

DEPARTMENT OF EMPLOYMENT AND LABOUR

NO. R. 7249

20 March 2026

LABOUR RELATIONS ACT, 1995

**NATIONAL BARGAINING COUNCIL FOR THE CHEMICAL INDUSTRY:
EXTENSION TO NON-PARTIES OF THE FAST-MOVING CONSUMER GOODS SECTOR
(FMCG) COLLECTIVE AGREEMENT**

I, **NOMAKHOSAZANA METH**, Minister of Employment and Labour, hereby in terms of section 32(2) read with section 32(5) of the Labour Relations Act, 1995, declare that the Collective Agreement which appears in the Schedule hereto, which was concluded in the **National Bargaining Council for the Chemical Industry**, and is binding in terms of section 31 of the Labour Relations Act, 1995, on the parties which concluded the Agreement, shall be binding on the other employers and employees in that Industry with effect from the second Monday after the date of publication of this notice and for a period ending 30 June 2027.



MS N METH, MP

MINISTER OF EMPLOYMENT AND LABOUR

DATE: 12 March 2026

UMNYANGO WEZEMISEBENZI NEZABASEBENZI

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USUKU:

UMTHETHO WOBUDLELWANO KWEZABASEBENZI KA-1995**UMKHANDLU WOKUXOXISANA PHAKATHI KWABAQASHI NABASEBENZI BE NATIONAL
BARGAINING COUNCIL FOR THE CHEMICAL INDUSTRY****UKWELULWA KWESIVUMELWANO SABAQASHI NABASEBENZI BEZOMKHAKHA WE
FAST-MOVING CONSUMER GOODS SECTOR (FMCG) SELULELWA KULABO ABANGEYONA
INGXENYE YASO**

Mina, **NOMAKHOSAZANA METH**, uNgqongqoshe Wezemisebenzi NezabaSebenzi, ngokwesigaba-32(2) sifundwa Kanye nesigaba 32(5) soMthetho Wobudlelwano KwezabaSebenzi ka-1995, ngazisa ukuthi isiVumelwano sabaqashi nabasebenzi esitholakala kwiSheduli yesiNgisi exhunywe lapha, esenziwa kwi **National Bargaining Council for the Chemical Industry**, futhi ngokwesigaba 31 soMthetho Wobudlelwano kwezabaSebenzi, ka 1995 esibopha labo abasenzayo, sizobopha bonke abanye abaqashi nabasebenzi kuleyomboni kusukela ngoMsombuluko wesibili emva kokushicilelwa kwalesiSaziso futhi kuze kube isikhathi esiphela mhlaka 30 kuNhlanguvana 2027.

**NKOSIKAZI N METH, MP****UNGQONGQOSHE WEZEMISEBENZI NEZABASEBENZI****USUKU:** 12 March 2026

FAST-MOVING CONSUMER GOODS SECTOR

COLLECTIVE AGREEMENT

Between

**CHEMICAL, ENERGY, PAPER, PRINTING, WOOD AND ALLIED WORKERS UNION
(CEPPWAWU)**

**GENERAL INDUSTRIES WORKERS UNION OF SOUTH AFRICA
(GIWUSA)**

SOLIDARITY

(hereinafter referred to as "Unions")

and

**NATIONAL FAST MOVING CONSUMER GOODS EMPLOYERS ASSOCIATION
(FMCG)**

(hereinafter referred to as "employers")

FOR THE PERIOD 1 JULY TO 30 JUNE 2027

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CHAPTER 1

1. SCOPE OF AGREEMENT

The manufacturer of all Fast- Moving Consumer Goods based on general household and personal care products, including soap in any form; synthetic detergents, shampoos, and shaving products; cleansers; washing and scouring powders and similar cleaning preparations; air fresheners; and insecticides for domestic use; household pesticides and disinfectants; cosmetics; fragrances; deodorants; lotions; hairdressing; toothpaste and other toilet preparations, and all operations incidental to these activities.

2. EFFECTIVE DATE(S) AND DURATION

Substantive terms and conditions envisaged in this two-year Agreement shall be effective from 1 July 2025 and remain in force until 30 of June 2027 for the parties to the Collective Agreement and on the date as determined by the Minister of Employment and Labour for the non-parties to the Collective agreement and shall remain in force until 30 June 2027.

3. TERMS

3.1 This Agreement will be applicable to all employees in the Bargaining Unit as defined in existing Agreements between employers and the unions at company level.

3.2 Existing employment terms and conditions not referred to in this agreement will remain status quo. Any existing condition, which is more favourable than the conditions contained within this agreement, will remain in force at company level.

3.3 The terms of this agreement are full and final settlement of substantive wages and conditions of employment as tabled and negotiated for the period 2025/2027 between the unions and participating employers, and on the date as determined by the Minister of Employment and Labour for the non-parties to the Collective Agreement and shall remain in force until 30 June 2027.

4. DEFINITIONS

Any reference in this Agreement to the Republic of South Africa shall be deemed to be those areas and/or Provinces as they existed immediately after the coming into operation of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1993 (Act No. 200 of 1993). Any expression used in this Agreement that is defined in the Labour Relations Act, as amended, shall have the same meaning in that Act, and any reference to an Act shall include any amendments to such Act; further unless inconsistent with the context – 'Act' means the Labour Relations Act (as Amended). The definitions as listed in Section 213 of the Act must read as incorporated herein.

'Council' means the National Bargaining Council for the Chemical Industry;

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'employee' means an employee whose minimum wage of pay or activity is scheduled in this Agreement or an employee under exemption from this Agreement or under conditions determined by the Council;

'employer' means any person who employs or provides work for any person and remunerates or expressly or tacitly undertakes to remunerate him or who permits any person in any manner to assist him in the carrying on or conducting of his business;

'law' includes Common law;

'Fast Moving Consumer Goods Sector' as defined in the certificate of registration of the NBCCI
'Substantive agreement' means this agreement

'Basic Conditions of Employment Act' means the Basic Conditions of Employment Act 75 of 1997

'Labour Relations Act' means the Labour Relations Act 66 of 1995;

'Minister' means the Minister of Employment and Labour

5. PEACE OBLIGATION

Neither party to this Agreement shall engage in any form of Industrial action against the other party regarding any disagreement on wages and other substantive conditions of employment which are covered by the current Substantive Agreement for the period between 1 July 2025 and 30 June 2027 for parties to the Collective Agreement and on the date as determined by the Minister of Employment and Labour for the non-parties to the Collective agreement and shall remain in force until 30 June 2027.

CHAPTER 2

6. WAGES

6.1 GENERAL INCREASE IN BASIC WAGES

The parties agree to an across-the-board increase of 5.50% on current basic wages with effect from 1 July 2025 to 30 June 2026 (one year) for the parties to the Collective Agreement and on the date as determined by the Minister of Employment and Labour for the non-parties to the Collective agreement and shall remain in force until 30 June 2026.

For (year two) 1 July 2026 to 30 June 2027 for parties to the Collective Agreement and on the date as determined by the Minister of Employment and Labour for the non-parties to the

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Collective Agreement and shall remain in force until 30 June 2027, the increase will be 6.00% across the board.

6.2 MINIMUM MONTHLY BASIC WAGE

The current minimum wage of R9 496.14 (nine thousand four hundred and ninety six rand and fourteen cents) will be increased with effect from 1 July 2025 to R10 018.43 (ten thousand and eighteen rand and forty cents) and will remain in force till 30 June 2026 for the parties to the collective agreement and on the date as determined by the Minister on Employment and Labour for the non-parties to the collective agreement and shall remain in force until 30 June 2024

For the period 1 July 2026 to 30 June 2027, the minimum wage of R10 018.43 (ten thousand and eighteen rand and forty-three cents) will be increased by 6.00% for the parties to the collective agreement and on the date as determined by the Minister on Employment and Labour for the non-parties to the collective agreement and shall remain in force until 30 June 2027

6.3 ENTRY LEVEL WAGE

The entry-level wage for new permanent employees will be at the actual company minimum applicable to the grade/category for the job.

However, this may be reduced by an agreement concluded at plant level between the employer and respective trade union(s) on condition, firstly, that the company undertakes not to resort to the use of labour brokers for those jobs and for the duration of the agreement. Secondly, the negotiated entry-level wage will not be lower than the agreed sector minimum wage.

In the event that the parties fail to reach an agreement, the status quo, i.e. that the entry-level wage will remain at the actual company minimum, will continue to apply.

7. HOURS OF WORK

The normal hours per week will be 40 hours for all employees who are employed by the employers' party and non-party to this agreement. Tea breaks are included in the 40-hour week, and lunch times are excluded from the 40-hour week.

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The Parties agree that no unilateral decision will be taken by employers in respect of averaging hours of work without negotiations with the unions. Existing shift patterns and specific working arrangements will continue to apply.

8. ANNUAL BONUS

A thirteenth cheque (4.33 times the basic weekly rate) is agreed upon. Pro-rata bonuses will be paid on termination of contracts for retrenchment, ill health, retirement, and death in service.

CHAPTER 3

9. ANNUAL LEAVE

No employee shall receive less than 15 days per annum leave. Additional leave will be granted on the following basis:

- 5-day week employee in the 6th year of service or more will receive 15 days with an extra 2 days leave.
- 6 day week employees in the 6th year of service or more will receive 18 days with an extra 2 days leave.

Where companies have service-related benefits in respect of additional leave, such will continue to apply.

10. SICK LEAVE

10.1 Sick Leave:

Sick leave will be granted as per the Basic Conditions of Employment Act, 1997 or as amended in the future.

10.2 Prolonged Sick Leave and Traditional Healers:

Employers agree in principle to consider sympathetically, payment for extended sick leave. Each application will be considered on its merits and requires a medical certificate. A shop steward should assist an employee in this regard.

11. MATERNITY LEAVE

Female employees covered by this Agreement will be entitled to 6 (six) months off work for the reasons of maternity. Maternity leave will be paid at 35% (thirty-five percent) of the basic rate of pay for the period of 4 (four) months and at 40% (forty percent) for the 5th and 6th months. However, maternity leave will not impact on the annual bonus (13th cheque). Employees will be entitled to a full bonus in the year(s) maternity leave is taken.

Should an employee suffer a miscarriage or stillborn child up to 6 weeks leave will be granted of which a maximum of one (1) month's sick leave will be paid. Such leave will not be deducted from normal sick leave benefits. A medical certificate will be required.

Female employees proceeding on maternity leave will be guaranteed the same type of job on the same terms and conditions as before the leave.

Females who are entitled to a period of maternity leave will be granted three days of special leave for antenatal check-ups before going on maternity leave.

This leave may be taken as a portion of a day and proof of the visit to the doctor or clinic must be provided.

HR will assist employees with their UIF claims from the Department of Labour.

12. CHILD CARE LEAVE

Childcare leave of 3 (three) days per annum (separate from Paternity Leave) will be granted for the illness of a child but on condition that it is not taken together with Paternity Leave. This means that if a parent takes paternity leave for the birth of his child he cannot immediately after the paternity leave take child care leave. Child care leave may however be taken at a later stage if that child, or another one, is sick and needs the care or attention of the parent (up to a maximum of three days per annum).

13. PATERNITY LEAVE

Paternity leave of 10 (ten) days per occasion will be granted of which 3 (three) days will be paid following a legitimate application from an employee in respect of the birth of a biological child. A certificate in this regard may be submitted following the application and within a reasonable period.

14. COMPASSIONATE LEAVE

Compassionate leave of 5 (five) days per occasion will apply following a legitimate application from the employee. Such leave will only be granted in the event of the death of parents, spouses, children, legally adopted children, brothers and sisters or fathers and mothers-in-law, adoptive parents and grandparents.

15. STUDY LEAVE

Study leave of 1 (one) day per subject plus 1 (one) day per examination written to a maximum of six days per annum. Prior approval of subjects/courses must be obtained from the employer.

16. SPECIAL LEAVE FOR SHOP STEWARDS

Shop stewards will be entitled to 5 (five) days of special leave per shop steward per annum. This leave is not to be pooled or accumulated.

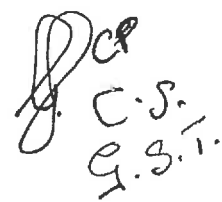
The minimum of 5 days for shop steward's leave will exclude days when a shop steward is an official of a committee of the CCMA, NBCCI, CHIETA, and the provident fund. The relevant union official should formally inform the company of the request to attend to committee duties and time-off should be approved by the company.

17. DISASTER LEAVE

A disaster is defined as a sudden, abrupt or unpredictable circumstance which causes human, material, economic or environmental losses, exceeding the ability of the affected employees to cope with them i.e. floods, storms, lightening and fire.

Employees affected within the agreed definition shall inform their employers of their predicament and request time off. Such request for the time off shall not be unreasonably withheld by the

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employer. Employees dissatisfied in this regard shall be dealt with in terms of the grievance procedure.

18. PUBLIC HOLIDAYS

Employees will be entitled to those public holidays covered by the Public Holidays Act, and payment for work on those days will be as per the Basic Conditions of Employment Act, 1997.

CHAPTER 4

19. PATH TO ZERO HARM

Parties agree to refer this item to a task team with clear terms of reference and specific timelines.

20. JUST TRANSITION

Parties agree to refer this item to a task team with clear terms of reference and specific timelines.

CHAPTER 5

21. SECTOR JOB GRADING

The issue to be referred to the Bargaining Council

CHAPTER 6

22. JOB SECURITY/LABOUR BROKERS

Parties and non-parties to comply fully with Section 198 of the LRA

23. THE SETTING OF AN UNEMPLOYMENT FUND

Referred to the National Negotiating Committee of the NBCCI

CHAPTER 7

24. SHIFT ALLOWANCE

Employees shall be paid a non-pensionable shift allowance equivalent to 11% of the employee's basic salary. Shift allowance calculations will be based on the basic rate of pay applicable to the employee concerned, will be non-pensionable and will be effective from 1 July 2025 for parties to the agreement and on the date determined by the Minister of Employment and Labour for non-parties.

CHAPTER 8**25. PLEDGE TOWARDS EXTENDING AGREEMENT TO NON-PARTIES**

The parties commit to support the extension of substantive agreements to non-parties

CHAPTER 9**26. AGENTS**

26.1 The Council shall appoint one or more specified persons as Agents to assist in giving effect to the terms of this Agreement. For the purpose of enforcing or monitoring compliance with this agreement, as the case may be, an Agent of the Council shall have the right to enter and inspect the premises, examine records, and question the employer and/or his employees in any manner that he deems appropriate: Provided that such rights be exercised only as is reasonably required for the purpose of enforcement of, or monitoring compliance with the Agreement.

26.2 After each inspection of an employer's records and operations the agent shall prepare a report for the attention of the employer, worker representatives, and, in the case of an individual complainant, the complainant concerned, confirming the date and time of the inspection and, if any contraventions of the Agreement were identified, a summary of the contraventions and the action that management is required to take to rectify the contraventions. Any disclosure of information shall comply with the provisions of the Act.

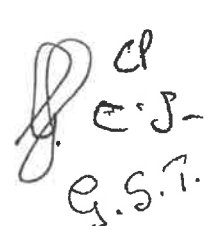
CHAPTER 10**27. INCOME AND EXPENSES OF THE COUNCIL**

27.1 For the purposes of meeting the expenses of the Council, every employer shall deduct from the wages of each employee.

27.2 Employees who fall within the Bargaining unit shall contribute an amount prescribed by the Council and the employees falling outside the Bargaining unit shall contribute an amount prescribed by the Council, respectively.

27.3 Such levies shall be increased, subject to the approval of the Council's Annual General Meeting.

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Every employer shall contribute the funds of the Council-

An amount prescribed by the Council for each employee who falls within the Bargaining unit, and an amount prescribed by the Council for employees who fall outside the Bargaining unit.

The total amount deducted in terms of subclauses above from the wages of employees together with the amounts to be contributed by the employer in terms of subclause above shall be payable monthly by the employer to the Council's Finance Department at no later than the 7th day of the month succeeding the month during which the deductions and contributions were made or were required to be made, together with the proof of payment and schedules incorporating the total number of employees and total levies remitted.

28. DEFAULT PAYMENTS

26.1 In an event that an employer pays levies that are due to the Council in terms of this Substantive Agreement, in any manner other than cash, and such levy contributions are dishonoured for any reason whatsoever, then in such an event, a penalty fee shall be imposed on the employer, the penalty fee shall be equal to 3.5%.

Any penalty fee plus the full amount originally due, shall be payable to the Council.

26.2 If it becomes necessary for the Council to institute legal action in a court of law for the recovery of any levies due but not paid after having been requested in any way whatsoever, then the debtor shall be liable for all legal expenses incurred by the Council in the means of recovering the levies due.

This includes attorney fees, an arbitrator, or a collections agency having been instructed by the Council to collect the levies.

Headings in the Agreement are for the convenience of the parties and are not to be considered in interpreting the document.

Signed at Johannesburg this _____ day of _____ 2025



For CEPPWAWU

Witness



For GIWUSA

Witness



For SOLIDARITY

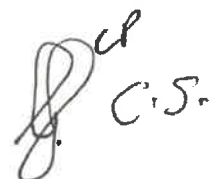
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Riyad Mohamed
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For FMCG Employers

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NBCCI'S EXEMPTION POLICY AND PROCEDURE

EXEMPTIONS POLICY AND PROCEDURE

INTRODUCTION:

1. The issue of exemptions is dealt with in Clause 16 of the Council's Constitution. It requires the establishment of a National Exemptions Committee and an Independent Appeals Committee.

The Constitution requires that the National Exemptions Committee and Independent Appeals Committee must determine its composition and powers and establish its own procedures and criteria to be considered in dealing with applications for exemption and for conducting its business.

Applications for exemption by both parties and non-parties must be made to the Council. Employers seeking exemption from the conditions of any collective agreement and/or any conditions agreed to previously through centralised bargaining between the parties should do so according to this procedure.

2. The procedures and criteria set out hereinafter shall apply to any party to a collective agreement as well as non-parties to whom any collective agreement concluded in the Council has been extended in terms of Section 32 of the LRA.

It is the stated view of the Council that all applications for exemption must be completed within 30 days from the date of the application for exemption and all appeals to the Independent Appeals Committee within 30 days from the date of the appeal.

The Exemptions Committee or the Independent Appeals Committee may, in its sole discretion, extend the completion date of an application for an exemption or an appeal for an additional 30 days where circumstances require such extension.

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PRE & POST COUNCIL PROCEDURE

CONSULTATION

- 1 Any application for exemption from any provision/s of a collective agreement concluded under the auspices of the Council must be preceded by consultations between the relevant employers and employees potentially affected by the exemption at which:
 - 1.1 The merits of the application and any impact that it will have on affected employees have been discussed and considered, and
 - 1.2 There has been full disclosure to each other of all information relevant to the consideration of the exemption application.
- 2 The following provisions will apply to consultations:
 - 2.1 Each employer must hold such consultations with the trade union representative(s) of the affected employees.
 - 2.2 If an employer reasonably believes that the affected employees are not trade union members, or where the relevant trade union representatives do not avail themselves for such consultations after a reasonable number of proven and recorded attempts by the employer, the employer must consult the affected employees themselves.
 - 2.3 The affected employees, or groups of such employees, may act through a nominated representative that they have elected, amongst themselves, to represent them.

Once they have informed the employer of such a representative, the employer must, regarding such employees, consult such representative in preference to the trade union to which they belong.

- 2.4 The above consultations may be facilitated by a member of the National Exemptions Committee with the proviso that all the parties involved in the consultation process consent to such facilitation. The member of the National Exemptions Committee who conducted the facilitation may not chair or be part of any panel appointed to arbitrate an application for exemption or an appeal that follows from his/her facilitation.
- 2.5 A request for facilitation must be made in writing on the Application for Exemption Form in the relevant section provided. (See Annexure A)
- 3 The party seeking an exemption from the Council must, commencing at least immediately before the application is made to the Council, display a copy of the application in a conspicuous place in the workplace(s) where the affected employees normally report for service and ensure that it remains displayed until the exemption license has either been granted in terms of these procedures, the application has been withdrawn, or the application has been dismissed by the National Exemptions Committee.
- 4 Any application for exemption must be in writing and on the appropriate application form, which can be obtained from the Council.

TIMELINES AND CONDONATION

- 5 Any party who wishes to apply for an exemption in terms of this policy must do so within a reasonable time, not exceeding 60 days from the date that the original agreement was signed.
- 6 Where addendums to any collective agreements were signed, the application for an exemption must also be made within a reasonable time not exceeding 60 days from the date of signature of any addendum.
- 7 In the case of a non-party, the party who seeks to apply for an exemption must apply no later than 10 days from the date of the Government Gazette wherein the collective agreement was made applicable to non-parties.

10. Any party who does not comply with the above timelines must submit an application for condonation with its exemption application.

INFORMATION TO BE DISCLOSED

11. The evidence required will include:

11.1 All information as required in the attached questionnaire (Annexure A)

11.2 The relevant steps taken by the employer to comply with the agreement(s) that it now seeks to be exempted from before making a decision to apply for an exemption.

12. In considering an application for exemption, the National Exemptions Committee shall take into account all relevant factors, including those detailed herein.

13. Other criteria that the National Exemptions Committee will consider may include:

13.1 The past records (if applicable) of compliance by the applying party with the provisions of the Council's Collective Agreements and Exemptions Certificates;

13.2 Any special circumstances which might exist;

13.3 Any precedent that might be set by granting/not granting the application;

13.4 The interest of the industry as regards:

- (i) Unfair competition;
- (ii) Collective Bargaining;
- (iii) Potential labour unrest;
- (iii) Increased employment/unemployment;
- (v) Any other aspect that the National Exemptions Committee deems relevant and after having invited the parties' representations thereon.

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13.5 The interest of employees as regards;

- (i) Exploitation;
- (ii) Job Preservation;
- (iii) Conditions of employment;
- (iv) Possible financial benefits;
- (v) Health and safety;
- (vi) Infringements of basic rights;
- (vii) Any other aspect that the National Exemptions Committee deems relevant after having invited the parties' representations.

13.6 The interest of the employer as regards;

- Financial stability;
- Impact on productivity;
- Future relationship with employees' trade unions;
- Operational Requirements;
- The SMME Status will be considered in line with Annexure C
- Any other aspect that the National Exemptions Committee deems relevant after inviting the comments of all interested parties.

14. All applications considered by the National Exemptions Committee will only be based on the written submissions, accompanying supporting documents and arguments presented by the party seeking the exemption and the written submissions, supporting documents and arguments of the parties opposing the exemption application.

The application will be considered and determined in a manner that is fair and transparent. The following times will apply in respect of an application for an exemption:

- 14.1 Any party seeking to oppose the application for exemption must, within 10 days from the date of the exemption application, file their respective responses to the General Secretary of the Council;
- 14.2 The party that has applied for the exemption may reply to the opposing representations within 5 days from receipt of the opposing statements;
- 14.3 The parties may thereafter submit their written arguments to the General Secretary, who will determine a date for the arbitration.
15. Any exemption granted to a party by the National Exemptions Committee (with the exception of the application made by the Company for the SMME status) shall only be in force for a period of one year or for a shorter period as determined by the National Exemptions Committee.
- Upon the expiry of the exemption certificate, the employer must implement and uphold the collective agreement from which it received an exemption on the terms and conditions in force at the time of the expiry of the exemption certificate.
16. The National Exemptions Committee may, in its sole discretion and in exceptional circumstances, call for the hearing of oral and additional evidence where such evidence is deemed essential to assist it in determining the application.
17. The National Exemptions Committee shall submit its written findings, with brief reasons, to the General Secretary for transmission to the parties involved.
18. Once the General Secretary has received the decision of the National Exemptions Committee in terms of this procedure, s/he shall:
- 18.1 Issue an exemption certificate or vary a certificate already issued or
- 18.2 Transmit any other decision of the National Exemptions Committee to the parties to the exemptions dispute as directed by the National Exemptions Committee.

18.3 The National Exemptions Committee must make its decision within 14 days of having concluded the matter unless permission is granted by the General Secretary for a longer period. In such a case, the affected parties must be notified.

HOW TO FILE AN APPLICATION FOR EXEMPTION WITH THE COUNCIL

19. All applications must be submitted in writing to the General Secretary.
20. Any employer seeking an exemption must apply to the Council. Copies of the application must be served on all trade unions in the industry whose members may potentially be affected by the application. All applications must be signed by an authorized company representative.
21. The application must specify the provisions of the collective agreement in respect of which the exemption is sought and the reasons why it is sought. Details of the employees in respect of whom the exemption is sought, either by name or by way of a clear description of the category of employees and an introduction of how many employees fall within that category.

INDEPENDENT APPEALS COMMITTEE

22. In terms of Section 32(3)(e) of the LRA, the Council hereby establishes an independent body, to be known as the Independent Appeals Committee, to consider appeals from parties and non-parties against a decision by the National Exemptions Committee of a party's or non-party's application for exemption from the provisions of a published collective agreement.
23. The Independent Appeals Committee shall consist of such members as the Council determines, with the understanding that the Council may, at its discretion, appoint a single member to chair specific appeals. The Independent Appeals Committee may also co-opt an auditor, who shall only serve in an advisory capacity, where necessary, to assist with financial matters.
24. The following provisions shall apply to the Independent Appeals Committee:

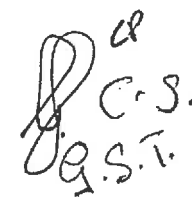
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- 24.1 Any party or non-party may lodge an appeal with the Independent Appeals Committee against the decision of the Exemptions Committee to refuse to grant an application for an exemption from the provisions of a published collective agreement in which event the following procedure shall apply:
- 24.2 An appeal shall be in writing and shall be addressed to the General Secretary of the Council for consideration by the Independent Appeals Committee. All appeals will be considered on the written application, the written submissions and arguments of those who seek the exemption as well as those who oppose it. The independent Appeals Committee may deal with an appeal in any manner that it deems prudent, provided that it acts in a manner that is fair and transparent.
- 24.3 All appeals lodged by parties or non-parties shall be considered by the Independent Appeals Committee with due regard to the Appeal criteria set out in Clause 16 of the Council's constitution as well as the factors detailed below.
- 24.4 All appeals to the Independent Committee shall be fully substantiated or motivated in writing by the applicant and shall include the following details:
- (i) The period for which the exemption is required;
 - (ii) The Agreement and clauses or sub-clauses of the Agreement from which exemption is required;
 - (iii) Proof that the exemption applied for has been discussed by the employer, his employees and their respective representatives, and the responses resulting from such consultation, either in support of or against the application, are to be included with the appeal.
25. The Independent Appeals Committee may, having regard to the individual merits of each appeal, grant or refuse the appeal if -
- 25.1 It does not undermine the Agreement;

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25.2 It is fair to the employer or his employees and other employers and employees in the Industry.

26. The Independent Appeals Committee shall deal with all appeals within 30 days of the date on which the appeal was submitted. The Independent Appeals Committee may, however, defer a decision to a following meeting if additional motivation, substantiation or information is considered necessary to make a decision on the appeal.
27. Once the Independent Appeals Committee has granted an exemption, the Council must issue a certificate and advise the applicant(s) accordingly within 14 days of the date of its decision.
28. When the Independent Appeals Committee dismisses an appeal or a part of an appeal for exemption, it shall advise the applicant(s) within 14 days of the date of such decision.

EXEMPTION CRITERIA

29. The Independent Appeals Committee must consider, apart from the factors referred to in Clause 16 of the Council's Constitution, all appeals with reference, amongst others, to the following criteria:
- 29.1 The written substantiation and motivation submitted by the applicant;
- 29.2 The extent of consultation with and the petition for or against granting the exemption as provided by employers or employees who are to be affected by the exemption if granted;
- 29.3 The scope of exemption required;
- 29.4 The infringement of basic conditions of employment rights;
- 29.5 Consider whether a competitive advantage is not created by the exemption;

- 29.6 the viewing of the exemption from any employee benefit fund or training provision in relation to the alternative compatible bona fide benefit or provision, including the cost of the employee, transferability, administration management and cost, growth and stability;
- 29.7 The extent to which the proposed exemption undermines collective bargaining and labour peace in the Industry;
- 29.8 Any existing special economic or other circumstances which warrant the granting of the exemption;
- 29.9 The recommendations contained in the Report of the Presidential Commission to Investigate Labour Market Policy;
- 29.10 Any recommendation from the Council; and
- 29.11 Any other matter that the Independent Appeals Committee deems prudent after having invited the comments of the parties involved in the dispute.

QUESTIONNAIRE: ANNEXURE A

PART 1 – COMPANY DETAILS

1. The following is required:

- (i) The name of the company applying for exemption;
- (ii) The Industry Sector;
- (iii) The address of the Company. Provide all details if more than one establishment/workplace is affected by the exemption application;
- (iv) Contact Person (Provide Contact Details);
- (v) Name of Employer Organisation (Provide Contact Details).

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PART 2 – LABOUR DETAILS

- (i) The company's total headcount;
- (ii) The total number of employees affected by the exemption application. Provide details of employment categories, union affiliation and numbers;
- (iii) Names of Trade Unions with affected employees as members. Provide contact names and contact details specifying designation, i.e. trade union official or trade union representative;
- (iv) Nominated representatives in respect of non-unionised affected employees. Provide contact names and contact details and the job categories the nominated representatives are representing.

PART 3 – EXEMPTION DETAILS

- (i) What is the exemption being applied for? Provide details of all clauses of the collective agreement in question from which exemption is sought.
- (ii) Has the Company, in the past 12 months, applied for exemption? If yes, provide details and the outcome.
- (iii) Has the Company, in the past 12 months, instituted short time, lay off and/or retrenchment? If yes, provide details, including dates and numbers of employees affected.
- (iv) What are the estimated savings to the Company if this application for exemption was granted? Quantify the savings anticipated by the Company.
- (v) What is the proposed duration of the exemption if granted? Specify whether the application is for a permanent exemption from a particular requirement of the collective agreement in question or is an application to defer implementation to a later date and, if so, specify the date.

PART 4 – FINANCIAL INFORMATION

2. A party seeking an exemption must attach the most recent audited financial statements for the financial year prior to the date of the application, together with management accounts (income statements) for at least six months immediately prior to the date of the application.

In respect of exemption applications in respect of parts of a Group where audited financial statements do not reflect the financial circumstances of the establishment/workplace in question and/or where inter-company trading takes place at a substantial level, additional relevant information should be included.

3. The Council may, at its discretion, call on the party seeking the exemption to provide such other information to the Council where the Council deems such information relevant for purposes of determining the merits of the application.

PART 5 – MOTIVATION

4. The party seeking an exemption must attach a detailed explanation of the difficulties being faced, including additional financial information where necessary to provide proof of the circumstances that motivated the exemption. Included therein must be an explanation of all alternatives the employer has pursued in making savings prior to this application and documentary evidence, where necessary, of the employer's policy in respect of dividends to shareholders and remuneration in respect of employees not subject to the collective agreement in question.

PART 6 – CONSULTATION

5. Attach documentary evidence that will prove that all interested parties have been served with a copy of the exemption application together with relevant attachments and that all interested parties have been invited to consult in accordance with the Council's Exemption Procedure.

A record of such consultation plus its outcomes must be annexed to the application for exemption and must be countersigned by the parties to the consultation for purposes of authenticity.

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The refusal of any party to a consultation to countersign such record will not render any application flowing from such consultation improper, nor will it prevent the Council's structures to determine the matter.

6. Specify whether or not the company requests the Council to appoint a Facilitator to assist the parties with the required consultative process.\

ANNEXURE B

COMPOSITION AND ACTIVITIES: NATIONAL EXEMPTIONS COMMITTEE/INDEPENDENT APPEALS COMMITTEE

PURPOSE

1. The purpose of this document is to detail the procedures governing the National Exemptions Committee/Independent Appeals Committee, as established and governed by Clause 16 of the Council's Constitution, and to ensure that they operate in an orderly and transparent manner.

COMPOSITION OF THE EXEMPTIONS COMMITTEE/APPEALS COMMITTEE

2. The Council must appoint the members of the National Exemptions Committee/Independent Appeals Committee on such terms and conditions as it deems fit. It will be within the sole discretion of the Council to appoint any number of members to chair applications for each exemption application/appeal. The appointment of a single member is sufficient to constitute a National Exemptions Committee/Independent Appeals Committee.
3. The National Exemptions Committee/Independent Appeals Committee must co-opt any suitably qualified auditor/accountant to advise it on financial matters. The person so co-opted will not have any decision-making power.
4. The National Exemptions Committee/Independent Appeal Committee members hold office until either:

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- 4.1 They resign on three months' notice to the Council, or
 - 4.2 The Council resolves to terminate their membership of the entity that they serve on.
5. Members appointed to the Exemptions Committee/Appeals Committee must:
- 5.1 Be independent, impartial and perform the functions of the office in good faith, and
 - 5.2 Recuse themselves from any matter if they have any conflict of interest in either the subject matter of the exemption application or in respect of the parties involved in the dispute.
6. Should any member of a National Exemptions Committee/Independent Appeals Committee become unable to continue with any process, for whatever reason, any proceedings held up to that stage shall be suspended until it is determined whether or not that member is able to continue with the proceedings or not. If that member is unable to continue, whatever the reason, the proceedings will be adjourned, and a new panel will be constituted. In such a case, the matter will commence afresh in front of the newly constituted panel. With the consent of the newly constituted panel, the parties may agree on how to present the evidence that was presented in the suspended proceedings.

DECISIONS OF THE EXEMPTIONS COMMITTEE/APPEALS COMMITTEE

7. A decision agreed upon and confirmed in writing by the majority of the National Exemptions Committee/Independent Appeals Committee, where applicable, is a decision of the Committee.
8. Proceedings of the meetings of the National Exemptions Committee/Independent Appeals Committee shall be recorded and, where necessary, minuted by the Council secretariat. Parties may keep their own recordings.
9. The Independent Appeals Committee shall have the powers to:

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9.1 Grant a full or partial exemption or reject an application for exemption; and

9.2 Approve interim orders in circumstances where this will not affect the final outcome.

MEETINGS OF THE NATIONAL EXEMPTIONS COMMITTEE/INDEPENDENT APPEALS COMMITTEE

10. The Independent Exemptions Committee/Independent Appeals Committee must meet when requested to do so by the Council.
11. If a meeting of the National Exemptions Committee/Independent Appeals Committee does not finalise an application for exemption or an appeal, as the case may be, the meeting may be rescheduled for continuance at a date and time to be agreed upon by the National Exemptions Committee/Independent Appeals Committee.

FINDING AND REASONS FOR DECISION

12. Within two weeks of a meeting of the National Exemptions Committee/Independent Appeals Committee where an exemption application/appeal has been considered, the National Exemptions Committee/Independent Appeals Committee must provide the Council with a written decision and brief reasons for the decision.
13. The Council must circulate the National Exemptions Committee's/Independent Appeals Committee's decision and reasons to all interested parties

CRITERIA FOR SMALL BUSINESS EXEMPTIONS POLICY

14. Exemptions in this category will be granted for a period not exceeding 3 years.

Exemptions shall be in respect of the wage increase or in respect of specified clauses of the agreement.

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15. The Council will consider applications on merit, guided by current South African legal guidelines on the definition of SMME'S and the application of these definitions amongst different sectors, taking into account one or more of the following factors:-

- 15.1 That the business is not the subsidiary of another company;
- 15.2 Its employment numbers keep it within the definition of an SMME'S, within the bargaining unit, in terms of the legal framework of the definition of an SMME'S;
- 15.3 It is able to show that such an exemption will enable it to retain existing jobs or create additional jobs in the firm. This particular factor must be covered in the motivation;
- 15.4 The financial situation of the company.

PROCEDURE TO BE FOLLOWED TO CONSIDER THE APPLICATION

16. Application for Exemptions by SMME'S will be filed by the Company within 10 days of the Company having been declared an SMME.
17. The application will be considered by the SMME Advisory Panel within 10 days from the date on which the application was filed with the Council.
18. The SMME Advisory Panel shall issue the outcome within 7 days from the date of the sitting.

FACTS TO BE CONSIDERED IN DETERMINING THE APPLICATION

19. The Company making the Application must comply with Annexure A.

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COMPOSITION OF THE EXEMPTIONS COMMITTEE FOR SMALL BUSINESS APPLICATIONS

20. Application for Exemptions by SMME shall be considered by the SMME Advisory Panel comprising an equal number of representatives (two per side) from the Employers and Trade Unions and an Accountant/External Auditor.
21. The General Secretary shall chair the Advisory Panel. In the event the chairperson is not available, then the Committee will elect someone amongst themselves to chair that specific sitting.

PHASE IN EXEMPTIONS

22. The Council shall, in recognizing the financial constraints faced by SMMEs, grant the SMME a phased-in period of up to 3 years for compliance with the minimum Bargaining Council regulations.
23. SMME'Ss shall use this time to adjust their operations and finances gradually, minimizing disruptions and mitigating financial risks.
24. Application for phase-in exemptions must be accompanied by completion of the standard application for exemption questionnaire and shall be dealt with after giving consideration to the following:-

clear evidence of financial difficulties, including

- 24.1.1 The latest Audited Financial statements and/or management accounts;
- 24.1.2 Explanation of the difficulties faced;
- 24.1.3 Company motivation, business plan and phase-in plan indicating how parity will be achieved.

25. No Company that has agreed to adopt the phase-in program on a voluntary basis may retrench any worker as a direct result of a phasing-in period of the new wage structure unless such retrenchment is on a voluntary basis or unless there are exceptional circumstances beyond the Employer's control.

AMENDMENT OF THIS POLICY

The amendment of this policy shall be made as and when the need arises, taking into consideration the developments in the law. The amendments will not be binding until such time that they are approved by the Executive Committee and ratified by the Full Council, having gone through the relevant institutional structures.

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