

**MEDIA RELEASE**  
**14 May 2020**

**MINISTER NXESI CALLS ON EMPLOYERS OF DOMESTIC WORKERS AND  
FARM LABOURERS TO APPLY FOR UIF LOCKDOWN BENEFITS**

In its quest to ensure that no worker in need is left behind, the Department of Employment and Labour is making all efforts to reach domestic workers and farm labourers so that they can benefit from the COVID-19 relief scheme.

The scheme which is part of the basket of government-wide services to ensure that the worst effects of the coronavirus pandemic are mitigated has already dished out billions to workers who may not have a salary as a result of the lockdown.

“Society is judged by how it tries to take care of the most vulnerable in its midst. This is why as government in general and the Department of Employment and Labour in particular, are doing everything in their power to shield the most vulnerable from the worst of the pandemic.

“Since the lockdown was announced, the Department of Employment and Labour through the Unemployment Insurance Fund (UIF) has handed out almost R11-billion in benefits to workers through employers. We have appealed to employers especially those who employ domestic workers and farm labourers to apply on their behalf so that they are not left wanting.

“We sincerely hope that employers especially in these two sectors heed our call. We have also enlisted the help of a private company which is helping us trace these workers through their cell phones so that they are aware of the benefit and either get the employers to claim on their behalf or reach out to the UIF themselves,” said Minister Thulas Nxesi.

The private company, Interfile has offered to run the SMS service at no cost to UIF to these sectors. The department is currently working on the database it has to try and reach these workers.

According to our records, a total of 91 406 domestic workers are on the database but only 2 968 (3%) have their cell numbers listed and only 25 518 (28%) have emails. “We appeal to employers of domestic workers, those who may have difficulties paying them to ensure that they access these services as soon as possible. The disbursements from UIF could also act as top-up for reduced salaries and these are necessary for our mothers and sisters as they really need the break,” said Minister Nxesi.

So far, the Fund has disbursed just under R12-billion (R 11 915 612 569.90) through 167 524 employers and benefitting 2 092 774 workers. A total

of R155 481 810 has been paid to 56 641 workers through bargaining councils representing 909 employers.

The fund continues to pay ordinary benefits amounting to R1 664 959 589.24 for 184 207 recipients since March 26, 2020 broken down as follows:

- R 1 331 967 671.39 for unemployment benefits for 147 366 individuals
- R 249 743 938.38 maternity benefits for 27 631 recipients
- R 49 948 948 787.67 for 5 526 dependants
- R 33 299 191.78 for 3 684 recipients for illness and adoption

For further information, anyone can log on to our website [www.uifecc.labour.gov.za/covid19](http://www.uifecc.labour.gov.za/covid19) or reach the UIF on the toll-free number 0800 030 007.

For more information contact:  
Teboho Thejane  
Departmental Spokesperson  
082 697 0694

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