



**economic development
& tourism**

MPUMALANGA PROVINCE
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

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MEDIA STATEMENT

Date: Thursday, 14 May 2020

Attention: Journalists, News Editors and Executive Producers

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MPUMALANGA DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TOURISM LAUNCHES SUPPORT HELPLINE FOR SMMEs AFFECTED BY THE NATIONAL LOCKDOWN

Mbombela – Mpumalanga Department of Economic Development and Tourism will on Friday, 15 May 2020, launch the Support Helpline for small businesses and co-operatives affected by the national lockdown, due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The Helpline will provide general support and guidance on how to access government relief funding to counter the effects of the lockdown.

“We are launching this Support Helpline to close the gap which was created by the national lockdown. Through the Helpline, small businesses and co-operatives will access general support and guidance, on how to access various government relief funds to counter the effects of the lockdown”, explained Mr Sarel Mtsweni, Head of the Department of Economic Development and Tourism.

The number for the new Support Helpline is **013 766 4589**; and is linked to various mobile phones of Departmental Business Support Advisors, who are still operating remotely from home.

“The Support Helpline will be activated from tomorrow, Friday 15 May from 08h00 in the morning; and we encourage our SMMEs to call the Helpline, rather than coming to our offices, because we want to protect them from contracting COVID-19 at all costs. Although the Helpline is meant specifically to provide COVID-19 assistance, we may consider making it a permanent service, depending on its acceptance by business people”, concluded Mr Mtsweni.

More information on the available COVID-19 Relief Funding Schemes can be found on the Departmental website on www.dedt.mpumalanga.gov.za (accessible also from Friday, 15 May 2020).



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