

19 March 2020

W&RSETA Stakeholders

Dear Stakeholders,

RE: W&RSETA RESPONSE TO THE IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON EDUCATION AND TRAINING IN THE WHOLESALE AND RETAIL SECTOR

On 15 March 2020, President Cyril Ramaphosa declared a state of national disaster in South Africa as a result of the COVID-19 (corona virus) global pandemic. As part of the President's announcement and subsequent regulations in line with the Disaster Management Act, public gatherings of more than 100 are now prohibited. These developments, together with the general health concerns of the spread of the virus through human interaction have had an impact on the implementation of both the W&RSETA and sector-funded programmes.

I am writing to you to inform you of measures that the W&RSETA has implemented to address the impact on the implementation of learning programmes as follows:

- An extension to Work-based Learning Programme agreements for three (3) months from the current to end date.
- Workplace attendance may continue under the stringent requirements in accordance with regulations of the Disaster Management Act and precautionary hygiene measures of the participating employer.
- Payment of stipends for funded programmes will be limited to a 12-month period in line with the contract between the W&RSETA and relevant employers.
- The W&RSETA will review the contracts to accommodate the 3-month extensions on learner agreements and a communique will be published in due course.

Board: Yvonne Mbane (Chairperson), Zinhle Tyikwe, Reggie Sibiya, Lwazi Koyana, Praise God Ndaba, Mogomotsi Masoabi, Themba Mthembu, David Makuwa, Fachmy Abrahams, Sibusiso Busane, Margaret Bango.

- Employers are encouraged to explore the provisions of the Unemployment Insurance Fund Act in terms of assisting learners to claim the benefit as contributors to the fund for the duration of the stop-gap period.
- The W&RSETA will **NOT** require classroom attendance registers for tranche payment claims pending the three-month suspension; however, other forms of evidence of attendance will be required to confirm that the learners have been attending the practical component of the programme. The evidence required will include among others, payslips.
- The W&RSETA will implement alternative means to physical verification and monitoring of learners such as online verification through Skype and video calling.

The cooperation of our stakeholders to these measures would be appreciated as we all work together to weather the storm that we are faced with.

Stakeholders can contact their relevant regional office should the need arise.

Sincerely,



Mr Tom Mkhwanazi
Chief Executive Officer

Board: Yvonne Mbane (Chairperson), Zinhle Tyikwe, Reggie Sibiyi, Lwazi Koyana, Praise God Ndaba, Mogomotsi Masoabi, Themba Mthembu, David Makuwa, Fachmy Abrahams, Sibusiso Busane, Margaret Bango.