

# ProBono.Org joins LexisNexis to support recovery and rebuilding

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Small, medium and micro enterprises (SMMEs) grappling with the impact of the recent devastating riots and looting in South Africa will be able to access free legal resources and a complimentary one-hour virtual consultation with an attorney. This is thanks to an initiative by legal technology company, LexisNexis South Africa, and NGO, ProBono.Org, which works with the private legal profession to provide pro bono legal services to the poor and vulnerable.



In the aftermath of the civil unrest, LexisNexis used its expertise to set up a freely available [online resource](#) to support affected individuals and businesses with knowledge on their legal rights pertaining to losses.

“The Rebuilding and the Rule of Law online platform is designed to provide individuals and businesses with legal information, available resources and advice as they begin the process of rebuilding their lives and businesses, following the looting and devastation,” said LexisNexis South Africa CEO and Chairperson of the Board, Videsha Proothveerajh.

“We are additionally excited about the partnership with ProBono.Org which will now provide individuals and business owners with the added benefit of a free, one-hour virtual consultation with an attorney in ProBono.Org’s network,” added Proothveerajh.

KwaZulu-Natal Regional Director of ProBono.Org, Shamika Dwarika, said, “During the 10 years that our Durban office has been in existence, we have assisted thousands of the most vulnerable and marginalised members of society.

“We are therefore very proud to be partnering with LexisNexis SA to assist SMMEs as they rebuild. ProBono.Org prides itself on the free, quality legal assistance that we are able to offer through our network of private legal practitioners that undertake pro bono work through us. Our organisation and our legal practitioners are ready and eager to assist and we are confident that SMMEs that access the resource portal and avail themselves of the resources and services on offer, will benefit greatly.”

To maximise the value of the virtual consultation, business owners will first be directed to questions and answers on the area(s) of the law relating to their individual matters.

The [Rebuilding and the Rule of Law platform](#) provides access to content such as pertinent primary law and expert commentary and guidance around topics such as financing options for rebuilding and recovery, force majeure, disaster management, insurance claims, violent protests, loss of intellectual property, data breaches, cyber-crimes and security, and rights and duties of Community Policing Fora members, particularly relating to civilian neighbourhood patrols.

Examples of the content LexisNexis SA and partners will include on this evolving platform include:

### **Insurance advice**

- What is covered by business interruption insurance
- How to start the claims process
- How to simplify and shorten the claims process
- What to do if your claim is repudiated
- SASRIA's ability to pay out claims

### **Labour/IR**

- Basic conditions of employment
- Unemployment insurance and benefits
- Retrenchments and the LRA if the business has to close or downscale
- Dismissals and the LRA if an employee was caught looting
- Discrimination (Promotion of Equality)

### **Property Law**

- Rental obligations and rights

### **Banking advice**

- Bridging finance/loans – what is available and pitfalls to look out for
- How to access low - and medium-cost funding from private/government sources
- Bank charges in the wake of the destruction of ATMs

### **Data Protection, Consumer Law and IP Law**

- Guidance on POPIA compliance
- Guidance on how to simplify contractual terms and conditions and required paperwork for SMMEs that may not have dedicated commercial teams
- Data breaches, cyber-crimes and security

## Tax advice

- Assistance on various remedies available, including:
  - deferral of the payment of employees' tax liabilities for tax compliant SMMEs
  - extension of ETI
  - deferral of excise duties on alcoholic beverages

Legal professionals interested in submitting content for the [Rebuilding and the Rule of Law online platform](#) can contact John de Villiers on [JSmutsdeVilliers@outlook.com](mailto:JSmutsdeVilliers@outlook.com)

"We believe that the sustainable economic development needed to create a stronger and more stable South Africa goes hand in hand with advancing the Rule of Law, which is our mission at LexisNexis. With the support of ProBono.Org, we are helping businesses and individuals to fast-track their recovery and rebuild their businesses, while meeting their responsibilities in terms of the law," said Proothveerajh.

**Click [here](#) to access the content and set up a free, one-hour virtual consultation with a private attorney.**

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