

Mhlontlo Municipality's EPWP workers not paid on time

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APPROXIMATELY 100 employees, who fall under the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) at the Qumbu-based Mhlontlo Local Municipality, were left fuming after the municipality failed to pay them their R1 995 monthly salaries, which were due to be deposited into their bank accounts on October 25, on time.

The salaries were eventually paid in by Monday, November 4.

The employees said their employer had not

given them any reason for the delay in paying their salaries, except to say the municipal finance department was attending to the problem.

“The whole delay in getting our salaries is badly affecting us because some of us need to pay rent, feed our children and buy groceries from the money,” said one affected employee, who spoke to *Express* on October 31, before the money had come through, on condition of anonymity, out of fear of losing his job.

“The mayor of the municipality did meet us on Monday, October 28, and promised that we

would get our salaries before close of business on the day but that has not happened,” said another employee. The affected employees started working under the EPWP programme at the municipality in August and their daily duties involve refuse collection and grass cutting in and around Qumbu and Tsolo.

Asked if they were continuing to perform their duties despite the delayed payment of their salaries, the affected employees said they had been told by their manager to come and sign in and out each day, but they were not performing

their duties until they received their pay.

Mhlontlo Local Municipality spokesperson, Solakhe Magxala, attributed the delay to shortage of staff to capture the employees' details into the municipal payroll system, but said the problem had since been resolved and some of the workers had already received their salaries by 13:00 on October 31.

The affected employees confirmed that a few of them had received their salaries that day, while others only received them over the weekend or on November 4.