

The Importance of Following Protocols in the Winter School

By Nosipho Mdletshe

Release date: 18 July 2022

The 23rd Khanya College Winter School starts on 17 July 2022 at the House of Movements, in Johannesburg. The composition of the school this year is young post-school youth. This year the school has 70 participants from 19 organisations. The composition of the school includes Cultural Workers, Community Health Care Workers, Farm Workers, Casual Workers, Reclaimers, NGOs, Orphaned & Vulnerable Centre Coordinators, etc. While the school has a diverse audience, it is important that rules, policies and protocols are laid out and followed by everyone in the school, to ensure the smooth running of the school.

On 22 June 2022, Health Minister Joe Phahla announced that South Africans no longer needs to wear masks, or maintain social distancing etc. However, on Friday, 15 July, National Institute for Communicable Diseases reported 405 new Covid-19 cases, which essentially means, we are still at risk of getting Covid-19 and dying from Covid-19-related complications. Despite this announcement by Minister Phahla, the school and the House of Movements still has intact Covid-19 protocols, this means everyone who comes to the school needs to wear masks properly and maintain social distancing at all times. Participants will be provided with masks in their packs and sanitizers. It is important for participants to follow and respect this protocol for the safety of everyone who comes to the school. To reinforce this, Khanya has booked single rooms for participants in the hotel, participants are not allowed to visit each other in the hotel rooms.

In addition to Covid-19 protocols, the school will have house rules which are set to ensure that the school runs without interruptions and problems. The house rules will be shared with participants and as activists who are in the school to learn, it is everyone's responsibility to make sure that those rules are followed. These rules are set to protect everyone in the school. It is particularly important that we are all conscious of the space and make sure we do not behave in a way that makes other people feel uncomfortable to participate in the school.

Khanya also has a strict sexual harassment policy. This policy is there to safeguard participants, in particular, women comrades and ensure the school is a safe space for them. This policy outlines that Khanya has a zero-tolerance policy against sexual harassment and perpetrators of sexual harassment will be kicked out of the school and banned from Khanya premises and the issue will be taken up with their organisations. The fight against capitalism cannot be won when women activists can't participate in the struggle out of fear of being harassed. It is our collective responsibilities to rid our struggles of patriarchy and there is no space in the school for patriarchy, misogyny and discrimination. Everyone is in the school because of their activism, and not as flowers of the organisations. We look forward to a fruitful week.

This article was submitted as part of the Imbila Yesu publication produced daily for the duration of the Winter School in 2022 (17-22 July 2022). It appeared in Edition No. 1, released on 18 July 2022.

You may republish this article, so long as you credit the author and Karibu! Online (www.Karibu.org.za), and do not change the text. Please include a link back to the original article.