

How the latest Covid-19 regulations impact employers, employees

 By [Johan Botes](#)

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The South African cabinet announced changes to Adjusted Alert Level 1 on 31 January 2022, effective immediately. From 31 January this year, persons who test positive for Covid-19, but are non-symptomatic, need not isolate. Anyone presenting with symptoms of Covid-19 must isolate for seven days.



Image source: Edmond Dantès from [Pexels](#)

These changes are applicable to both vaccinated and unvaccinated persons. The South African government has retained the obligation for citizens to wear face masks in public spaces and on public transport. The changes are informed by seroprevalence surveys, which use antibody tests to identify persons who have had Covid-19. These studies showed a substantial increase in the proportion of people with immunity against Covid-19 in South Africa (exceeding 60% to 80%, based on the survey considered).

These changes will assist employers in reducing workplace disruption by curbing the requirements for employee isolation. The reduced isolation period should also enable those employees with symptoms of Covid-19 to return to the office sooner. When considering the economic pressure faced by many organisations in South Africa, any measure aimed at improving workforce productivity and company flexibility, should be welcomed.

Working parents with children at school are also likely to benefit from the announced immediate return of learners to full daily attendance at school. With more organisations implementing compulsory return-to-work policies, working parents will breathe a sigh of relief at being able to return to office full time, without the need to supervise children attending school virtually from home.

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