



TO: ALL CONVEYANCERS

FROM: CAPE TOWN ATTORNEYS ASSOCIATION (CTAA)

DATE: 17 APRIL 2020

RE: CONVEYANCING OPERATIONS

Dear Conveyancers

During these unprecedented times, it is now, more than ever required that we remain calm and work together with the various stakeholders to navigate the unknown territory that awaits us in the days to come.

We are engaging with the various government departments and other stakeholders regularly and will soon have further updates regarding the future operations of the conveyancing sector.

In the interim we furnish you with the following information:

DEEDS OFFICE

The Deeds Office computer system is programmed to reject matters after about 12 working days. It is therefore inevitable that all matters currently in the system, shall be automatically rejected.

Various communications have been addressed to the office of the Minister of Justice, motivating the re-opening of the Deeds Office as an essential service. We are currently awaiting the outcome of these submissions.



Once the Deeds Office re-opens, it is expected that the Director General will issue operational guidelines to be implemented by the various Registrars of Deeds.

In anticipation of these regulations, firms should prepare themselves to ensure the safety of their staff and to limit visits to the Deeds Office to an absolute minimum and to, where possible, restrict the number of staff and professionals attending the public areas, such as the execution room. At all times, protective gear must be worn and safety regulations strictly observed, especially social distancing.

Firms should also continue to arrange the linking of batches inter se in a safe environment to avoid gatherings.

TRANSFER DUTY

The Transfer Duty section is operating on skeleton staff and currently turn-around times of 9 working days are observed.

Conveyancers are requested NOT to submit duplicate transfer duty requests, should the request for transfer duty not be processed within the time period. After 9 days queries should be escalated through the usual channels.

All duplicate applications already submitted must please be cancelled.

RATES CLEARANCES

Skeleton staff is attending to rates clearances. The City of Cape Town is currently engaging the Chief Registrar of Deeds in order to negotiate some leniency in respect of expired rates clearance certificates, in respect of matters already lodged at the Deeds Office.

Measures to address the extension of expired rates clearance certificates are also being debated and more information in this regard is expected soon.



MASTER'S OFFICE

Commencing next week, the Director General issued a directive requesting all designated staff to return to work on a skeleton and roster basis. The office will remain closed to all members of the public including practitioners.

Cape Town Attorneys Association

Deeds Office Portfolio

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