



**economic development
& tourism**

MPUMALANGA PROVINCE
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

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MEDIA STATEMENT

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Attention: Journalists, News Editors and Executive Producers

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

REVISED NATIONAL LOCKDOWN REGULATIONS NOW ALLOW LICENSED STREET FOOD HAWKERS TO TRADE

Mbombela – Finance, Economic Development and Tourism MEC, Mr Pat Ngomane, says he is happy that street food hawkers are now allowed to continue trading, provided they have the necessary operating permit. This follows the relaxation of the national lockdown Regulations, announced by the Corporative Governance and Traditional Affairs Minister yesterday.

“Our people, in the informal business sector, have been complaining that we have not considered them, when we came up with the lockdown Regulations. As the caring government, we have listened to their cry. They can now continue trading, for as long as they have permits from their local municipalities. Those without such permits approach their municipalities directly to apply for operating permits”, explained MEC Ngomane.

Although spaza shops – also informal traders – were allowed to operate during the national lockdown period (provided they had operating permits), street hawkers or traders were prohibited to do so.

“President Ramaphosa has recently acknowledged that this is a learning curve to us, as we have never experienced a national disaster of such magnitude. In the process, government had unintentionally omitted street traders – who are critical stakeholders in the informal sector of our economy – from the list of those permitted to trade during the lockdown period. I hope our people will understand that our intentions, were however, genuine as our eyes were solely focused on protecting them from contracting the COVID-19 disease through interaction with other people, who may have unknowingly contracted the disease; hence we removed them from the streets, where they were most vulnerable”, added the MEC.



In terms of the Mpumalanga Business Act (Act No. 2 of 1996), local municipalities have been appointed by the Member of the Executive Council (MEC) responsible for economic development in the Province (in this case, the MEC for Finance, Economic Development and Tourism), as Licensing Authorities to issue licenses of business in their areas concerned.

“We still, however, emphasise that all traders, including street hawkers and spaza shops, must comply with the health and hygiene measures applicable to the COVID-19 lockdown period. They must provide their customers with hand sanitisers, and ensure appropriate social distancing. This is to protect them from possibly contracting this spiraling disease, concluded Mr Ngomane.

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***Issued by the Department of Economic Development and Tourism
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