

MEDIA RELEASE

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MINISTER THULAS NXESI GUNS FOR EMPLOYERS WHO ARE NOT PASSING ON COVID RELIEF BENEFITS TO WORKERS

The Minister of Employment and Labour Thulas Nxesi has come out blazing against employers who have received Unemployment Insurance Fund (UIF) Covid-19 Temporary Employer/Employee Relief Scheme benefits from the UIF but are not passing on the money to workers.

The Minister has described this practice as callous and insensitive to the needs of workers, especially when many people are facing financial distress due to the Coronavirus pandemic lockdown.

The UIF has been inundated with calls from workers complaining that employers have not paid them their benefits despite having received funds from the UIF. “I want to categorically state that this is inhumane and employers who are withholding funds meant for workers must immediately release payments. We are in the midst of a global pandemic that has brought economies of countries to their knees. Workers are the worst affected by this inevitable eventuality. The worst thing you can do as an employer is to withhold funds meant for workers”, says Minister Nxesi.

The Minister says the UIF system has been upgraded to allow employees to check the status of claims submitted by their employers. Employees can access their employers’ records by entering their ID number. They will be able to see how much has been paid to the company and the specific amount paid to them as an employee.

“We have companies that are misrepresenting us before their workers and the public. For instance, we were accused by a company in the Eastern Cape Unibisco when their workers demanded their money that we have not paid them. Nothing could be further from the truth. Our records indicate that this company was paid a total of R539 595 on April 24 to pass on to their workers”, Minister Nxesi added. The call for companies to pass on the benefits to workers comes as the UIF has disbursed close to R11-billion (R 10 710 458 278.00) in relief benefits. This amount is for the benefit of 1 924 060 employees through 156 831 employers. Other payments have been effected through the bargaining councils for 56 641 employees represented by 909 employers. They have been paid a total of R155 481 810.86

The full list of all companies paid by the UIF is also available. Anyone can log on to our website www.uifecc.labour.gov.za/covid19 or reach the UIF on the toll-free number 0800 030 007.

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