

REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA



THE PRESIDENCY

STATEMENT BY

**HIS EXCELLENCY DR. HAGE G. GEINGOB,
PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA**

**ON THE OCCASSION OF THE 42nd COVID-19 PUBLIC BRIEFING
ON THE NATIONAL RESPONSE MEASURES**

13 April 2022

WINDHOEK

**Check Against Delivery*

Fellow Namibians,

Welcome to the 42nd Covid-19 update on our National Response Measures.

Though not out of the woods yet, the rate of infection during the expiring Observance Period remains relatively under control, despite an increase in the average rate of infections. During the preceding week of 14-20 March 2022, the positivity ratio of 2,9 percent marks a rise of 1,6 percent in the rate of new infections, from the previous baseline of 1,3 percent positivity. Although marginal, this upward trend is being monitored.

The recent surge in infections at two local schools confirms the importance of maintaining personal vigilance.

Though the Public Regulation for the compulsory wearing of face masks in public spaces has been abolished, it is still advisable to protect yourself from exposure to the virus by applying sound personal judgment and taking necessary precautionary measures. As our first line of defence against Covid-19, let us continue to observe hand hygiene, the correct wearing of face masks, especially in public and crowded places, social and physical distancing and personal vigilance and avoiding crowded indoor settings.

We are fortunate to have contained the recent surge in cases at our local schools, a success that is attributable to effective surveillance, prompt response and active testing.

Had this cluster outbreak occurred within the broader community, it could have gained momentum and caused far-reaching reversals on public health and the public health system.

I therefore, once again commend our frontline health-workers and first responders, who have been committed to protecting our country against this deadly enemy. The fact that our country has reached and maintained a manageable infection rate, is testament of the hard work and dedication of our health-workers.

Fellow Namibians,

While the disease continues to evolve, including the detection of the new *Delta-Cron variant*, to be fore-warned is to be fore-armed. We continue to take evidence-based policy decisions, as advised by experts.

Local data has proven that vaccinated persons have been less likely to fall seriously ill, when re-infected. This, because those vaccinated have built up some immunity. Local statistics on Covid-19 related hospitalisations and ICU admissions, are of those who have not been vaccinated.

As at 11 April 2022, the cumulative number of fully vaccinated persons was 399,304 translating to 22.4 percent of the total target population. While 47 829 people have received their Covid-19 vaccine booster dose. Let us therefore continue to listen to voices of reason and get vaccinated. Especially as we approach the cold winter months which naturally compel us to spend more time indoors and knit more closely together. Let us not become complacent now.

It is in our best interests as Namibians to do what is right, for the sake of our own health and lives, our families and communities at large.

Fellow Namibians,

The current dispensation which came into effect for a period of 30 days, from 16 March 2022, will lapse on 16 April 2022 at midnight. All public health measures remain unchanged and are therefore extended, for a period of 30 days until 15 May 2022.

As I move to a close,

Our country has been devastated by the impacts of Covid-19 on our health, social and economic wellbeing. The Government has maintained its priority to safeguard Namibian lives and livelihoods. Therefore, please obey the rules.

We should continue with the drive to increase vaccinations in order to achieve herd immunity. This will not only limit severe illness and hospitalisations, but will also instill confidence in the economy, specifically the tourism and hospitality sectors which have been negatively affected by Covid-19. There remains a lot of work ahead, before we can safely say that Covid-19 is behind us. I once more, acknowledge and thank all members of our society, including our Development Partners and friendly nations, for their support, cooperation and collaboration over the past two difficult years.

I now invite the Minister of Health and Social Services to provide further technical information.

I thank you.