

SA tourism industry reacts to cancellation of Covid-19 regulations

The South African tourism industry has welcomed and commented on Health Minister, Joe Phaahla's repeal of several Covid-19 regulations relating to the wearing of face masks, gatherings and persons entering the country.



Source: [Pexels](#)

The repealed rules formed part of what is formally known as the Regulations Relating to the Surveillance and the Control of Notifiable Medical Conditions, into which they were inserted on 4 May, according to [Business Insider](#)



Remaining Covid-19 regulations cancelled

23 Jun 2022



Here the tourism industry shares their thoughts:

Euan McNeil, managing director Flight Centre Travel Group South Africa

The lifting of Covid restrictions is fantastic news for South African travellers.

"The Covid entry requirements imposed by our government during Covid made sense at the height of the pandemic. Lately, however, these restrictions have been causing some confusion for travellers who are unsure how to present their proof of vaccination. For those who aren't vaccinated, the cost of PCR tests has also been a major deterrent.

"The lifting of the last few Covid requirements will undoubtedly boost traveller confidence, and we expect a considerable uptick in travel bookings.

"We would like to urge travellers to book well ahead of time as the influx in travel demand could have unintended consequences. During the last few months, there has been a significant delay in the issuing of visas from several governments.

"We would advise all travellers to obtain guidance from travel experts who are able to assist with unravelling the complexities of travel, as requirements and regulations do still change at short notice.

"Travellers can check the Flight Centre Travel Group's free Travel News information hub, a website that allows you to search for any country and get up-to-date Covid-19 travel information and more need-to-know resources."

Carol Weaving, managing director of RX Africa (Reed Exhibitions)

"The lifting of the existing restrictions is a much-needed boost for both leisure tourism and business tourism live events and exhibitions. The capacity is a commercial issue and it's affecting all businesses. For us to be able to get back to some sort of normality, which in turn helps feed the economy is really important. This is a very welcome announcement."

Jessica Redinger, GM of voco The Bank Johannesburg Rosebank hotel

"Today is a great day for the travel and tourism industry as we are seeing the scrapping of the last Covid regulations. It will be a sigh of relief for business travellers to be able to attend conferences freely and travel for work without additional admin or costly PCR tests. Voco is located in the centre of Rosebank, a big business node with numerous international corporates.

"We foresee a promising boost in demand from international business travellers who will feel more confident to travel to South Africa now that the last hurdles to 'get back to business' have finally been removed. It will also be great to see all my staffs friendly smiling faces again.



Source: ©Stephan Stockinger via [123RF](#)

Rosemary Anderson, national chairperson of Fedhasa

As Fedhasa, we are absolutely thrilled that government has lifted the restriction of 50%-only capacity in conferences, events, exhibitions, musical events and big stadium events. This will really help our industry get back on its feet because we now have clarity and certainties. We can actually plan in advance, which is exactly what our industry needs.

"We've got lots of work to do to catch up all the events and conferences that we lost especially in the international market, but our industry is resilient and we really are determined to try to do that. We are absolutely thrilled that we can get on with doing what we do best, which is create jobs and add handsomely to the economy."

Oz Desai, GM Corporate Traveller

"The relaxation of rules brings South Africa in line with first world countries, such as the US, which were the first to scrap Covid rules for travel and conferencing. This announcement will without a doubt have a positive impact both on business travel and on conferencing and events in South Africa as regulations are completely removed and we can go back to normal volumes."

Jeanneret Momberg, CEO of Visit Stellenbosch

Today Visit Stellenbosch is hosting the inaugural Meet Stellenbosch a showcase for the business tourism sector in Stellenbosch. This is such a joyous occasion that we can celebrate the end of restrictions to group gatherings. The MICE industry has really suffered greatly and we are deeply relieved by this decision and we look forward to the opportunities that await.

Sean Kritzinger, executive chairman at Giltedge

"I believe the repeal of these regulations will be a huge boost for tourism to South Africa and the greater Southern Africa. It is high time to normalise travel as is already happening in other countries around the world. The fact that we were under constant scrutiny for over two years and put on red lists has done a lot of damage to the greater tourism numbers. It's important that we get back to pre-Covid normality. We can now finally market and sell our destination without being hampered by government regulations. The news that the regulations have been scrapped is not only exciting, it is also

hugely rewarding for tourism to our destination."

Guy Stehlik, CEO BON Hotels

"At Bon Hotels we are to an extent grateful that sanity has eventually prevailed when it comes to the absolute ludicrous rules that have hit our industry, the hospitality industry, the hardest out of every industry in this country. I don't think there's any other industry that has been hit harder than us. So many of the rules have been absolutely nonsensical and have cost thousands upon thousands of jobs.

"We'd like to call upon government to stop creating own goals for the people of this country who are trying to earn an honest living. We'd like to urge government to consult with industry stakeholders more widely so that we can offer our perspectives into major decisions that are affecting everyone in our industry and in the country."

Robert More, CEO of More Family Collection

"With unemployment sitting above 30% and the hospitality being a key player in reducing this, we are delighted with the lifting of all regulations and we can now get back our lives and more importantly our livelihoods."

For more, visit: <https://www.bizcommunity.com>