



public works
& infrastructure

Department:
Public Works and Infrastructure
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

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Media Statement by Minister of Public Works and Infrastructure, Patricia de Lille, MP

Department of Public Works and Infrastructure to deploy 25 000 Expanded Public Works Workers to assist with COVID 19 measures.

On 25 March 2020, I briefed the media on the various interventions the Department of Public Works and Infrastructure (DPWI) was making to assist in national government's response to fighting the COVID 19 pandemic. One of the interventions identified by the DPWI was to recruit Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) participants to assist the Health Department in its response to COVID 19.

Initially the DPWI planned to recruit 20 400 EPWP participants by contracting them through the non-profit organization (NPO) sector to deploy EPWP participants across all 44 districts and 8 metros. The DPWI has been working on this intervention and we have increased the numbers to recruit 25 000 EPWP participants through NPOs.

One of the key issues in contracting the EPWP participants was for the DPWI to secure the Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) to ensure that participants are properly protected once they are deployed into communities. This is because a key task of the EPWP participants will be to assist the Department of Health as it ramps up its public screening initiatives.

The DPWI has commenced with the procurement of personal protective equipment (PPEs), finalizing service level agreements with NPOs that are compliant to the requirements of the Central Supplier Database, and developed a distribution list of participants per NPO, province, and district.

The 191 NPOs that are currently being contracted will immediately, after contracting, finalise the recruitment of EPWP participants to participate in the DPWI EPWP COVID-19 response entailing:

a) 10 000 EPWP participants to conduct public health education and awareness programme linked to the Department of Health's Hygiene Strategy;

b) 10 000 EPWP participants to conduct screening within communities. Participants will not partake in testing activities, as testing is done by health professionals. If a member of the

public is found to possibly be infected the screeners will refer the person to the nearest testing site.

c) 5 000 EPWP participants to provide support to quarantine sites (including surface cleaning of public places; and in provision of services such as cooking of food, serving of food and cleaning) once PPEs have been secured.

The EPWP participants will be contracted for the COVID 19 work for a period of three months.

The contracting of NPOs and the recruitment of EPWP participants is set to be completed by the end of this week.

The DPWI will work closely with the Department of Health to ensure that EPWP participants are properly trained briefed and protected before they are deployed into communities.

On 12 April, I wrote to the Minister of Health, Dr Zweli Mkhize to inform him that the DPWI has started to contract 191 NPOs to assist the Department of Health (DoH) in its effort to address the COVID-19 pandemic.

I also requested Minister Mkhize to urgently identify in which wards, districts and metropolitan areas the need will arise first to recruit the necessary EPWP participants so that deployment of the EPWP participants can be done in areas where interventions are most needed.

The DPWI is working hard to ensure that we do everything we can to assist the COVID 19 National Command Council and especially the Department of Health in the overall efforts to respond to the COVID 19 pandemic. We are ready to assist in any way we can to ensure that we curb the spread of the virus and keep citizens healthy and safe during this time.

ENDS

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