Child Support and not registered as indigent.

The lady lost her parents and was raised by a grandmother who came to Vryheid to work as a domestic worker. The grandmother eventually died leaving her at the hands of the male stranger who

raped her all these years reminding her that she had nobody to look after her. She eventually had to drop at school at Grade 7, falling pregnant through rape and the old man died leaving her HIV positive.

As part of the interventions I helped her to have an ID, assistance DSD with food parcels, support grant for her children, who then started attending school.

We also assisted her to get a house eventually and to get psychosociological support through counselling. Since the lady had no family, she had another orphan she accommodated in her new RDP house as a give back for the interventions I did for her.

Currently, I am involved in various initiatives to fight GBV in the province. The OSW is currently a secretariat in coordinating the plan and its implementation for GBV in the province.

**What keeps you motivated in your job?**

The job is very demanding. I started working on gender issues in 2004 at eThekweni Municipality, where I worked for 8 years. I joined the Office of the Premier in 2012, which is 8 years ago this year, making it 16 years focusing in the empowerment of women.

When I get feedback of how much I have changed peoples lives with providing solutions and seeing women grow because of the interventions I do as part of my job, that gives me a reason to push every day. I have since obtained a Master in Gender, specializing in Gender Based Violence.

This year I am advancing by doing PhD since the Office of the Premier and government of KZN promotes women to grow to leaderships positions. I am motivated that as a young woman, one should strive for excellence as the product. As a young woman, I am hoping I will get an opportunity to grow within the department and share my knowledge I have gained throughout the years in the OTP.

**Ms S Khumalo-Dludla**  
BSoc.Sc (UND) MA in Gender (UKZN)  
Currently pursuing PhD Scholar with UP

# OTP CONGRATULATES 2020 GRADUATES

It is with great pleasure to present our 2020 graduates. We congratulate our achievers for their commitment, zeal and determination that pushed them to rise above all challenges and barriers in order to achieve their goals. As we

know that we are confronted by the aggressive enemy, COVID-19 this year, our colleagues couldn't enjoy their graduation ceremonies they were eagerly looking forward to. Nonetheless, they have proudly obtained their

qualifications. The Premier's Stars would like to encourage other colleagues not to hesitate to pursue their dreams. "The beautiful thing about learning is that no one can take it away from you." BB King



**Ms S Khumalo-Dludla**  
Qualification: Masters: Social Sciences (Gender Studies)  
University of KwaZulu-Natal



**Ms Gugu Shabangu**  
Qualification: Masters: Public Health  
University of KwaZulu-Natal



**Mr Oscar Msweli**  
Post Graduation Diploma: Industrial Relations  
University of Kwazulu-Natal



**Mrs Zamajobe Madlala**  
Masters: Business Administration (MBA) 2019, University of KwaZulu-Natal (Westville)

# Women's month

MEMBERS OF THE KWAZULU-NATAL PROVINCIAL EXECUTIVE, LED BY PREMIER SIHLE ZIKALALA, WILL CELEBRATE WOMEN'S DAY.

## 09 AUG

2020 | 10h00

VIRTUAL

"Generation Equality: Realizing women's rights for an equal society now."

#WomensMonth2020

LIVE STREAMING

[www.facebook.com/KZNGOV](https://www.facebook.com/KZNGOV)  
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[youtube.com/kznonline](https://youtube.com/kznonline)

Mr Sihle Zikalala

PREMIER OF KWAZULU-NATAL

KZN Provincial Communications, 2020

