



NATIONAL NEWS FLASH



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COVID-19: WHAT IF.....? SOP EASY REFERENCE.

NAPTOSA is approached daily by members wanting to know what is to be done if a COVID-19 situation arises at their schools. Some of these enquiries revolve around real situations, but a number are hypothetical in nature.

The Department of Basic Education, before schools re-opened, compiled and issued a “**Standard Operating Procedure** for teachers, non-teaching staff and learners on the coronavirus” that addresses the different scenarios that could be faced at school. The fact that members are not aware of the contents can only mean one or more of the following:

- The DBE did not share the document with the Provincial Departments;
- The Provincial Departments failed to share the information with Principals; or
- Principals failed to share the information with teachers, learners and parents.

The Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) will be uploaded to the NAPTOSA website under the “What’s New” section, but for easy reference the following is brought to the attention of members to guide the different “What if...?” scenarios: (These are extracts from the SOP)

If a learner / educator/ education support personnel member at school displays COVID-19 symptoms:

1. Isolate the individual.
2. Give the person a face mask.
3. Inform parents/ guardians immediately in the case of a learner.
4. Inform the school nurse/ facility manager/ provincial official.
5. Advise the person/ parent/ guardian to contact the NICD toll-free emergency hotline for COVID-19 on 0800 029 999 or to consult a medical professional.
6. Any further action will be advised once a diagnosis is confirmed by a medical professional.

If an educator/ education support personnel member comes into contact with someone who has the virus:

1. Inform the Principal immediately.
2. Do not report to school.
3. Remain home and self-quarantine for 14 days.
4. Apply for quarantine leave.
5. If the person who has the virus is an employee, all employees who worked closely with the infected employee are to self-quarantine for a period of 14 days **on approval** by the Head of Department (HOD) or as prescribed by the Department of Health (DoH).

6. All the workspaces of those exposed must be cleaned and disinfected thoroughly.

If an educator/ education support personnel member tested positive for the virus:

1. Inform the Principal immediately.
2. Do not report to school.
3. See a doctor immediately
4. Apply for normal sick leave or temporary incapacity leave if normal sick leave is exhausted.
5. Only report to school when a medical evaluation confirms that you tested negative.
6. The public health officials will make an assessment of the situation for purposes of the school and advise on the management of learners and staff
7. All employees who worked closely with the infected employee to self-quarantine for a period of 14 days **on the approval** of the HOD.
8. Thorough cleaning and disinfection of the infected person's workspace must be conducted.

Closure of schools

1. Possible closure of a school should only be considered following recommendations from the accountable public health official.
2. The decision to close a school will be school- and context-specific.
3. School administrators are not expected to make decisions about dismissals or closure of schools.

In each of the scenarios described above, the NAPTOSA site rep/ member at the affected school must advise his/her NAPTOSA provincial office so that the situation can be monitored, and members advised.

BASIL MANUEL

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR