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Minister Kubayi: COVID-19 vaccine is voluntary

Thursday, July 29, 2021



Acting Health Minister, Mmamoloko Kubayi, has reiterated that getting the COVID-19 vaccination is not mandatory in South Africa.

This stems from reports of some employers threatening to dismiss staff who choose not to receive the COVID-19 vaccine that is currently being rolled

out in the country.

“We have been very clear and the President has been very clear that we should never force people [to vaccinate]. It’s voluntary,” she said on Thursday in an interview with broadcaster, *eNCA* on the sidelines of a visit to the Gallagher Estate vaccination site.

The acting Health Minister and President Cyril Ramaphosa visited the site in Midrand to assess progress in South Africa’s vaccination programme.

“That’s why we do the work that we’re doing to make sure that there’s enough information for people to decide whether they want to vaccinate or not,” she said on Thursday.

In addition, it was government’s role to ensure there are enough vaccines available for people to choose which job they would like to take.

“That’s what we need to do because I don’t think forcing people is the route we should go.”

Meanwhile, Kubayi said she was monitoring the work being done by the South African Human Rights Commission (SAHRC).

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The SAHRC has appealed to people who have been threatened with losing their jobs or rented accommodation for refusing to have a COVID-19 vaccine to contact them.

The independent chapter nine institution said people have the right to autonomy – the right to make decisions about treatment after being given all the relevant information and that the principle of autonomy should be respected.

“Vaccines are important in curbing the pandemic, however, those that choose not to take the vaccine cannot be discriminated against,” said SAHRC’s Gauteng Head, Buang Jones.

The Minister said she has requested a team in her office reach out to the commission for them to work together.

“In the same way that people have the right, as well, we need to be able to not promote vaccine hesitancy. That’s the balance we need to keep every time.”

The Minister was also expected to visit the North West province to monitor the progress of vaccinations in the tourism and mining sectors where she is expected to receive her jab.

According to the Minister, vaccinations for the mining sector remains critical.

However, she said government would like to see all sectors being vaccinated to ensure the nation is protected. – [SAnews.gov.za](https://www.sanews.gov.za)

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