

EPWP biometric system goes live

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Gauteng's new biometric identification system for the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) has gone live at the Helen Joseph Hospital, in Johannesburg, kicking off the first part of a province-wide deployment. The "cutting edge" biometric and facial recognition system is expected, over the next three months, to overhaul the way Gauteng runs government's critical poverty alleviation programme.

The aim is to eliminate corruption, which is hampering the efficient administration of the programme, with the preceding manual system used to enrol workers and track time worked, open to widespread abuse, explained Gauteng Infrastructure Development MEC **Jacob Mamabolo**.

The ATM-style kiosks, fitted with the latest face recognition and fingerprint technology, will biometrically verify the identity of every EPWP beneficiary, record their attendance on site and the hours worked – and generate payment reports.

"Every beneficiary will now be required to clock-in and clock-out through the biometric identification terminals, and this will bring complete transparency," he said, pointing out that it will also assist EPWP workers to be clear about how much is due to them at the end of the month.

Mamabolo described the terminals as ATMs where the workers "deposit hours" with the option of requesting electronic printouts showing their banked hours.

This also eliminates ghost workers using false identification documents to register and the practice of duplicate beneficiaries where people fraudulently register at multiple sites.

“All these loopholes are now closed because our biometric system conducts data verification to pick up duplicate beneficiaries and ensures that every person who is enrolled is not only a South African citizen but meets all the other EPWP requirements,” he concluded. 🇿🇦