

MEDIA RELEASE

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Minister Patel publishes directions on winter clothing, footwear and bedding

The Minister of Trade, Industry and Competition, Minister Ebrahim Patel has gazetted directions on the sale of winter clothing, footwear and bedding during Alert Level.

These directions clarify the related winter clothing, footwear and home textiles which may be sold during Alert Level 4 in terms of the regulations published by the Minister for COGTA on 29th April.

The publication of these directions results from Minister Patel's consultative meeting with industry leaders in the Clothing, Textile, Footwear and Leather sector held last Tuesday, 5 May 2020. All members of the Industry Masterplan adopted in November last year.

Industry stakeholders had requested that Minister Patel gazette a list of clothing and related products that could be made available for sale in retail stores. A task team of industry representatives and the department worked together to construct a list of essential winter clothing, footwear and home textiles that would be permissible for sale in retail stores across the country during the COVID-19 Alert Level 4.

The list of winter clothing, footwear and home textiles includes all baby and toddler clothing and footwear; children's wear, including school wear and school shoes; maternity wear; adult sleepwear and gowns; adult underwear; a range of adult footwear categories, including boots, slippers, sneakers and trainers; adult outerwear categories, including active wear, knitwear, jackets and coats; adult accessories; and bedding categories, including baby bedding and blankets, duvets, blankets, and electric blankets.

In a media statement released by the National Clothing Retail Federation (NCRF) on Tuesday, 12 May, CEO of The Foschini Group (TFG) and chair of the NCRF, Anthony Thunstrom welcomed the new directions.

"The federation has participated in a robust engagement with government and stakeholders to construct the list of essential consumer items for winter clothing and textile items. The leadership of Minister Patel has been appreciated throughout the consultations. The NCRF calls on the clothing retail sector to offer retail environments that adhere to strict health protocols to help mitigate the transmission risks of Covid19," he said in a press release issued by the Federation. (See full

release attached).

Minister Ebrahim Patel has expressed his appreciation for the positive tone of the engagement with industry stakeholders.

“Restarting more parts of our economy is important and we are working hard to ensure that industry follow best practice to protect health and safety of all our citizens. The discussions with industry builds on the greater cooperation that arose from the Industry Masterplan for the retail-clothing, textile and footwear industry. I call on consumers to look for South African-made products, made proudly by local workers, so that we can rebuild the economy. The manufacturing and retail sector has been through a very difficult time and the resumption of clothing sales under Level 4 of the new risk-adjusted approach, will assist to provide greater levels of production and commerce in the sector,” said Minister Patel.

Customers are encouraged to limit their trips to retail stores, and to always wear protective face masks and maintain social distance of at least 1.5 metres when around other people.

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