

## **Shoprite Group makes urgent plea to vaccinate its frontline workers as third wave hits**

The Shoprite Group is urgently calling on Government to allow its more than 140 000 employees, who serve over 25 million people a month, to receive vaccinations as the third wave of Covid-19 increases in severity.

The supermarket group is South Africa's largest private sector employer, and believes it is critical that Government prioritises the allocation of vaccines to its frontline workers, which it will source and administer at its own cost and through its own logistics and pharmaceutical infrastructure.

Announcing new Level 4 restrictions due to the third wave on 27 June, President Cyril Ramaphosa focused on "mining, manufacturing and the taxi industry" for the fourth stream of vaccination programmes.

"Our frontline workers, including cashiers, merchandisers and line management retail workers, have been at work every day since the onset of the pandemic, working tirelessly to ensure we provide food, essential groceries and medicine to the nation", says CEO Pieter Engelbrecht.

"Our people interact with 25 million customers coming into our stores every month, and it is critical that they be vaccinated," he says. "We strongly believe that they should be prioritised and we are ready to roll out vaccinations on behalf of government to our employees who continue to go the extra mile in challenging conditions to keep serving customers."

The Group has a significant logistical and pharmaceutical distribution network to roll out vaccines to employees through [Transpharm Pharmaceutical Distributors](#) and pharmacy chain [MediRite](#).

"As the last few weeks have shown, South Africa will continue to be vulnerable to future waves of Covid-19 until we have vaccinated a sufficient percentage of our population," Engelbrecht says. "The Group is eager to see the vaccine roll-out programme accelerated and we can help if we can secure and administer vaccines, while absorbing all the costs ourselves."

"We are prepared to play a role and foot the bill, and we can ensure it will happen rapidly."

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