



**BUSINESS AND INTELLECTUAL
PROPERTY AUTHORITY**
Protecting Entrepreneurship and Innovation

P O Box 185
Windhoek, Namibia
Tel +264 61 2994400
E-mail: info@bipa.na
Website: www.bipa.na

BIPA'S RESPONSE TO COVID-19

MEASURES TO BE INCORPORATED TO MINIMISE THE RISK OF INFECTION FOR STAFF AND CLIENTS

20 March 2020

In the wake of the Covid-19 (coronavirus) pandemic and in keeping with the President's Declaration of a State of Emergency to prevent the spread of coronavirus in Namibia, BIPA is re-aligning its operations to minimise the risk of infection for both staff and clients alike. At the core of our actions is a need to put the health and safety of all our stakeholders first and to support worldwide efforts to clamp down on the spread of the Covid-19 pandemic. Our efforts are informed by guidelines provided by the World Health Organisation (WHO) and the Namibian Ministry of Health and Social Services.

In response to the actions taken by government, BIPA appointed a Crisis Management Committee to discuss, plan and implement all measures.

BIPA will continue to offer its services to the public, with due consideration of the following measures:

OUR STAFF

We have identified our operations as being in the category of 'medium risk', with our client-facing staff at a greater risk than our support staff. To this effect:

- Staff will not be permitted to travel for professional obligations;
- Staff that have travelled or travel for personal reasons, have to inform BIPA accordingly. These staff members may be requested to self-isolate and work from home;
- Staff members with compromised immune systems, breast feeding mothers and pregnant women shall be permitted to work from home;
- Any staff member that feel sick or believe they might have symptoms of Covid-19, are requested to remain home and seek medical advice;
- Staff members have furthermore been provided with the necessary information and equipment to protect themselves; while social distancing is encouraged;
- Work stations have been re-arranged to ensure greater distance between employees;

- A dedicated emergency room has been made available for staff or clients who feel sick;
- Staff have been requested to limit meetings with colleagues, clients and suppliers where possible; and to make use of electronic communication instead.

OUR OPERATIONS AND CLIENTS

In an effort to reduce infection, our operations have been re-aligned.

- Cash payments will no longer be permitted. Only EFT payments, deposits at the bank and POS-payments are permitted as of Monday, 23 March 2020;
- Clients have been requested to limit their visits to our offices, and rather phone or email us for assistance; except in the case of urgent matters;
- Clients' access to the building will be restricted, and they will be requested to implement personal hygiene measures before accessing;
- Offices and public spaces will be subject to thorough cleaning on a regular basis;
- Our communications team is tasked with ensuring that regular communications are distributed to internal and external stakeholders via email, social media, the website and the broadcast and print media.

THE IMPACT

Due to the measures implemented by the institution, as well as measures implemented by our suppliers, service delivery might be affected. If that is the case, clients will be informed accordingly.

For further notices about BIPA's activities, please visit our website at **www.bipa.na**/**Public notices**.

Information will also be updated on our social media pages on Facebook and Twitter.

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