

TERS APPLICATIONS OFFICIALLY REOPEN

Applications for the Temporary Employer/Employee Relief Scheme (TERS) have reopened for workers recently affected by the lockdown restrictions.

The Minister of Employment and Labour, Thulas Nxesi signed a new direction on Friday, 16 July 2021. This direction allowed for the Unemployment Insurance Fund (UIF) to extend and reopen its applications for TERS.

Applications for this cycle will cover the period of 16 March 2021 and 25 July 2021.

This means that the UIF will open the system for applications from 19 July 2021 and commence payments from 26 July 2021.

Workers who can apply includes:

- Those who have not been able to work from 16 March 2021, due to level 1, 2 and 3 restrictions preventing gatherings of a certain number of people – such as in the entertainment industry. (Sectors specified in Annexure A)
- Those who were or are still impacted upon by the level 4 restrictions which started on 28 June 2021. (Sectors specified in Annexure A)
- Those who have not been able to work because they are over 60 or have co-morbidities and have not been able to work in the period as well as those who have had to isolate or go into quarantine. (Annexure A or Annexure B Sectors)

Qualifying sectors for Phase 3 of the COVID TERS are identified in Annexure A of the direction which includes venues hosting auctions, professional sports, where social events are held and venues hosting concerts and live performance.

Annexure B contains all sectors affected by Level 4 lockdown restrictions including restaurants, the liquor industry, hospitality and tourism as well as any industries and business establishments that form part of these value chains.

There is one major condition that payments will in the main be made directly to the bank accounts of workers and not, as has happened before, through their employers but employers would still be expected to claim on their behalf," the Employment and Labour Ministry said in a statement.

The COVID-19 benefits were previously paid into the employer's bank accounts.

The application process and the information or documents required to claim for the COVID TERS still remains the same, the department said.

Acting UIF Commissioner Mzie Yawa said it was, therefore, crucial for employers to provide valid and accurate details of their employees – including identity document numbers and valid bank accounts.

“We have learnt the lesson from the previous phases that some unscrupulous employers did not advance the funds to their employees, and it is for that reason that we have opted for this mode of payment.

“As a result of the non-payment of workers, the UIF and the entire department were inundated with a lot of complaints as workers could see in the system that funds had been released but had not been paid by their employers who kept the COVID TERS funds for themselves,” Yawa said.

The list of sectors expected to receive relief includes hospitality, liquor, restaurants, tourism, and venues hosting various activities such as concerts, social events and professional sports.

For any queries, please contact us at techadmin@saipa.co.za

Kind regards,

The South African Institute of Professional Accountants (SAIPA)

