

R1.5m paid out to first silicosis claimants

A total of R1.5m has been paid out to the first six miners seeking compensation for occupational lung disease.



Image source: Getty/Gallo

The payments were made by [Tshiamiso Trust](#), which was established to carry out the terms of the settlement agreement reached between six mining companies and claimant attorneys in the historic silicosis and TB class action.



Silicosis fund to be established in April 2019

18 Oct 2018



The six claimants were selected as part of an exercise to test various of the trust's internal systems. They are all individuals who are suffering from second-degree silicosis and who have already received compensation from the government's Medical Bureau for Occupational Diseases. They therefore had available clear medical evidence required to complete a claim.

The recipients of the benefit payments reside in the Eastern Cape, North West Province and Lesotho respectively. Based on their second-degree silicosis diagnosis, each recipient received R250,000, so the total amount paid was R1.5m.

With this test successfully concluded, the trust is now in the process of equipping 56 claims lodgement offices around South Africa, Lesotho, Eswatini, Mozambique, Botswana and Malawi, and training the staff who will deal with claims.

Each claimant will need to lodge their claim in person and the trust envisages that it will be possible for claimants to begin making appointments to lodge from around 20 January 2021. The lodgement offices will be operational from 1 February for claimants to submit the necessary documents and undergo identification through biometric processes. The trust is also putting in place systems to carry out benefit medical examinations.

Process

In the meanwhile, the trust's website has a [tool](#) through which prospective claimants can check whether they are recorded on our database as having carried out risk work on qualifying mines – those owned or managed by companies party to the silicosis and TB class action settlement in terms of which the trust is carrying out its activities.

"We are very pleased that, following the complex process of establishing the systems to administer this R5bn project designed to benefit tens of thousands of mineworkers or their dependants, the first set of benefits have been paid.

"We undertake to move as rapidly as possible towards processing the claims of those who will be lodging their claims as from February next year. However, we also ask that claimants are patient as there will be a lot of people submitting their documents and the process to check and verify will take time," says May Hermanus, Tshiamiso Trust chair .

The trust warns prospective claimants to beware of individuals who are charging a fee purportedly to assist them to receive benefits. Those people have no authority from the trust to do so, and they will not be able to provide the service they say they can. When the trust's claims system opens, using it will be free of charge.

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