

South Africa

Disaster Management Act, 2002

Directions on Zero-rating of Content and Websites for Education and Health

Government Notice 651 of 2020

Legislation as at 5 June 2020

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Directions on Zero-rating of Content and Websites for Education and Health Contents

- 1. Definitions 1
- 2. Purpose 1
- 3. Zero-rating criteria for Basic Education sector 1
- 4. Zero-rating criteria for Higher Education and Training sector 2
- 5. Zero-rating criteria for Health sector 2
- 6. Further control measures for zero-rating websites 3
- 7. Commencement 3
- Annexure A 3
- Annexure B 5

South Africa

Disaster Management Act, 2002

Directions on Zero-rating of Content and Websites for Education and Health

Government Notice 651 of 2020

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Commenced on 5 June 2020

[This is the version of this document from 5 June 2020.]

I, Jackson Mthembu, Acting Minister of Communications and Digital Technologies, hereby, under regulation 4(10) of the Regulations made under section 27(2) of the Disaster Management Act, 2002 ([Act No. 57 of 2002](#)), and published in Government Notice No. R480, Government Gazette No. 43258 of 29 April 2020, issue Directions on the Zero-rating of content and websites for Education and Health, as indicated in the Schedule.

Mr Jackson Mthembu (MP)

Acting Minister of Communications and Digital Technologies

1. Definitions

In these Directions, a word or expression bears the meaning assigned to it in the Electronic Communications Act, 2005 ([Act No. 36 of 2005](#)), Electronic Communications and Transactions Act, 2002 ([Act No. 25 of 2002](#)) and the Regulations made under section 27(2) of the Disaster Management Act, 2002 ([Act No. 57 of 2002](#)) and published in Government Notice No. R480, Government Gazette No. 43258 of 29 April 2020, unless the context otherwise indicates.

2. Purpose

- 2.1 The purpose of these Directions is to provide a framework for the zero-rating of websites (sites) as contemplated in paragraphs 9.1 and 10.2 of the Electronic Communications, Postal and Broadcasting Directions published in Government Gazette No. 43164, Government Notice No. 417 of 26 March 2020, as amended by Government Notice No. 451 of 6 April 2020 and Government Notice No. 516 of 8 May 2020.
- 2.2 An application for zero-rating must be made by submitting the application form set out in Annexure A to the relevant e-mail address provided for in paragraph 3.2, 4.2 or 5.3.
- 2.3 The process flow applicable to zero-rating of websites is set out in Annexure B.

3. Zero-rating criteria for Basic Education sector

- 3.1 The following websites qualify for zero-rating subject to approval by the National Department of Basic Education (DBE):
 - 3.1.1 DBE and Provincial Education Departments' (PED) website/portals;
 - 3.1.2 Local websites offering free access to educational content resources;
 - 3.1.3 Local commercial websites that offer all learners unconditional or free access to educational content resources or offer parents or learners direct access to their respective schools' teaching and learning content resources;

- 3.1.4 Websites of educational institutions registered with the 9 PEDs; and
- 3.1.5 Websites of educational institutions accredited by Umalusi.
- 3.2 An application for the approval of zero-rating of websites for the Basic Education sector must be submitted to –
 - Basic Education websites - zerorate@dbe.gov.za.

4. Zero-rating criteria for Higher Education and Training sector

- 4.1 Websites of the following institutions and colleges qualify for zero-rating subject to approval by the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET):
 - 4.1.1 An institution established, deemed to have been established or declared as a public higher education institution in terms of the Higher Education Act, 1997 ([Act No. 101 of 1997](#)) or a public Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) institution or a Community Education and Training (CET) college referred to in the Continuing Education and Training Act, 2006 ([Act No. 16 of 2006](#));
 - 4.1.2 a public Nursing or Agricultural College;
 - 4.1.3 an institution registered as a private higher education institution in terms of the Higher Education Act, 1997 or a private college registered in terms of the Continuing Education and Training Act, 2006;
 - 4.1.4 an institution accredited with one of the Quality Councils to offer programmes/courses which must channel the request through the relevant Quality Council that will submit it on that institution's behalf;
 - 4.1.5 an institution which has a memorandum of understanding or similar contract with an existing, registered higher education institution or college which must channel the request through the institution that it is working with. The latter institution must submit the request on the former institution's behalf as critical to the former institution's teaching & learning); or
 - 4.1.6 an institution which has an ac.za or edu.za domain.
- 4.2 An application for the approval of the zero-rating of websites for the Higher Education and Training sector must be submitted to the following:
 - Public universities and ac.za websites - zerorate@tenet.ac.za
 - Public TVET and CET colleges websites - Zerorate.tvet@dhet.gov.za
 - Private HEIs websites - Zerorate.privatehei@dhet.gov.za
 - Private Colleges websites - Zerorate.privatecol@dhet.gov.za; and
 - Agricultural and Nursing Colleges websites - Zerorate.agrinurse@dhet.gov.za

5. Zero-rating criteria for Health sector

- 5.1 The following websites qualify for zero-rating subject to approval by the National Department of Health (DoH):
 - 5.1.1 All COVID-19 related websites identified by the DoH; and
 - 5.1.2 Local websites offering free access to COVID-19 health content resources.
- 5.2 Zero-rating must be provided for websites relevant to Mobile Health Applications approved by the DoH which provide information on COVID-19 or enable COVID-19 interventions.

- 5.3 An application for the approval of zero-rating of websites or applications for the Health sector must be submitted to zerorate@health.gov.za

6. Further control measures for zero-rating websites

- 6.1 Breakout from landing websites may be charged, particularly if and when the destination site is not covered within the criteria provided in this Direction.
- 6.2 Websites with missing technical information required by network operators for zero-rating, such as SNI (Server Name Identification), will not be zero-rated. The list of these websites must be submitted to the DBE, DHET or DoH for them to gather missing technical information. Progress reporting will be based on websites with all information available.
- 6.3 An electronic communications service licensee that requires login details for websites that need to be zero-rated and are using login authentication, must submit a list of the websites that will be shared with relevant departments to make the necessary follow up. The site owner or administrator must provide the network operator with default login details in order to facilitate zero-rating.
- 6.4 To enable electronic communications service licensees to efficiently manage this service, websites with dynamic IP addresses will not be zero-rated.

7. Commencement

These Directions will come into operation on the date of publication in the Government Gazette.

Annexure A

Zero-rating application form

(version 2.0, 2020-05-25)

This form serves as an application to have a website zero-rated in terms of the Electronic Communications, Postal and Broadcasting Directions issued on 26th March 2020 under Regulation 10(8) of the Regulations made under the Disaster Management Act, 2002 ([Act No. 57 of 2002](#)), as amended. These Directions state:

9.1 Electronic Communications Service Licensees must provide zero-rated access to local educational content websites.

10.2 Electronic Communications Service Licensees must zero-rate all COVID-19 websites as identified by the Department of Health [...].

Supporting Department

Please indicate to which of the following Departments this zero-rating application will be submitted:

Department of Basic Education

Department of Health

Department of Higher Education and Training

Website operator

This should be the person responsible for the operation of the website, usually the person completing this application. Please do not list contact details for the hosting provider. This must be someone who can be contacted about this website, if necessary.

Name: _____

Email: _____

Phone: _____

Confirmation of understanding of zero-rating

Zero-rating only applies to locally hosted educational websites and COVID-19 websites. Websites that are not hosted in South Africa will not be zero-rated. Services and applications that are not websites will also not be zero-rated. Embedded content from other websites will not be covered by zero-rating, only content hosted on the zero-rated server.

Please confirm all of the following:

- The website that is the subject of this application is hosted in South Africa.
- The website contains educational content or COVID-19 information.
- The applicant understands that external content is not covered by zero-rating.

Website details

Website title: _____

Examples: "South Hill School", "South Hill College learner management system".

Website address (URL): _____

Examples: "www.southhillschool.org.za", "lms.shcollege.edu.za"

Note: Please do not include directories or individual files, just the site address.

Server IPv4 address(es): _____

Examples: "111.34.23.96", "154.8.12.17"

Server IPv6 address(es): _____

Note: This is optional. Leave blank if unsure.

Server ports

Does the web server only respond on port 80 (HTTP)? Yes No

If yes, ignore the rest of this section.

Does the web server respond on port 443 (HTTPS)? Yes No

Some network operators may not be able to implement zero-rating for port 443 unless the server uses the Server Name Indication (SNI) extension to TLS. In most cases, the SNI will be the same as the URL.

Please indicate:

The SNI is the same as the URL.

The server does not support SNI.

The SNI hostname is: _____

Do any ports other than 80 or 443 need to be zero-rated? Yes No

If yes, please provide details: _____

Login credentials

If the website requires a login to access, some operators may only agree to zero-rate after they have been temporarily provided with login credentials.

Does the website require any login credentials? Yes No

Who should be contacted regarding temporary login credentials?

The website operator as listed above.

The following person:

Name: _____

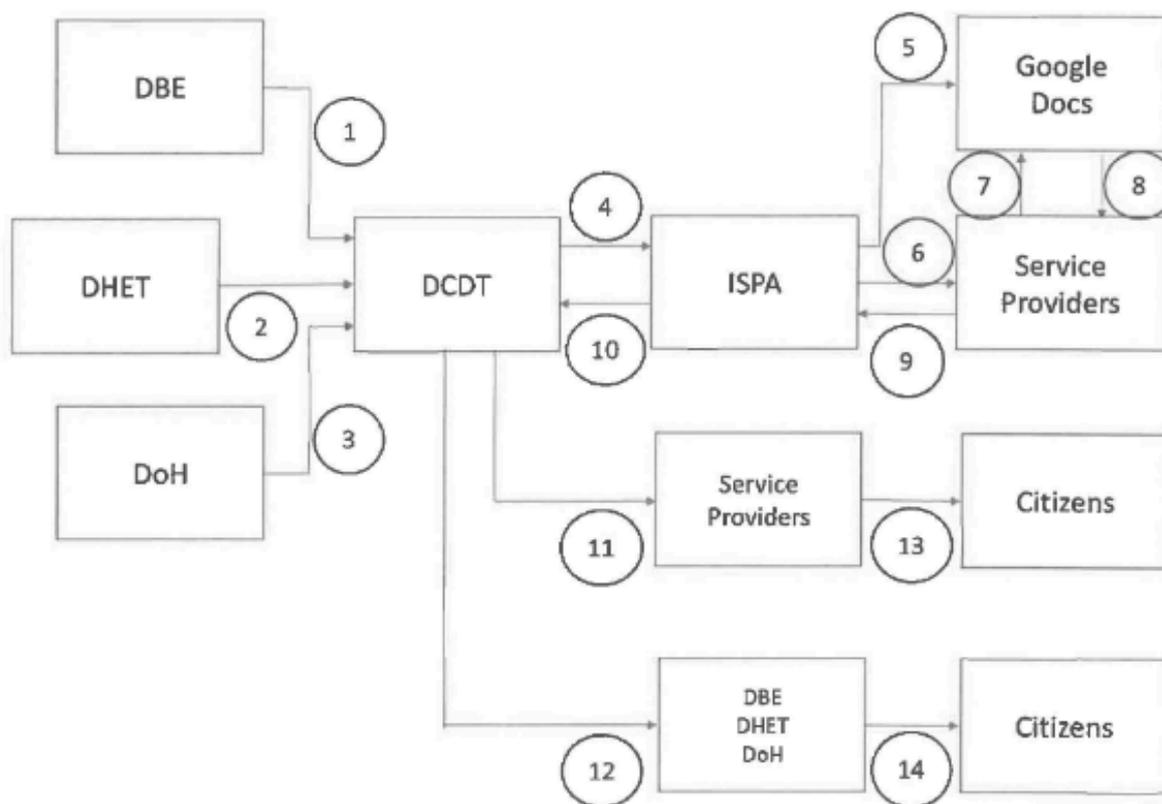
Email: _____

Phone: _____

Annexure B

Process flow for zero-rating of websites

(Educational & Health content)



1, 2, 3 - DBE, DoH & DHET Submit list of websites to DCDT

4 - DCDT submit the list to ISPA

5 - ISPA updates the Google docs file

6 - ISPA inform service providers of uploaded file

7 - Service providers access the file on Google docs

8 - Service provider implement zero rating as per the list

9 - Service providers inform ISPA about the completion of task

10 - ISPA provides feedback to DCDT

11, 12 - DCDT informs DBE, DHET, DoH, and service providers of zero-rated websites

13, 14 - DBE, DHET, DoH & service providers to inform citizens about zero rated websites through their websites.