fundtalk

The quarterly newsletter for members of the Government Employees Pension Fund 4th Edition 2025/2026

WHAT ARE THE MAIN REASONS FOR UNCLAIMED BENEFITS?

ALWAYS ENSURE THAT YOUR TAX MATTERS ARE IN ORDER WITH SARS

WHAT ARE NON-CONTRIBUTORY BENEFITS?

THE IMPORTANCE OF REGISTERING YOUR CUSTOMARY MARRIAGE

The South African Constitution recognises customary marriages.

A customary marriage is defined as "one that's negotiated, celebrated or concluded according to any of the systems of indigenous African customary laws which exist in South Africa". In keeping with this provision, the GEPF recognises customary marriages.

GEPF members who are married under customary law are urged to register their marriages, as this prevents delays in paying benefits. The Recognition of Customary Marriages Act became effective in November 2000 and states that spouses of a customary marriage have a duty to ensure that their marriage is registered.

The Fund often deals with disputes related to the marital status of deceased members. This is because many of our members and pensioners - particularly those who were married under customary law - did not officially register their marriage at the Department of Home Affairs (DoHA).

This can present many problems that make it difficult for the Fund to determine the validity of the marriage and who the lawful beneficiaries are, which must be done, to pay what is due to the rightful beneficiaries. It can be difficult for the Fund to validate a very old marriage if the lobola letter has been lost and there isn't sufficient proof to validate the marriage. The situation becomes even more difficult if the two families involved don't co-operate in providing the necessary evidence to support the existence of the marriage.

Registration of customary marriages

Customary marriages must be registered within three months of taking place. This can be done at any office of the Department of Home Affairs or through a designated traditional leader in areas where there is no Home Affairs office.

This will help the Fund to pay out the correct benefits to the right beneficiaries when the time comes to do so.

For more information contact us at:

Government Employees Pension Fund

0800 117 669 | enquiries@gepf.co.za | gepf.co.za

Government Employees Pension Fund | @GEPF_SA

Government Employees Pension Ombud

enquiries@gepo.co.za | gepo.co.za | +27 12 110 4950

GEPF™

your investment, your future

WHAT ARE THE MAIN REASONS FOR UNCLAIMED BENEFITS?

The Pension Fund Act defines an unclaimed benefit as a benefit from a retirement fund that has become legally due and payable, but has not been paid for more than 24 months. Although GEPF operates according to the Government Employees Pension (GEP) Law, the Fund uses the same definition as the best practice guideline..

Benefits may be unpaid for a number of reasons. For example:

- The member's exit documents forms (Z102 forms) that should be submitted when a member leaves the Fund were not submitted or contain errors that have not been rectified.
- Benefits paid are returned to GEPF due to incorrect banking details, a dormant or frozen bank account, etc.
- GEPF does not have sufficient information, for example, about the deceased member, a possible spouse or beneficiaries, to facilitate a claim to the benefit.
- A tax directive is declined by SARS due to the member's tax affairs not being in order.

Although GEPF does everything in its power to pay benefits to the rightful member or beneficiary, it cannot always do so in the absence of the necessary information.
In addition to the current efforts that GEPF makes to trace beneficiaries, it has also started informing members about unclaimed benefits and how they can assist in ensuring that these benefits are paid to the rightful owners. GEPF will also use the services of tracing agents to identify the rightful beneficiaries.

Eligible claimants of unclaimed benefits

These include: retired GEPF members; employees who exited the public service system without claiming their benefits; beneficiaries of GEPF members who are no longer in service or are deceased.

Methods of reaching out to potential beneficiaries and guardians

- Roadshows.
- Retirement member campaigns.
- Mobile office and co-locations with other service centres.
- Engagements with community development workers.
- Media.
- Newsletters.

How can members help the Fund to alleviate the unclaimed benefit challenge?

- Members are encouraged to always update their information with their employer departments, particularly the nomination form.
- Members are requested to spread the word in areas where they live to continuously raise awareness in their communities. This might help to ensure that the information reaches potential beneficiaries.

Potential beneficiaries are encouraged to use the following options to check if they qualify to claim:

- Contact the GEPF Call Centre: 0800 117 669
- Visit a nearby GEPF Walk-in Centre

DOES GEPF INVEST MEMBERS' MONEY AND IF SO FOR WHAT PURPOSE?

The GEPF does invest members' money using its Asset Liability Model. The model is used to review the Fund's investment policy and strategy regularly by consulting with the Minister of Finance in terms of section 6(7) of the Government Employees Pension (GEP) Law.

It is of great importance that the GEPF invests members' money to protect the wealth of its members and pensioners to safeguard their retirement investment. The investment strategy is designed to ensure the long-term sustainability of the Fund while meeting its obligations to members.

The Fund has a Responsible Investment (RI) policy, which is a blanket strategy aimed at integrating environmental, social and governance issues into investment decisions and ownership practices as well as a Developmental Investment (DI) policy, which underpins all GEPF investments.

The Fund works closely with its investment manager (the PIC) but also provides guidelines on the type of investments that can be made, the percentage allocation for each asset class, benchmarks and performance targets.

It is required to invest 90% of its assets in South Africa, which makes it the single largest investor on the Johannesburg Stock Exchange (JSE). Its international allocation is limited to 5% in the rest of Africa and 5% elsewhere internationally.

GEPF members do not benefit from investment dividends directly. The GEPF is a defined benefit pension fund, which means that the pension received by members is guaranteed and independent of the Fund's investment performance. This ensures that members receive a pension regardless of whether the Fund's value rises or falls over time.

ALWAYS ENSURE THAT YOUR TAX MATTERS ARE IN ORDER WITH SARS

Your tax affairs must be in good standing before GEPF can pay out a lump sum, and tax must be deducted as per the SARS rules.

Check your SARS tax status, make sure you have a valid SARS number, update your personal details and submit outstanding details that match both the SARS and GEPF data (name, surname, ID). If your tax is not in order, GEPF will not process the claim.

WHAT ARE NON-CONTRIBUTORY BENEFITS?

Apart from paying pension, death and resignation benefits, certain benefits paid to government employees are funded by the GEPF. These benefits are called non-contributory benefits because employees do not pay for them from their salaries. These complimentary benefits include the following:

Funeral Benefits

- Paid when a member, spouse, or eligible child passes away.
- Member R20 000
- Spouse R20 000
- Child: varies according to age

Spouse Pension

- If a deceased member has a legal or qualifying spouse or partner, the lawful spouse receive a lifelong pension funded by the employer.

Injury on duty

- The Injury on Duty benefit is paid to government employees who are injured on duty or who sustain a fatal injury. The benefits payable depends on how serious the injury is. A gratuity (lump sum) is paid if the disability is determined to be between 1- 30%. An annuity (monthly pension) is payable if the disability exceeds 30%.

Child Pension

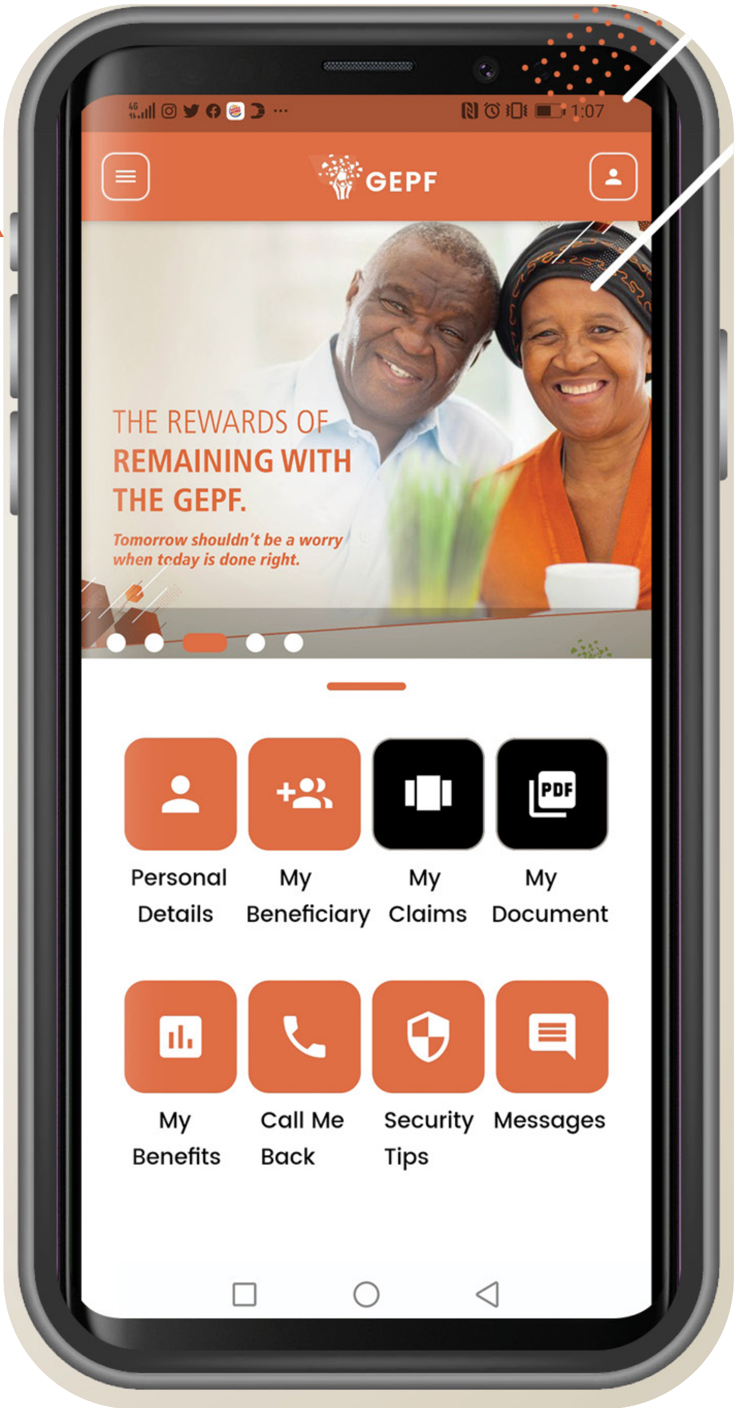
The child pension is a benefit for the biological or adopted children of deceased members or pensioners, offering financial support until the child reaches the age of 22.

Eligibility Criteria

- Beneficiaries: The child must be a biological or legally adopted child of the deceased member or pensioner. Stepchildren or children in care do not qualify unless legally adopted.
- Age Limit: Eligible children can receive the pension until they turn 22, regardless of their student status. Disabled children may receive benefits indefinitely if they are financially dependent on the deceased.

MAKE YOUR LIFE EASY

- REGISTER ON THE GEPF SELF-SERVICE APP



The introduction of the GEPF Web and Mobile App, known as the Self-Service App, on 26 February 2021, marked a significant shift from a traditional to a convenient, digital way of accessing essential information and services.

The move ushered in an innovative way of accessing GEPF services at your fingertips, while reducing administrative delays, and enhancing transparency. Over 1 300 000 GEPF members have registered on the App and can access the services provided by the Fund from the comfort of their home or office, even in remote areas.

If you are registered on the GEPF Self-Service App you can access and download the following:

- **A Benefit Statement**
- **Payment Advice**
- **A tax certificate**

You can also:

- **View the Two-Pot component**
- **Submit and track Two-Pot savings withdrawal claim**s

The GEPF Self-Service App is not a stagnant technology, as it is constantly evolving. It is envisaged that additional functions will be introduced in the near future.

Soon members will be able to claim the following benefits on this platform:

- **Spouse Pension**
- **Funeral Benefit**

Do not be left behind.

Make your life and the GEPF experience easier. Register on the GEPF Self-Service App and access the services of the Fund at a time and place convenient to you.