
WESTERN CAPE



Press Statement

For immediate release

06 May 2020

Retail Sector detrimental to fight against COVID19

The South African Youth Council in the Western Cape, a voluntary, autonomous, non-partisan, and representative body of youth in civil society, is concerned about the counterproductive contribution of the retail sector in the fight against COVID-19.

The sector, which has been operating even in the lockdown, has been infamous for cluster transmissions specifically amongst employees. As of May 1, the Western Cape Department of Health confirmed that more than 200 supermarket employees had tested positive for COVID-19, and Shoprite Group alone confirmed that 17 stores across the province had suspended operations due to COVID-19.

On Monday, the South African Youth Council in the Western wrote to the Premier and all leaders of political parties represented in the Western Cape Provincial Parliament calling for a protracted strategy specific to the sector. In the letter, we brought to the attention of the leadership of the provincial parliament, the Checkers Rylands Village Store that continued operating despite 7 employees testing positive for COVID19. The leadership of the provincial parliament had committed to ensuring businesses complied with the regulations and created safer workplaces.

We have also written to the Checkers Head Office demanding a suspension of operation and deep cleaning of the store.

As the South African Youth Council in the Western Cape, we reiterate our call for the inclusion of Business, Labour, and Civil Society sectors in a rapid response strategy to COVID-19. The impact of cluster transmissions to the growing number of infections in the province cannot be overemphasized. As the province grapples with high infections, the contribution of retail stores requires urgent and dedicated attention from government, business, labour, and civil society.

Issued by South African Youth Council Western Cape

For inquiries

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