

**30 APRIL 2020**

**TO ALL EMPLOYERS AND EMPLOYEES IN THE ELECTRICAL CONTRACTING INDUSTRY**  
**RE: UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE FUND (UIF) CLAIMS DURING COVID 19 LOCKDOWN**

Council is aware and concerned that there has been confusion and in certain instances even dissatisfaction about the perceived lack of progress by Council in processing, and firms not receiving payment for UIF claims submitted through the Council.

There are some firms who have confirmed receiving payments from UIF and Council is aware that there is still a large number of firms who have still not received any payments to date. This is concerning to the Council and unfortunately seems to be the trend in many sectors of the economy.

Council understands the gravity of the situation facing employees and firms over this period. That is why Council undertook to assist firms in claiming UIF COVID 19 benefits for on behalf of firms and their employees. While the vast majority of Bargaining Councils declined to assist their industry in this process our Council saw this as an opportunity to provide assistance in good faith at a time that was arguably most needed.

It is important for Council to explain to industry some of the many challenges it has experienced and continues to experience in respect to the process, the UIF system challenges and also challenges experienced in respect of incomplete information submitted by a number of firms.

From the outset of lockdown Council embarked on obtaining mandates to enter into a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with the UIF and also compiled and submitted a COVID 19 collective agreement for the Minister of Labour to publish. In the meantime Council accepted claims on behalf of the industry and submitted to the UIF email address it was required to submit through, and in the format that was required from UIF at the time. Numerous information was required to be submitted in this regard.

Completed claims that could be submitted to the UIF via this email address were registered. Council then identified that there was very limited and poor feedback from the UIF when a claim was submitted via the required email address. After a week or so the UIF changed the format of their template and added additional columns to it without prior warning. Many firms were contacted and these templates had to be recreated and resubmitted. Soon thereafter the email address provided by UIF crashed and it became impossible to submit claims.

Shortly thereafter Council learnt that the UIF had created a new online portal for claims to be submitted, and in addition required that the excel templates be converted into a specific csv format. In this regard UIF provided a detailed but lengthy guide on how to convert a computer and files to the required format.

Council staff converted many excel templates into the required csv format and registered and continued to submit completed claims on behalf of the industry via the online portal. This process proved slow and troublesome and more recently the UIF portal has exposed many glitches including being unable to log on to the site and being disconnected while uploading information. This was particularly apparent during the day but also become troublesome at night.

The Council also decided to provide additional assistance to a number of firms in submitting their claims directly.

During this time Council was waiting for the signed MOA from the UIF. What this meant in effect was that the Council was registered like any other employer and had to wait in the claim queue like any other employer.

To date Council does not have the signed MOA.

Council has taken a decision that all claims submitted to the Council up to and including the 30 April will be corrected where necessary, and completed claims will be submitted to the UIF.

No new UIF COVID 19 claims will be accepted from the 01 May 2020 until such time as the MOA has been signed by the UIF Commissioner and Council has been assigned a project manager to facilitate submission of claims from the Council.

In the meantime firms are required to submit new claims directly to the UIF, but in this regard Council staff will still provide support to those that request assistance with their submissions.

In this regard please feel free to request assistance to the following email addresses:

Region A (Johannesburg, Mpumalanga & Free State): [uif-jhb@nbcei.co.za](mailto:uif-jhb@nbcei.co.za)

Region A1 (Pretoria, Polokwane, Nelspruit, Rustenburg, North West & Limpopo): [uif-pretoria@nbcei.co.za](mailto:uif-pretoria@nbcei.co.za)

Region B (Eastern & Southern Cape): [uif-pe@nbcei.co.za](mailto:uif-pe@nbcei.co.za)

Region C (KwaZulu-Natal): [uif-kzn@nbcei.co.za](mailto:uif-kzn@nbcei.co.za)

Region D (Western Cape): [uif-cape@nbcei.co.za](mailto:uif-cape@nbcei.co.za)

Firms that have been requested to provide correct information and have not done so within a reasonable time frame must submit their claims directly to UIF.

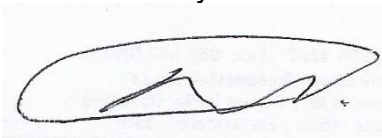
Firms that still feel dissatisfied with the effort and assistance Council has provided to date are also welcome to try submit their claims directly to the UIF.

This is uncharted territory for all and we all wish there was a fast and easy solution. The Council will continue to do its utmost to overcome all arising challenges.

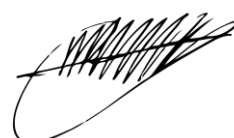
Council thanks you for your understanding and assistance in this regard.

**FOR AND ON BEHALF OF THE COUNCIL**

Yours faithfully



**Deon Van Deventer**  
Acting General Secretary



**Mark Mfikoe**  
Acting General Secretary