

Report non-payment of minimum wages

ARISING from the implementation of the national minimum wage of R20 an hour with a minimum of four hours a day, many employers are still not paying this and many are advising their staff, and sometimes their trade unions, that they are exempt from the payment of the minimum wage.

It must be understood that only farmworkers (at R18 an hour) and domestic workers (at R15 an hour) are allowed to be paid below the minimum without the exemption.

The government has exempted the payment for Expanded Public Works Programme workers to R11 an hour.

The regulations for exemption from the minimum wage allow employers to come forward to explain why they can't afford the payment of the minimum wage, and the maximum exemption they would be entitled to is R2 an hour.

This would be done online through the Department of Labour, and the exemption process is an onerous one.

However, because of the lack of inspectorate many employers are merely ignoring the minimum wage payment.

It is clear that such behaviour is unacceptable and illegal. Trade unions are well advised to approach the Commission for Conciliation Mediation and Arbitration as soon as possible in order to report such behaviour.

Furthermore, every employee must carefully study their payslip in order to ascertain that the payment is R20 or above an hour.

If there is a discrepancy, this must be immediately reported to either the trade union concerned or the Department of Labour.

Disputes can be taken up with the CCMA at 78 Darling Street, Cape Town.

The CCMA call centre is also well geared to advise on the possible problems that might arise from the non-payment or short-payment of the minimum wage.

MICHAEL BAGRAIM, MP

DA spokesperson on labour