**BILL WATCH 31/2021**

[11th May 2021]

Public Health Lock-down Order : Further Amendments

Since our last Bill Watch on amendments to the Public Health Lock-down Order *[Bill Watch 21/2021 of the 1st April 2021]* there have been two further amendments to the Order, published in SI 87A of 2021 *[*[*link*](http://www.veritaszim.net/node/4903)*]* and SI 108 of 2021 [*[link]*.](http://www.veritaszim.net/node/4960)

In this bulletin we shall outline the effect of the amendments.

Restaurants

Restaurants are now allowed to remain open until 9 p.m. every evening;  previously they had to close at 7 p.m. daily *[see the new proviso to section 17(6) of the Order, inserted by SI 87A/2021]*.  It should be noted that restaurants cannot serve alcohol to their customers later than 4.30 p.m., so romantic evenings out will have to be accompanied by soft drinks as well as soft lights.

Vaccinating Foreigners

According to a new section 26D inserted by SI 87A, tourists can get themselves vaccinated against COVID-19 at their own expense.

Quarantining of Visitors and Returning Residents

SI 108/2021 inserts two new sections 26C and 26D *[a second section 26D]* which provide for the quarantining of people entering Zimbabwe:

* Foreigners entering Zimbabwe will have to prove that they have undergone a COVID-19 PCR test within 48 hours of their departure for Zimbabwe, and if the test is negative they will have to self-quarantine for 10 days at a hotel at their own expense.  If they cannot prove they have been tested, they will be quarantined for 10 days at a designated hotel at their expense.  These requirements do not apply to foreign envoys and visiting heads of State, nor to SADC nationals in transit through Zimbabwe to another SADC state.
* Returning residents and citizens will also have to prove they have been tested for COVID-19 within 48 hours of their departure for Zimbabwe.  If their tests are negative they can self-quarantine for 10 days at home;  if they have not been tested they will be quarantined at their expense for 10 days at a designated hotel or other designated place of quarantine.

*[Comment:  Very little distinction is made between foreigners who have been tested and those who have not:  both will have to quarantine themselves in hotels.  Some words may have been left out of the provision in error.  Also, it is not clear how these requirements, for foreigners and for residents and citizens, relate to requirements already contained in section 8 of the Order.  Under that section travellers must quarantine for 14 days, not 10.]*

General Comment

We have said before and we say again, that the Lock-down Order has been amended so many times – twenty to date – that it has become very difficult to understand.  The overlap and conflict between section 8 of the Order and the new sections 26C and 26D, to which we have just drawn attention, is an example of the confusion that can arise when a piece of legislation has been over-amended.  The fact that there are now two sections 26D is another example.

It is high time the Order was completely overhauled, revised, simplified and re-enacted.

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