

Pepkor steps up to support local COVID-19 measures

South African retailer Pepkor is supporting the fight against COVID-19 through a number of initiatives.

“Pepkor realises the responsibility of business to contribute to the efforts to alleviate the impact of COVID-19 on South Africa and its citizens. We are fortunate to have a wide footprint that allows us to reach our many consumers who have loyally supported our brands over many years, and are therefore able to contribute to various causes throughout the country,” says Leon Lourens, CEO of Pepkor.

The Pepkor executive and non-executive board members have agreed to take a salary sacrifice of 30% over a period of three months which together with the salary sacrifice of the Pepkor Executive Committee enables Pepkor to make a donation of R2 million to the Solidarity Fund. In addition these funds will be used to donate approximately 100 000 meals through other feeding schemes which distribute to the needy and hungry throughout South Africa. This is in line with President Ramaphosa’s call for unified action and to support the fight against the pandemic.

“The business leaders of South Africa have to step up and take the lead to help protect the needy from the devastating impact of COVID-19. So many people in South Africa are suffering now and we trust that this contribution will make a difference in the lives of those who need it most,” Lourens said.

Pepkor’s Parow-based clothing factory, Pepclo, has started manufacturing cloth face masks and surgical gowns in reaction to the significant increase in demand. The cloth masks are washable and are therefore much more economical compared to paper masks. The factory expects to make approximately 50 000 cloth masks per day and can scale this up significantly should the current demand remain. The masks meet government specifications with a back envelope in which replaceable filters can be secured.

“We will donate 50 000 masks to government and Pepkor will also manufacture and supply its own employees with masks for personal and work use. The health and safety of our manufacturing staff is a major focus during this time and strict safety and hygiene guidelines will be followed in the factory to ensure their safety,” Lourens said.

Pepclo will also start manufacturing hospital gowns, once government has confirmed fabric specifications and Pepkor has procured these materials.

Pepkor has also set up functionality across its store base for voluntary donations from customers to [“The Do More Foundation”](#), which feeds thousands of families in resource-poor communities.

“Once we fully re-open our stores, customers can donate R2 or R5 at the till points across our footprint of more than 5 000 stores. These funds will go towards feeding the many hungry children and families in our country during these desperate times,” Lourens said.

“Pepkor is committed to assisting the South African people and government in the fight against COVID-19 and will continue to provide support where we can during this critical time for our country,” Lourens said.

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