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EPWP workers queue for days for salaries

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The department of public works has announced that Postbank has made changes to its system that have inconvenienced Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) workers, who collect their salaries from the post office.

Public works spokesperson Siphokazi Ncanywa said: "We are engaging with both the post office and EPWP beneficiaries."

Recently in Komani, a man from Magqubela in Cacadu who was coming back for the second day died while waiting for his turn at the post office.

His brother, Sibongile Gladile said: "We came together at 7am to get our money. I don't know what happened. He is not on any treatment. I just saw him collapse after 3pm."

People in the queue were unhappy with the treatment they received from post office officials when they went inside



WORKERS' WOES: More than 33 EPWP workers had recently prepared boxes to spend the night in at the post office in Komani to get salaries. **Picture:** ABONGILE SOLUNDWANA

to report that a man collapsed.

Ntombomzi Dyantyi from Who Can Tell said: "We were told to tend to him, as 'he is ours'. We were assisted by a policeman who was walking past us. There should have been an ambulance on standby."

EPWP workers said they preferred the bank card system.

This was because the long queues at times resulted in the money running out, forcing them to spend a night or two outside the post office before they were able to get assistance.

Vathiswa Madolo from Rwantana in Cacadu said: "We only receive R800. If we have to travel two to three times to the post office, what will be left for us to spend? We have families to feed and burial societies to

make our contributions to."

Another reason they preferred cards was that they would save their money by sending a community member to draw their money and buy groceries for them.

Some complained that they were not able to access money which they had not received from previous months, which made them suspect that their money was being stolen.

Meanwhile, Komani Protest Action (KPA) leaders went to arrange for a meeting with post office management to also give an update on why some of the branches were not working, which required people to travel to Komani.

KPA's Solomzi Nkwentsha said: "The officials say that they

were experiencing a problem because the money got to Komani from East London late.

"We came in August to ask for an appointment with the officials concerning the same issue, which was never responded to. Today we are here again because we heard that someone died."

The post office had not responded to the questions sent to it by the time of going to print.

Police spokesperson Captain Namhla Mdleleni said police were investigating the man's death.

"On Thursday September 21, about 4.50pm, a man who was waiting in a queue collapsed and died. Police opened an inquest docket," she said.