



**MINISTRY JUSTICE AND CORRECTIONAL SERVICES DEVELOPMENT
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA**

**Media Statement
For Immediate Release**

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Directions on essential justice services to be provided during the lockdown period

The Minister of Justice and Correctional Services, Mr Ronald Lamola, has issued ***amended*** Directions to address, prevent and combat the spread of COVID 19 in all courts, court precincts and justice service points. The amended Directions were published in Government Gazette No. 11076 on 31 March 2020.

These Directions replace the Directions issued on 26 March 2020 (Government Gazette No. 43167).

As part of government's measures to curb the spread of Covid-19, essential justice services will be available at courts only between 10:00 and 13:00 daily during the national lockdown period (27 March until 16 April 2020).

Family law services will only attend to urgent applications in respect of matters referred to the Family Advocate by the court with urgent applications. Applications for protection orders will still be addressed, as will enforcement orders.

The offices of the Master of the High Court will attend to urgent appointments in terms of deceased estates as well as curatorship.

Criminal courts will be open to preside over bail hearings and first applications. Matters on the court roll will be rescheduled and members of the public will be informed of new dates for court appearances. Audio-visual remand technology at Correctional Centres will be used as widely as possible to mitigate the need for persons in custody to appear in court.

Persons whose matters are on the court rolls and not urgent should therefore, for purposes of the lockdown, stay home and not attend to the courthouses until after the lockdown. The courts will also ensure that they are advised of the new dates to which their matters were postponed.

The Department encourages members of the public to adhere to the Regulations issued in terms of the Disaster Management Act, 2002. “While every effort is being made to ensure that South Africans can access essential justice services, we urge members of the public to work with us to adhere to the lockdown measures to stop the spread of the virus,” said Minister Lamola.

The detailed Directions can be found on: www.justice.gov.za/events/COVID-19.html

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