

Phasing out of lockdown - will your staff be safe?

By [Burt Rodrigues](#)

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As we collectively held our breath awaiting President Ramaphosa's mammoth decision as to whether to release South Africa from its extended lockdown from 1 May, there are questions weighing heavily on government departments, medical institutions and the corporate world. Whilst this period has certainly had an effect on the numbers of reported cases and given us time to put plans in place, are we really ready to go back to work, even in a risk adjusted, phased approach, knowing this pandemic is far from over...?



Burt Rodrigues, CEO of Biodx

There is of course a strong likelihood that within a short space of time, we will follow Japan's Covid19 journey and return to an even longer lockdown. But let's focus on back to work after 30 April.

With many companies' offices housing well over 5,000 employees in one building, often working in close quarters, how do you ensure your staff's ongoing safety? This is a hefty load to rest on CEO's shoulders.

For high risk areas such as hospitals, recent outbreaks of Covid-19 at St. Augustine Hospital and Morningside Mediclinic should sound a deadly warning. No one is safe.

Risks for CEOs

Should your staff return and just one is diagnosed with Covid-19, you'll be back to square one and possibly worse, having to not only clear your building and get it thoroughly deep cleaned and disinfected, but lose valuable work hours during this time.

Your staff may still fear contracting the virus not only for themselves but to pass it on to their loved ones at home. You need to make them feel 100% safe.

Risks for employees

Everyone in an organisation is at risk, from the top executives and management levels who spend large parts of their days huddled around boardroom tables, to cleaning staff, whose job has doubled, spending their days disinfecting everything from door handles to window seals, light switches, telephones, computers, teacups and fridge handles.

Solutions

This is a time for real leadership where effective, safe plans are made and, more importantly, carried out correctly. Questions that need to be asked and answered are:

- Many of your staff will travel to work on public transport. What precautions will you have in place as they enter the building?
- Will your offices/hospital/warehouse be ready for business and SAFE on 1 May?
- Are you staff sufficiently trained to regularly disinfect their workspaces and themselves?
- Are your current sanitising and surface disinfecting products certified and legitimately able to combat Covid-19?
- Are there enough supplies available?
- Will your cleaning staff be properly trained on how to use the disinfectants and sanitisers, protecting themselves and your employees?

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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