DEPARTMENT OF TRADE, INDUSTRY AND COMPETITION

NO. R. 7922 **18 September 2026**

NATIONAL CONSUMER COMMISSION
a member of the dtic group

NATIONAL CONSUMER COMMISSION

I, **Hardin Ratshisusu**, in my capacity as the Acting Commissioner of the National Consumer Commission, hereby, in terms of section 96 (b) (i) read with section 22 (3) of Consumer Protection Act No.6 of 2008, publish the draft Guidelines on Product Descriptions, Labelling, Issuance of Sales Records, and Price Disclosure Requirements for public comments. Any person who wishes to submit written input on the draft Guidelines is hereby invited to do so within 45 days of the date of publication thereof by:

a) Delivering such comments by hand at the following address:
National Consumer Commission
01 Dr Lategan Road, Block C, Groenkloof, Pretoria.

b) Mailing such comments electronically to the following email address, jointly:
J.Mbeje@thencc.org.za and N.Ngobeni@thencc.org.za

Hand delivered comments must be directed to the Divisional Head for Enforcement and Legal Services and marked attention to Mr Jabulani Mbeje.

____

Mr Hardin Ratshisusu

Acting Commissioner: National Consumer Commission

Date 17 **August 2026**

NATIONAL CONSUMER COMMISSION
a member of the dtic group

SABS Offices, 1 Dr Lategan Road, Groenkloof, Pretoria, Tel: (012) 065 1940

GUIDELINES ON PRODUCT DESCRIPTIONS, LABELLING, ISSUANCE OF SALES RECORDS, AND PRICE DISCLOSURE REQUIREMENTS: GUIDE NUMBER 001/06/2026

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 These Guidelines are published by the National Consumer Commission ("the NCC") in terms of section 96 (b) (i) read with section 22 (3) of the Consumer Protection Act, 2008 (Act No. 68 of 2008) ("the CPA").

1.2 These Guidelines are intended to provide practical guidance to suppliers, importers, manufacturers, distributors, retailers, and service providers regarding compliance with product description, labelling, sales record, and price disclosure requirements contemplated in the CPA.

1.3 These Guidelines do not constitute legal advice and are not intended to replace the provisions of the CPA, its Regulations, or any other applicable legislation.

1.4 The NCC accepts no liability for any loss suffered as a result of reliance on these Guidelines.

2. BACKGROUND

2.1 The CPA was enacted, amongst others, to: promote a fair, accessible, and sustainable marketplace for consumer products and services, establish national norms and standards relating to consumer protection, improve consumer awareness and information, protect consumers from unfair, unreasonable, or misleading trade practices; and promote responsible consumer business conduct.

2.2 The NCC conducted countrywide monitoring inspections between July 2024 and March 2026 and identified widespread non-compliance with the CPA, particularly among spaza shops and other small retail businesses.

2.3 During these inspections, suppliers were found to be in contravention of Sections 22, 23, 24, 26, and 29 of the CPA that prescribe important requirements relating to the disclosure of information to consumers, trade descriptions, product labelling, price disclosure, and marketing practices and issuing of sales records. These provisions provide as follows:

2.3.1. Section 22 (1) of the CPA provides that: *"The producer of a notice, document or visual representation that is required, in terms of this Act or any other law, to be produced, provided or displayed to a consumer must produce, provide or display that notice, document or visual representation— (b) in plain language, if no form has been prescribed for that notice, document or visual representation."*

2.3.2 Section 23 (5) of the CPA provides that: *"A price is adequately displayed to a consumer if, in relation to any particular goods, a written indication of the price, expressed in the currency of the Republic, is— (a) annexed or affixed to, written, printed, stamped or located upon, or otherwise applied to the goods or to any band, ticket, covering, label, package, reel, shelf or other thing used in connection with the goods or on which the goods are mounted for display or exposed for sale; (b) in any way represented in a manner from which it may reasonably be inferred that the price represented is a price applicable to the goods or services in question; or (c) published in relation to the goods in a catalogue, brochure, circular or similar form of publication available to that consumer, or to the public generally, if— (i) a time is specified in the catalogue, brochure, circular or similar form of publication as the time after which the goods may not be sold at that price, and that time has not yet passed; or (ii) in any other case, the catalogue, brochure, circular or similar form of publication is dated, and in the circumstances may reasonably be regarded as not out of date."*

2.3.3. Section 24 (4) of the CPA provides that: *"The Minister may prescribe— (a) categories of goods that are required to have a trade description applied to them, as contemplated in subsection (5); (b) the rules to be used in accordance with any international agreement for the purpose of determining the country of origin of any goods or components of any goods; and (c) the information that is required to be included in any trade description, from among the categories of information contemplated in the definition of "trade description" in section 1.*

2.3.4. Section 24 (5) provides that: *"The producer or importer of any goods that have been prescribed in terms of subsection (4) must apply a trade description to those goods, disclosing— (a) the country of origin of the goods; and (b) any other prescribed information."*

2.3.4. Section 26 (2) of the CPA provides that *"A supplier of goods or services must provide a written record of each transaction to the consumer to whom any goods or services are supplied.*

2.3.5. Section 26 (3) provides that: *"The record contemplated in subsection (2) must include at least the following information: (a) The supplier's full name, or registered business name, and VAT registration number, if any; (b) the address of the premises at which, or from which, the goods or services were supplied; (c) the date on which the transaction occurred; (d) a name or description of any goods or services supplied or to be supplied; (e) the unit price of any particular goods or services supplied or to be supplied; (f) the quantity of any particular goods or services supplied or to be supplied; (g) the total price of the transaction, before any applicable taxes; (h) the amount of any applicable taxes; and (i) the total price of the transaction, including any applicable taxes."*

2.3.5. Section 29 provides that: *"A producer, importer, distributor, retailer or service provider must not market any goods or services— (a) in a manner that is reasonably likely to imply a false or misleading representation concerning those goods or services, as contemplated in section 41; or (b) in a manner that is misleading, fraudulent or deceptive in any way, including in respect of— (i) the nature, properties,* *advantages or uses of the goods or services; (ii) the manner in or conditions on which those goods or services may be supplied; (iii) the price at which the goods may be supplied, or the existence of, or relationship of the price to, any previous price or competitor's price for comparable or similar goods or services; (iv) the sponsoring of any event; or (v) any other material aspect of the goods or services."*

2.4 The inspections revealed that most of the inspected suppliers failed to comply with the above provisions in that they failed to disclose prices of goods offered for sale, failed to issue sales records to consumers or issued sales records that did not contain the information prescribed by the CPA, suppliers offered goods for sale without labels and product descriptions thereby limiting consumers' ability to exercise his/her right to choose and make informed purchasing decision prior to concluding transactions.[1]

2.5 These Guidelines seek to provide clarity regarding the obligations imposed on suppliers in relation to product descriptions, labelling of goods, issuance of sales records, and disclosure of prices to consumers.

3. PURPOSE

The purpose of these Guidelines is to—

(i) promote transparent and responsible trade practices;

(ii) ensure consumers receive adequate and accurate product information;

(iii) reduce misleading or deceptive conduct in the marketplace;

(iiii) facilitate compliance with the CPA; and

(v) enhance consumer confidence in commercial transactions.

[1] The NCC issued at least 145 Compliance Notices to non-compliant supplier pursuant to the inspections conducted

4. APPLICATION

These Guidelines apply to all suppliers, manufacturers, producers, importers, distributors, retailers, wholesalers, and service providers supplying goods to consumers within the Republic of South Africa through physical retail stores, online and electronic commerce, mobile and informal trading and any other form of supply of goods or services to consumers.

5. INTERPRETATION

5.1. In these Guidelines, any word or expression to which a meaning has been assigned in the CPA bears the meaning so assigned.

5.2. For purposes of these Guidelines-

"consumer" means a person to whom goods or services are marketed or supplied in the ordinary course of business;

"label" means any tag, brand, mark, pictorial representation, or written statement attached to or accompanying goods;

"price" means the total consideration payable by a consumer for goods or services, inclusive of taxes and mandatory charges;

"sales record" means any receipt, invoice, till slip, electronic proof of purchase, or written confirmation of a transaction;

"supplier" has the meaning assigned to it in the CPA; and

"trade description" means any description, statement, indication, or representation relating to goods or services.

6. GENERAL PRODUCT DISCLOSURE REQUIREMENTS IN TERMS OF THE CPA

6.1 All information provided to consumers must be:

(i) accurate;
(ii) clear and legible;
(iii) written in plain language;
(iv) capable of being understood by an ordinary consumer; and
(v) not false, misleading, or deceptive.

6.2 Suppliers must ensure that consumers are provided with sufficient information to make informed purchasing decisions prior to concluding a transaction.

6.3 No supplier may directly or indirectly provide misleading representations concerning:

(i) the nature of goods or services;
(ii) quality or characteristics, quantity or size, composition or ingredients;
(iii) performance;
(iv) country of origin;
(v) approval or certification status; or
(vi) price.

7. LABELLING REQUIREMENTS

7.1 Goods offered for sale must contain a truthful and adequate product description.

7.2 A product description must, where applicable, include:

(i) the product name;
(ii) quantity, size, weight, or volume;
(iii) composition or material content;
(iv) country of origin; model or identification number;

(v) expiry or best-before dates;
(vi) care or storage instructions; and
(vii) any other prescribed information.

7.3 Any person who produces, supplies, imports or packages any prescribed goods must display on, or in association with the packaging of those goods, a notice in the prescribed manner and form that discloses the presence of any genetically modified ingredients or components of those goods in accordance with applicable regulations.

7.4 No supplier may -

(i) misrepresent used or refurbished goods as new;
(ii) falsely claim compliance, approval, or certification;
(iii) misrepresent material information likely to influence consumer's decision; or
(iv) use ambiguous or misleading terminology.

8. PRICE DISCLOSURE REQUIREMENTS

8.1. Suppliers must clearly display the selling price of goods or services offered to consumers.

8.2. Displayed prices must-

(i) be in South African Rand;
(ii) be clearly visible and legible;
(iii) include VAT and mandatory charges; and
(iv) correspond with the amount charged at the point of sale/ till point.

8.3. A supplier may not charge a consumer a price higher than the displayed price except where-

(i) the displayed price contains an inadvertent and obvious error; or
(ii) the price has lawfully changed before completion of the transaction.

8.4. Before payment is completed, suppliers, both online and physical, must disclose all additional charges, including -

(i) fees;
(ii) booking fees;
(iii) service charges; and
(iv) administration fees.

8.5 Hidden charges and undisclosed fees are not allowed.

9. ISSUANCE OF SALES RECORDS

9.1 A supplier must issue a sales record for every transaction concluded with a consumer.

9.2. A sales record must contain –

(i) The supplier's full name, or registered business name, and VAT registration number, if any;

(ii) the address of the premises at which, or from which, the goods or services were supplied;

(iii) the date on which the transaction occurred;

(iiii) name or description of any goods or services supplied or to be supplied;

(iiiii) the unit price of any goods or services supplied or to be supplied;

(iiiii) the quantity of any goods or services supplied or to be supplied;

(iiiii) the total price of the transaction, before any applicable taxes;

(iv) the amount of any applicable taxes; and

(v) the total price of the transaction, including any applicable taxes.

10. MONITORING AND ENFORCEMENT

10.1 The NCC may conduct inspections, investigations, and compliance monitoring activities to assess adherence to these Guidelines.

10.2 non-compliance may result in -

(i) compliance notices issued;

(ii) administrative fines in terms of Section 112 of the CPA,

(iii) product recalls;

(iv) referrals for prosecution; and/or

(v) any enforcement action permitted in law.

11. DISCRETION

The Guidelines are not binding on the NCC, the National Consumer Tribunal or the Courts but any person interpreting or applying the Act must take the guidelines into account. The above guidelines thus present the general methodology that the NCC will follow in assessing Sections 22, 23, 24, 26, and 29 of the CPA. Notwithstanding the above, this will not fetter the discretion of the NCC to consider other relevant factors on a case-by-case basis.

12. SHORT TITLE

These Guidelines shall be called *the Guidelines on Product Descriptions, Labelling, Issuance of Sales Records, and Price Disclosure Requirements, 2026.*

13 EFFECTIVE DATE AND AMENDMENTS

These Guidelines become effective from the date of publication in the *Government Gazette* and may be amended by the NCC from time to time.