

Casual workers want job security

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Casual Mitchell's Plain park cleaners say they are tired of living from contract to contract and desperately need permanent jobs to cover the cost of living.

However, the City of Cape Town says the expanded public works programme (EPWP) workers are selected from a database on a rotational basis so that everyone is given a chance to work and earn an income.

This brings little hope for Colleen Asia, 52, from Eastridge, who has been a casual worker for the council for 15 years.

She said her family was dependent on her fortnightly income.

Enver van der Heyder, 39, from Tafelsig, said while he does not have children to look after, he has parents and needs to look after himself. He said they get a stipend, which barely covers the cost of food.

"En hoe werk jy as jy nie eet nie," she said.

Gert Isaacs, 51, from Tafelsig, has three children, aged 27, 23 and 20, he said: "If we have permanent work then we can put food on the table, buy clothes.

"As jy nie werk nie, kan jy nie beplan nie – you can't plan for a better future," he said.

The workers completed three and four-month contracts on Friday July 12.

Grant Twigg, mayoral committee member for urban management, said jobs under the umbrella of the EPWP, was paid work created for an individual on a project for a specific period of time.

"A work opportunity under EPWP is temporary in nature, within the employment conditions of national legislation governing the programme. For example, the EPWP Ministerial Determination, and the Code of Good Practice for Special Public Works Programmes," he said.

Mr Twigg said at the end of a contract, workers must observe a cooling period, based on the City's "Management of the Jobseekers Database Policy" so that more people can access the programme.

"This is due to so many people being unemployed who also need to be given an opportunity," he said.

Ms Asia also voiced her frustration at the how residents dump in the park after they have cleaned it.

"Hours after we leave then it looks like we weren't even here," she said.

Ms Asia said they have to pick up dead dogs, rats, and sometimes foetuses.

"We do the heavy lifting of dirt, sweep and keep our parks tidy but it seems we are ignored," she said.

Mayoral committee member for water and waste, Xanthea Limberg said residents were encouraged to report illegal dumping in their community by calling 086 010 3089, or if they have the culprit's vehicle regis-

tration number and or identity to report it by calling 021 400 6157 or email solidwaste.bylaw@capetown.gov.za with the relevant information.

Any person found to be dumping illegally is issued with a Section 56 written notice, which carries a fine of R5 000 and the dumper may have his or her vehicle impounded.

The dumper is also liable for an impoundment release fee of over R8 000 before they can reclaim their vehicle.

Ms Limberg said dumping occurs every day across the City.

"It is simply not possible for cleansing staff to be in all areas at all times of the day. It is crucial that we work together in the fight against grime, by not littering/dumping, and reporting those who do," she said.



■ Pictured, from left, are temporary park cleaners Jerome Kemsley, from Beacon Valley, Margaret Maras, from Tafelsig, Najuwa Gallant, from Tafelsig, Enver Hamilton van der Heyde, from Tafelsig, and Gert Isaacs, from Tafelsig.