**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**QUESTION FOR WRITTEN REPLY**

**QUESTION NO.974**

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**INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER 9 – 2021**

**974. Mr A C Roos (DA) to ask the Minister of Home Affairs:**

(1) With reference to his department’s war on queues, what total numbers of the officials of his department were allocated front offices, who are not on sick leave but are off work due to restrictions related to COVID-19 as at 11 March 2021;

(2) Whether any of the specified officials will be allocated to manage queues outside of Home Affairs front offices; if not, why not; if so, what are the relevant details? NW1141E

**REPLY:**

(1) The total number of the officials of the department that were allocated to front offices, who are not on sick leave but are off work due to restrictions related to COVID-19 as at 11 March 2021 are 108.

(2) No, these officials all fall within the category of persons with one or more of the underlying commonly encountered chronic medical conditions that are not well controlled. Assigning such officials to manage queues may heighten exposure and place them at a higher risk of complications or death than other employees if infected with COVID 19, considering the environment and observation of physical distancing protocols in queues.

The Department however deploys other officials as well as Supervisors and Office Managers to assist with queue management. COVID-19 Compliance officers are appointed in writing to manage the queues as well as Immigration Officers who add to the capacity to manage the queues. Furthermore, strategies including utilisation of different channels have been developed by the Department to put measures in place to deal effectively with long queues in Home Affairs offices country wide. Officials are thereby deployed to health facilities, banks and mobile units to reduce long queues. Some offices are assisted by the municipalities with (Expanded Public Works Programme) EPWP staff to assist DHA in managing the queues.

**END**