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MEDIA RELEASE

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NW on alert as COVID-19 new infections are on a continual increase – Provincial Command Council concerned

Mahikeng – The North West Provincial Coronavirus Command Council has expressed its concern over the continuing daily increase in numbers of new COVID-19 infections in the province, with the Districts of Bojanala Platinum and Dr Kenneth Kaunda being identified as possible high risk areas.

Held on Friday, 11 December, the virtual meeting of the Provincial Command Council received a Risk Adjusted Report focusing on the Epidemiology update on emerging signs and Provincial Resurgence Plan, which highlighted that numbers in Rustenburg, Matlosana, JB Marks, Mahikeng and Madibeng sub-districts were progressing towards a resurgence and that this was a cause for concern.

The Command Council also received a report on the provincial integrated festive season plan which addresses the state of readiness to manage amongst others, the super-spreader events and how service delivery interventions will be carried out during this period. Added to this effort is the development of Districts based plans, this in line with the District Development Model approach.

Moreover, the Command Council welcomed efforts by the department of Health to engage key stakeholders, particularly in the mining sector, industries and schools, which are main high risk areas, on plans to manage the return-to-work after the festive season.

The department of Health pointed out that while the hospitalisation cases for High Care and ICU are still low, there is a need for the province to monitor and determine its hospital

capacity, this to ensure that the health system is not overwhelmed should the province experience a second wave of infections.

Premier Prof Tebogo Job Mokgoro who is the Chairperson of the Provincial Command Council, reiterated calls made by President Cyril Ramaphosa and the Minister of Health Dr Zweli Mkhize, for the public, in particular the youth, to exercise extra care and ensure full adherence to the COVID-19 prevention measures.

Premier Mokgoro said the prevention measures which include the wearing of masks when in public spaces, washing of hands regularly or using an alcohol-based sanitizer and maintaining social distance, remain as critical now as they have ever been.

“We have been told that the second wave was likely to be more devastating than the first one, hence our continued appeal to all citizens to stop the spread of this virus by avoiding large gatherings and unnecessary travels during this period.

Whilst we understand the yearning to celebrate festive season since it is a recognised as a period of festivities and family gatherings, we urge everyone to understand that this festive season is different”, said Premier Mokgoro.

The Command Council stressed the need for parents with teenage children to manage and monitor their behavior, this following recent confirmation that a large number of new cases were for teenagers aged between 15 and 19 years.

The Command Council welcomed the province’s resolve to continue reminding people that COVID-19 is still with us and that we have to maintain our vigilance and prevention behaviours, as well as strengthening the current strong focus on contact tracing.

In support of this contact tracing effort, the Command Council encourages members of the public to download the COVID-19 Alert App which lets users know when they have been in close contact with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19.

Mokgoro also expressed his gratitude to the commitment shown by health workers in delivering health care services since the first case of COVID-19 was reported in the province, and urged the citizens to support and give encouragement to the health workers.

The Command Council virtual meeting is attended by Ministers and Deputy Ministers deployed to the province as National District Champions, the MECs, Chairperson of the Provincial House of Traditional Leaders, Chairperson of SALGA, Heads of Department and Section 100 Administrators.

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