



Western Cape
Government

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COVID-19: Addressing the risk

A BESPOKE APPROACH FOR SPAZA SHOPS

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BACKGROUND

Spaza shops provide an important service in many communities in South Africa – providing easy retail access to the essential products they need to support their daily lives.

Spaza shops have also become an entry point for many entrepreneurs into both the formal and informal economic sectors of the country.

From a Covid-19 risk management perspective, spaza shops are potential high-risk areas for the spread of the virus and require a tailored approach to effectively manage the threat of Covid-19 spreading in the communities.

The setup of most spaza shops take the following forms:

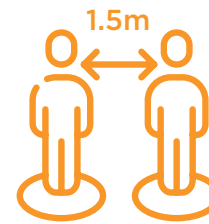
- They are mostly run from a small, enclosed space – whether from a container, a temporary structure – standalone or attached to the owner’s home or a brick structure owned or rented by the owner.
- Some spaza shops do not allow customers to enter the shops, but rather operate through hatch / window type openings, sometimes protected with bars.

- Other shops are more conventional in design and allow customers to access and choose their products from display racks inside the shop.
- Shops seldom have more than one door, and windows are often small, barred, and kept closed.

Spaza shops should therefore manage exposure to COVID-19 through addressing the following high-risk issues:

1. Lack of ventilation inside the shop
2. Overcrowding of shops
3. Risk management by owners/ employees
4. At-risk behaviour by customers

1. LACK OF VENTILATION:



Good ventilation is an important protective factor against transmission of the virus in spaces where people gather.

It is therefore important that spaza shop owners understand the importance of good ventilation and that they implement measures to ensure good ventilation in the shop:

- All doors and windows should always be kept open to allow as much natural ventilation as possible.

- Ceiling or oscillating fans can assist to ensure improved ventilation.
- Extraction fans and roof extractors (“whirlybird” extractors) can also assist with increased movement of fresh air.
- Many air conditioners only recirculate air from within the space being cooled/heated, and their use may not always ensure that sufficient fresh air is circulated through the space.
- Air conditioners that do circulate fresh air need to be maintained regularly to ensure that filters remain clean.

2. OVERCROWDING OF SHOPS:

To protect against transmission of COVID-19, a social distancing space of 1,5 meters need to be maintained between customers and between customers and the owner/employees.

It is generally recommended that 6 sq. meter floor space should be allocated for each person to maintain social distancing in a closed space such as a shop. This translates, for example, to 3 people (customers and employees) in a 20 sq.

meter floorspace spaza shop, or 5 people maximum in a 30 sq. meter floorspace spaza shop.

The owner should determine the floor space of the shop, calculate the number of people allowed within the shop based on the floor space, display this number prominently at the entry point, and limit the number of people entering accordingly.



3. RISK MANAGEMENT INTERVENTIONS BY OWNERS / EMPLOYEES:

- Information posters should be attached at the entrances, reminding people about the need for risk management activities such as frequent sanitizing, wearing of masks, and maintaining social distancing.
- Owners should ensure that all surfaces are sanitized daily, and regularly thereafter, to protect against transmission of the virus.
- The pay point counter should be sanitized after each contact with a client.
- If possible, a Perspex barrier should be erected between paying customers and the person receiving payment.
- Hand sanitizer should be made freely available, filled regularly, and customers and employees/owners should sanitize after each contact, or after handling money.
- Owners/employees should always wear masks correctly while working in the spaza shop and enforce the use of masks amongst their customers.
- Owners should demarcate 1,5-meter distancing spaces on the floor to guide customers wanting to enter the shop, or at the pay points.

4. RISK MANAGEMENT INTERVENTIONS BY CUSTOMERS:

- Customers should not enter the shop if they are sick, were in close contact with a person who tested positive for Covid, or awaiting their own Covid test results.
- Customers should ensure they maintain 1,5-meter social distancing from other customers and employees while waiting to access the spaza shop, when they are inside the shop, and when paying for purchases.
- Customers should always wear their masks correctly while waiting to enter the shop, or while inside the shop.
- Customers should sanitize their hands during entry into the shop, and after touching products and after every interaction with the owner/employees - including after payment for purchases.