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MEDIA RELEASE

Media release from Business for SA (B4SA) Health Workgroup

27 April 2020

- See guidelines for using, caring and wearing cloth masks below the press release.
- See infographic attached, available in both high and low res.

SA Cloth mask demand to boost local manufacturing

- ProudlySA Marketplace to link local cloth mask manufacturers to corporate buyers
- Boost for local manufacturing, textile and CMT industries
- Manufacturers urged to use locally produced textiles
- Companies asked to donate medical grade PPE in national interest

Corporate buyers/consumers can visit https://www.proudlysa.co.za/covid_19/covid_19.php#

Manufacturers wishing to register on the portal can email: bongani@proudlysa.co.za

Proudly SA has launched a dedicated marketplace online portal for cloth masks, which connects corporate buyers with local producers of cloth masks.

It is the culmination of the Department of Trade, Industry and Competition (DTIC), SA Clothing and Textile Workers Union (SACTWU) and the Manufacturing Circle's drive to capacitate, retool and reinvigorate the local clothing and textile manufacturing industry, and to generate opportunities for SMEs, so that they are able to participate in the economy, save and create jobs, and remain resilient in the tough economic times ahead.

Many local manufacturers of clothing and textiles have repurposed their production capability and machines to produce cloth masks. Government is urging cloth mask manufacturers to only use locally produced textiles.

The demand for cloth masks is aligned with Government's announcement that all medical-grade masks, including N95 respirators and surgical masks, be reserved for frontline health care workers, who are our only line of defence against the virus. The President announced this week that all passengers travelling on public transport will be required to wear a non-medical or cloth mask. It is also recommended that all citizens wear a cloth mask outside of their homes.

Business for South Africa (B4SA) welcomes the DTIC, SACTWU and the Manufacturing Circle's intervention and leadership, and believes it will not only spur local manufacturing in the textile and CMT industries, but will also provide the country with the volumes of cloth masks needed to protect its citizens and health workers.

Stavros Nicolaou, chair of the Business for South Africa Health Workgroup says, "This is an incredibly important initiative that will provide real solutions for two of the most pressing challenges we have in South Africa at the moment: ensuring that our citizens, and most importantly, our frontline health care workers are protected against the Covid-19 virus; and to ensure critical sectors in the local market are able to weather the economic storm. As Business for SA, we congratulate the Minister and his team, as well as SACTWU, the Proudly SA team and the Manufacturing Circle, for their work in this regard."



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“Given our Government’s call-to-action around wearing cloth masks, there may be many companies in South Africa with excess medical-grade PPE, including N95 and surgical masks, gloves, goggles and visors, gowns, aprons and overshoes. These companies can be a force for good, by either diverting or donating their stock. This stock will be used to protect our frontline doctors, nurses and community health care workers. If we protect them, they will be able to protect us,” concludes Nicolaou.

To donate medical-grade PPE: <http://covid19manager.co.za>

The DTIC has developed guidelines for the production of cloth masks by textile and CMT companies: http://www.dti.gov.za/news2020/Guidelines_Masks.pdf

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Business for SA Health Workgroup media contacts:

Sandra Sowray: 079 167 6863 / sandra@prologconsulting.co.za

Dani Cohen: 082 897 0443 / dani@prologconsulting.co.za

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Appropriate use of masks:

The following guidelines, approved by the National Department of Health and the NICD, provide clarity on the appropriate use of cloth masks by non-health care workers and the public. Please note that medical-grade masks, including N95 respirators and surgical masks, SHOULD ONLY be used by frontline doctors, nurses and community health care workers. Everyone else should use well-made cloth masks.

Masks are an effective way to stop the spread.

Well-made cloth masks do not replace the 5 Golden Rules of Good Hygiene. They may offer some extra protection, if well-made and used correctly.

Follow the 5 Golden Rules of Good Hygiene to stop the spread of coronavirus:

1. Wash your hands often, for at least 20 seconds with soap and water.
2. Do not touch your face with unwashed hands.
3. Cough or sneeze into a tissue or your elbow. Safely throw away the tissue.
4. Observe physical distancing - keep 1,5 metres apart from others.
5. Stay home if unwell. Contact a hotline or your health care worker.

Use a cloth mask if you come into contact with people

- Using public transport.

- Shopping.
- Attending essential services.

When putting on the mask:

- Wash your hands first.
- Place the inside of a clean mask against your face.
- Cover your nose and mouth.
- Make sure it fits well, don't touch the cloth part.

While wearing the mask:

- Do NOT TOUCH YOUR FACE or fiddle with the mask.
- Remove the mask if it is wet.

When taking off the mask:

- Touch only the straps. NEVER touch the inside of the mask.
- Keep it in a container until you wash it.
- Wash your hands, with soap and water or hand sanitiser, after taking it off.

Caring for your masks:

- Have at a minimum two masks so that you always have a clean one ready.
- Do not share masks with other people.
- Wash the mask with soap and hot water.
- Dry the mask in the sun and iron it to disinfect it.

A good cloth mask:

- Avoid T-shirt material.
- Use fabrics that can be washed in hot water and ironed.
- Use Cloth/Fabrics that do NOT inhibit breathing.
- Is square with 3 pleats to fit well.
- Covers from above the nose to below the chin and up to the ears.
- Fastens tightly around the head.

- Has three layers:
 - **Outer layers (faces towards other people):** made from thick weave cotton like denim, calico, upholstery fabric or shweshwe. Must be water repellent, easy to clean and be quick drying.
 - **Inner layer (sits against the face):** Both polyester or nylon fabrics are preferred. Cotton can be used but this fabric can be highly water absorbent and become wet against skin. Make sure you differentiate clearly between the inner and outer layers e.g. use different colour/patterned fabric.
 - **Middle/Filter layer:** using the same fabric as inner/outer layer or fabric that is used in lining of suit jackets or formal coats.

Advice for parents: When toddlers and children wear masks

- Adults must always assist, toddlers and children to put on a mask.
- Follow the rule of always washing hands when touching masks.



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- Ensure that toddlers and children are under adult supervision when wearing a cloth mask.
- Ensure that children and teenagers are informed on caring, use, and precautions of using a cloth mask.

If you are sick with Coronavirus, or caring for someone who has it, speak to your health worker or hotline about what masks and protection to use.

National Hotline : 0800 029 999

National WhatsApp : 0600 123 456

National Institute for Communicable Diseases website: <http://www.nicd.ac.za>

COVID-19 information website: <https://sacoronavirus.co.za>

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