



destea

department of
economic, small business development,
tourism and environmental affairs
FREE STATE PROVINCE

MEDIA STATEMENT

DESTEA CONSUMER PROTECTION TEAM TACKLES

NON-COMPLIANCE TO COVID-19 DISASTER MANAGEMENT REGULATIONS

While government and other patriotic corporate citizens and ordinary people are doing everything to turn the tide against COVID-19 pandemic, some unscrupulous businesses continue to take advantage of the situation.

To mitigate against this problem, MEC, Makalo Mohale has led an operation consisting of senior departmental officials, SAPS, Home Affairs, National Regulator for Compulsory Specification (NRCS) and municipalities to ensure that these business people do not take advantage of the situation through overpricing of essentials goods during this period of lockdown.

Since 27/03/2020, the entourage has visited 15 towns throughout the Free State to check on the level of compliance to Consumer Management Act and Disaster Management Regulations.

During the Blitz, several businesses were found non-compliant and it was discovered, among others that a number of foreign nationals are not properly documented and continue to run spaza shops in many towns and townships. Most businesses are not registered in terms of the Business Act 71 of 1991. The municipalities have been alerted to this and the department will be working with local authorities to ensure that there is compliance.

Transgressions include not being in possession of valid municipal permits, overpricing of food, health and safety issues, home affairs laws governing asylum seekers. A total of forty one (41) shops were found to be non-compliant and were closed down and owners or managers were arrested with four people arrested for violating immigration laws including one for fraud.

One business man was arrested for fraudulent activity of photocopying Lockdown Certificates and selling them to 10 (ten) other businesses in Boshoff for R2 500-00 each.

The operation will continue throughout the province even beyond lockdown. Members of the public are urged to be vigilant and where they suspect wrongdoing they should not hesitate to contact Free State Consumer Office at 082 773 9949

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