

Move to Adjusted Level 3 brings relief for SA's hospitality industry

Despite putting in place stringent health and hygiene protocols over a year ago, the hospitality sector is one that has not been able to operate fully, even when regulations were at Level 1. With last night's announcement by President Cyril Ramaphosa that South Africa would move to Adjusted Level 3 regulations the industry breathes a sigh of relief, says Rosemary Anderson, national chair of Fedhasa.



Source: Supplied

"The hospitality sector supports the President's call for South Africans not to be complacent as the third wave surge declines. Along with a robust drive amongst South Africans to get vaccinated, this is crucial if we are to keep our businesses open and attempt to rebuild and restore the thousands of jobs that have been lost.

"Trying to continue to trade within the framework of government restrictions that make it financially unviable to trade within is simply not sustainable. Businesses have been crippled as they fight to stay open and support livelihoods within the unsustainable restrictions," says Anderson.

"We have always committed to adhering to the basic precautions to limit the spread of the virus to others and once again call on our guests and patrons to help us with this, so that as a sector we can continue to ensure their safety and that of our staff. As a collective, we can remove the ongoing limitations within which the hospitality sector has been forced to operate in for over a year."

Vaccination programme, inbound travel

The announcement that the vaccination programme will be even further accelerated is a welcome relief for the hospitality sector, Anderson adds, not only because it will help to prevent from rolling from one wave to the other, but also because it is a key consideration amongst inbound international travellers who want to travel.

"While our main international source markets have been vaccinated, we have somewhat lagged in this space. Until we get to reach the point where adults in South Africa are vaccinated in substantial numbers, our sector will continue to be impacted by surges and low demand from our international customers.

Over 15 months of regulations have brought the hospitality sector to its knees with very little financial relief or prospects of recovery. For the sector to have any hope of getting back on its feet, it needs consistency and the rapid rollout of vaccinations.

"We call on South Africans to roll up their sleeves and get their #jab4tourism so that we can begin to rebuild and create the many thousands of jobs that hospitality and tourism are capable of doing if we just provide the favourable travel conditions for our international guests within which to visit our magnificent country," concludes Anderson.

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