

# Lockdown Stages



This state of emergency was implemented through five lockdown stages:

Stage 1 – Full Lockdown,

Stage 2 – Strict Precautions,

Stage 3 – Moderate Precautions,

Stage 4 – Relaxed Precautions

Stage 5 – New Normal.

A National Joint Operation Centre (JOC) was established at the Namibian Police Force 1 Headquarters to coordinate domestic law enforcement action throughout the pandemic, with the country clustered into ten lockdown zones, with sixty-nine checkpoints and fourteen regional JOCs. The first stage involved deployment of defence and security forces to internal and national borders to control movement of people both internally and across borders. Law enforcement agencies closed all points of entry, restricting cross-border and domestic travel except for the transportation of essential goods. These measures were gradually lifted as the state of emergency transitioned to stage five.

The Namibian Police implemented INTERPOL's Covid-19 Pandemic Law Enforcement Guidelines on recommended protection measures and law enforcement duties in the context of the Covid-19 outbreak. The INTERPOL National Central Bureau in Windhoek provided each JOC with INTERPOL's daily COVID-19 daily bulletin, which was also shared with National Security Cluster ministers. This was the first time Namibia declared a health state of emergency and carried out an operation of this magnitude. Throughout

the stages, National Security Cluster chiefs visited the lockdown zones to assess the level of preparedness and implementation. Lessons learned highlighted critical coordination roles played by different international and regional entities, such as the WHO, UNICEF, INTERPOL, AU, AFRIPOL and SADC. Locally this required strong relations between various stakeholders within the country, which enabled a smooth national response.

The new operational environment was challenging as it required additional resources and consideration of health precautions. National lockdown measures generated new crime patterns with an overall decrease in crime despite increased drug and alcohol smuggling from neighbouring countries. We boosted border patrols to prevent illegal border crossing. Unable to engage in their traditional crime activities, criminals tended to engage instead in online fraud schemes, and this remains a challenge. Some of the post pandemic questions national law enforcement will be addressing include ways to enforce health regulations more effectively, how to stay staff in preserving public order whilst also maintaining human rights. Social challenges that come with this pandemic, such as unemployment and poverty are also being addressed. Obviously, mature political leadership and acumen will be required to respond to the aftermath of the pandemic.

The success of Namibia's policing action throughout the pandemic was mainly due to the implementation of the INTERPOL guidelines, the commitment and dedication of our officers, solid coordination between health and security stakeholders and closer collaboration with our neighbouring countries. Together we can prevent the further spread of Covid-19 and conquer this pandemic. During Stage 1- Full lockdown, Namibia recorded 16 Covid-19 cases for a period of 38 days. Namibia, as of 25 June 2020, recorded 90 cases, 21 recoveries, 69 active cases and no death.

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