



government
communications

Department:
Government Communication and Information System
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

SAFER EASTER WEEKEND KEY MESSAGES

BRIEF:

The Easter long weekend is around the corner. It is a time when many South Africans travel around the country to visit family, friends or for religious purposes. It is also a time when there are increased traffic volumes on our roads.

Unfortunately this period usually sees a high rate of road accidents and fatalities. This is concerning for government because most road accidents can be prevented and are caused by human error.

The root causes of these accidents are driving under the influence of alcohol, excessive speeding, not wearing seatbelts, dangerous overtaking, talking on the phone while driving, un-roadworthy vehicles and pedestrians failing to observe traffic rules.

This year our country also has to deal with the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. COVID-19 remains with us and is spread through contact with others, particularly at events or gatherings where there are a large number of people. During this Easter holiday we must strictly adhere to social distancing, wearing a mask at all times in public and washing our hands with soap and water or sanitiser.

“Stay Safe: Act responsibly and stay protected, always”

KEY MESSAGES	SUPPORTING STATEMENTS
<p><i>Take the necessary precautions this Easter weekend to protect yourself against COVID-19.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Travel carries great risk, which can be reduced by avoiding unnecessary travel. We cannot let our guard down, and must take personal responsibility for our health. • You can reduce the risk of infection by wearing a mask in public transport, keep the windows open and maintaining prevention measures on arrival. • Everyday preventative actions and behaviour to help prevent the spread of the virus, include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wash your hands often with alcohol based hand sanitiser or soap and water for at least 20 seconds. • Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands. • Avoid close contact with people who are sick. • Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces. • Maintain at least 2 metre distance between yourself and anyone. • Adhere to the COVID-19 restrictions and curfew times which is from 12 midnight to 4am.
<p><i>Easter holiday services must comply with lockdown restrictions.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Easter weekend is traditionally a time for large gatherings which can be ‘<i>super spreader</i>’ events that carry a huge risk of transmission of the virus. • When social distancing is not observed in these gatherings, venues are overcrowded and not adequately ventilated, the risk of spreading the virus increases. • We call on churches, religious organisations and event organisers to adhere to lockdown restrictions during the Easter weekend. • The maximum number of people allowed at any gathering including churches is 100 people indoors or 250 people outdoors. • Where possible, we appeal to churches and religious organisations to live-stream their Easter services. • This will allow congregants who cannot attend due to lockdown restrictions to have church services in the comfort of their homes.
<p><i>Your actions can change the course of this pandemic.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If the spread of the virus is left unchecked, it is projected that the country will have a third wave in the coming weeks. • Every individual action we undertake can and does make a difference. Now, more than ever, we are responsible for the lives of those around us. • The best way to prevent infection is to minimise the risks involved in hosting or attending a party or holiday event. • If you have to host or attend an event, make sure that you do it safely and limit the number of people who can attend.

KEY MESSAGES	SUPPORTING STATEMENTS
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep your celebrations small and where possible do it virtually. • Spend as little time as possible in indoor gatherings with poor ventilation. • Going to a crowded party or gathering poses more risk than celebrating at home. • Do not share food, dishes, glasses, spoons, forks or knives when you eat.
<p><i>Irresponsible and reckless driving destroys lives.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drivers must obey the rules of the road; keep to the speed limit; and ensure that their vehicles are roadworthy. • All occupants in a vehicle must wear a safety belt and younger children must be placed in a car seat to ensure their safety. • The rule of not drinking and driving applies to all. If you are intoxicated, do not drive but rather make alternative transport arrangements. • Drivers should be on the lookout for pedestrians and not speed near towns, especially informal settlements where there are often no formal crossing points. • There will be a high visibility of traffic law enforcement patrols and road users can report those who drive recklessly.
<p><i>Have a relaxing Easter weekend but enjoy it responsibly.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alcohol and substance abuse can cause aggressiveness which might lead to violent behaviour, fights and domestic violence. • It can also increase the risk of contracting HIV and AIDS, and other sexually transmitted infections. • If you are sexually active, protect yourself and your partner by always using a condom. • Female and male condoms are freely available at all health facilities. • We should always practise safe behaviour in order to prevent HIV and AIDS. • Avoid multiple partners as it increases the chance of contracting HIV and AIDS.
<p><i>The safety of our children this Easter weekend must be a priority.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Always be aware of your children's location and ensure they are only left with responsible adults. • Drownings are a major cause of unnatural death among our children. Always supervise children around swimming pools, riverbanks and dams. • Parents and caregivers should always put the safety of children first and ensure they grow up in a violence free household. • Children should never be left in a hot car even on a mild day as it can lead to seizures, brain damage, liver or kidney failure and even death. • Communities should care and protect children, the elderly and other vulnerable groups by reporting any incident of abuse, neglect and exploitation of children to the authorities.

KEY MESSAGES	SUPPORTING STATEMENTS
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report child abuse to Childline on 0800 055 555.
<p><i>Do not look away, act against any form of abuse.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All South Africans must ensure a safer society for women, children, the elderly and persons with disabilities. • We can reduce the number of sexual offences and attacks on women and children. • We should work with the law enforcement agencies to bring perpetrators to justice. • Report all cases of rape, sexual assault or any form of violence, including the ukuthwala practice to the police. • Support is available from the GBV Command Centre is on 0800 428 428.