



To Members of the EFA

Circular No. 157

Mbabane, 8th January 2021

Suspension of ongoing football competitions due to the persistent situation of the COVID-19 virus (Coronavirus)

At the direction of the Government of the Kingdom of Eswatini, pursuant to the resurgence of the distress of the COVID-19 (Coronavirus) in a second wave nationally, EFA Member Associations and Leagues are hereby informed of the suspension of all football competitions matches, including friendly matches (*if applicable*) and other football business activities under the auspices of the EFA countrywide immediately, pending a review of the COVID-19 situation in Eswatini, as prescribed by the Government of the Kingdom of Eswatini.

EFA Members and Leagues will recall that on presentation of the Four-Pillar Strategy to restart football after the First Wave of the COVID-19 pandemic, at the beginning of the current 2020/2021 football season, it was articulated that the strategy also provided for contingencies to accommodate any intermittent interruptions as the season progressed. The currently pronounced partial lockdown, was one of such interruptions anticipated by the contingency planning. In this regard, there will therefore be no need to develop a new football competitions resumption strategy, save for the reinforcement of the contingency planning of the strategy, in order to ensure the successful implementation of football business for the remaining period of the 2020/2021 football season.

Guideline on the implementation of football business during this suspension period pending the review by the Government of the Kingdom of Eswatini

The following direction is advanced to EFA Members, affected leagues and stakeholders, in an effort to provide some statutory guidance on the implementation of football business during this state-declared partial lockdown period:

- Further to the already suspended football competitions at the Premier League and National First Division League, a suspension on all courses, workshops and judicial cases hearings is effected. The relevant EFA departments will develop new schedules of activities which will be communicated to all affected stakeholders. The postponement of some scheduled activities for the period does not absolve affected participants and stakeholders to ensure conformity with all respective statutory requirements and protocols of participation in the activities and programmes;
- All member associations' and leagues' offices are expected to close business during this period, with only critical essential business occurring, particularly being business that touches on the sustenance of the critical livelihood of the member association or league;

- There will be a partial closure of the national offices at Sigwaca House in Mbabane and the National Technical Centre in Lobamba, where most of the departments for which activities have been suspended, will work from home, with only a few remaining, particularly dealing with ongoing international business and the sustenance of the statutory operations of the organization;
- Football clubs of the Premier and National First Division Leagues, in an effort to mitigate the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic and to assure compliance with the directive of the Government of the Kingdom of Eswatini, are expected to revert back to individual training of players, however, during this period and in order to ensure the maintenance of the physical condition, such training has to be monitored by the relevant technical officials. In this respect coaches are expected to develop the necessary training programmes and regimes to be adhered to by players during this period.

Retesting of football players after the current interruption

Kindly note that in continuance with the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic and to uphold and ensure that the football competitions environment is safe, EFA is planning a compulsory COVID-19 Test of all the players and officials of the Premier League and the National First Division League, including referees and associated officials ahead of the resumption of matches after this partial lockdown period. As was the case in the original testing at the beginning of the 2020/2021 season, each club will be accorded COVID-19 Tests for a maximum of 30 people, inclusive of both players and officials.

Detailed information on the scheduling of the COVID-19 Tests and format will be communicated in due course by the relevant authorities and officers.

Registration of players

As a reminder, the first window registration period closes on 15th January 2021 and as such all football clubs are expected to have registered their clubs and players by close of business of the 15th January 2021. Registration for players and football clubs of the Premier League, National First Division League and the Regional Super Leagues is done electronically, as such does not require any physical visitation to the registration offices. Arrangements have been done by EFA where registration officers will continue to administer the registration remotely from home (*i.e. electronically online*).

In view of this remote arrangement, the printing and collection of playing licenses or cards and other applicable licenses will be done on the first day of the resumption of offices after this period of suspension.

Other leagues are to execute their registrations as directed by their respective regional football associations, in line with the regulations, decisions and directives of EFA on the subject.

Eswatini Football Association

Plot 582, Sigwaca House, Tsekwane Road, Mbabane Industrial Sites. P. O. Box 641, Mbabane, H100. Tel: +268 - 2404 6852/62. Fax: +268 - 2404 6206
EMAIL: info@nfas.org.sz Website: www.nfas.org.sz

Utilization of virtual platforms to discharge business

EFA will continue to discharge her operations virtually or remotely from home. EFA Members and stakeholders in this regard can advance their communication through the organization email address: info@nfas.org.sz to have all their requests and matters requiring statutory or urgent attention during this period addressed.

EFA hereby at this instance also encourages her member associations, leagues and clubs to engage in virtual platforms to discharge some of their critical businesses too.

Conclusion

The EFA would like to lament the unfortunate distress within which football and its entire stakeholders divide find themselves as a result of the COVID-19 virus. The EFA has to cooperate to stage safe events or take other required actions that protect the health of the players, fans, officials and the broader football and sporting communities.

Yours in Football,

Eswatini Football Association,


Frederick Mngomezulu
Chief Executive Officer



Copy to:

- EFA Executive Committee