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Department:
Justice and Constitutional Development
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

MASTER OF THE HIGH COURT FREE STATE DIVISION, BLOEMFONTEIN

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24 November 2020

MASTER'S OFFICE BLOEMFONTEIN:

NOTICE 7 OF 2020

TURN AROUND TIMES FOR MASTER'S SERVICES / MASTERS WEB PORTAL

I need to issue this notice as the staff in my office are put under tremendous pressure from practitioners to process their applications, especially with the registration of new trusts as well as the issuing of appointments in deceased estates, without appreciating the fact that Master's officials have a set number of days in which to process an application in terms of the Annual Performance Plan of the Department. There are various internal processes which need to be complied with before an appointment can be issued, a payment can be made, etc. hence the number of days allowed in the Annual Performance Plan.

The day on which we receive the application with all required supporting documents (we will date stamp it) is regarded as day number one. Practitioners are urged not to enquire from the Master's Office on the progress of a specific matter before the expiry of the number of working days as indicated below. The reason for this is that the officials are

already working under tremendous pressure due to absenteeism as a result of the Covid pandemic as well as vacancies that can't be filled at this stage. Enquiries made before the expiry of the number of days indicated in the Annual Performance Plan are counterproductive and an unnecessary time consuming exercise. The officials at the Master's Office try their level best to issue the appointment, make the payment, etc. within the set period, and we do so in most instances.

The following are included in our Annual Performance Plan, namely:

- Examination of liquidation and distribution accounts in deceased estates as well as Insolvencies – **15 working days**
- Examination of liquidation and distribution accounts in Curatorship matters – **30 working days**
- Letters of appointment (Letters of Executorship/Letters of Authority) issued in deceased estates – **15 working days**
- Certificates of appointment issued in Insolvency matters – **10 working days**
- Certificates of appointment issued in Curatorship matters – **15 working days**
- Certificates of appointment issued in Trust matters – **14 working days**
- Payments from the Guardian's Fund – **40 working days**

The following are not included in our Annual Performance Plan but the office have the following set turnaround time for these, namely:

- Making of copies – **10 working days**
- Confirmation of accounts in Insolvency matters – **10 working days**
- Consideration of section 42(2) applications – **10 working days**
- Replying to normal correspondence (including e-mails) – **14 working days**

- Replying to correspondence (complex matters) – **21 working days**

Practitioners should also take note of the information available on the Master's website and more particularly the ICMS Web Portal where you can do searches to check if a deceased estate is reported, a trust is registered, a company or close corporation is liquidated, a person placed under curatorship and an insolvent sequestrated. This information is available for all the offices of the Master. (Please note that the electronic information is only available as from 2008). For matters prior to 2008 practitioners still need to contact the Master's Office. By visiting the Web Portal practitioners will reduce the number of calls and letters/e-mail to the Master's Office. In order to access the Web Portal please make use of the following link: icms.justice.gov.za

Yours faithfully



**J A DU PLESSIS
MASTER OF THE HIGH COURT
FREE STATE DIVISION
BLOEMFONTEIN**