

**Ministry**

**Employment & Labour**

**Republic of South Africa**

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**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**WRITTEN REPLY**

**QUESTION NUMBER: 1496 [NW1708E]**

**1496. Ms B Mathulelwa (EFF) to ask the Minister of Employment and Labour:**

Which methods of intervention has his department implemented to assist farm workers in Ward 1 in the Umzwabantu Local Municipality, who were retrenched without any documentation, thus rendering them unable to claim their Unemployment Insurance Fund and/or Relief of Social Distress Grant? NW1708E

**REPLY:**

Late in 2020 or early 2021, the Manager for Kokstad Labour Centre received a call from former speaker of Umuziwabantu Local Municipality, Cllr Mzwandile Nyathi requesting the intervention of the Labour Centre) on a complaint of workers who were retrenched by their employer, Dropper Pride without proper adherence to UIF prerequisites.

The Dropper Pride’s owner’s name was Calum and the company was specialising on a forestry sector. He indicated that he had decided to close the company due to financial difficulties and ultimately retrenched the workers.

Guidance was given to him regarding the required documentation to enable his workers to apply for UIF. Consequently, Honourable speaker, Cllr Nyati e-mailed the UI-19 forms with relevant supporting documents of the retrenched workers. Further arrangements were made for workers to deposit their UIF applications in the box next to entrance door of the office as the satellite office within the premises of Department of Home Affairs, in ward 1 of Umuziwabantu Local Municipality was closed due to Covid-19 regulations.

Another alternative given was the official fetching the forms from the clients in the premises of the satellite office

All these options enabled the clients to submit their UIF applications and eventually the clients were helped and received their UIF monies.

The intervention of Kokstad Labour Centre was after the retrenchment has already completed by the Dropper Pride.

Secondly, the Social Distress Grant is a form of relief scheme that administered entirely by South African Social Security Agency (SASSA), in which each beneficiary receives R350.00 if his / her application is successful.

The Department has an MoU with SASSA in which the clients’ database of DEL is shared with SASSA for enabling the effective operations for the grant. The database enables SASSA to see the status of a client in relation to employment / unemployment.

If SASSA system says the client still has UIF money in DEL, the client after he / she has verified with DEL can write a letter or affidavit that disputes that to SASSA in which the latter will process the client’s application for a grant.

In essence, the Social Distress Grant complaints and queries are not supposed to be taken to DEL but to SASSA with appeals if need be.