

Provident fund battle

THE purpose of a pension or provident fund is to provide benefits for you when you retire or resign from employment.

The fund will also pay benefits when a member dies while still working, or is unable to work because of illness or retrenchment.

Since March this year Consumer Line has been inundated with complaints from beneficiaries who have had problems with their provident fund administrators.

Some beneficiaries have waited years before receiving their dues; some have died before getting their benefits, while others have had to prove they were dependent on their children to earn a living.

This is exemplified in the case of Reverend Phaff Mengwayi of Atteridgeville, Pretoria, who had to give Alexander Forbes proof of residence and bank statements to show that he and his wife were dependent on their son for their survival.

Mengwayi responded to an article in Sowetan two weeks ago in which the deputy pension adjudicator Muvhango Lukhaimane ordered the Cape Retirement Fund's board of trustees to change the way they allocated funds to dependants who were not nominated by a deceased person.

Mengwayi says in his case

GETTING THE BENEFITS CAN BE DIFFICULT

Alexander Forbes wanted to allocate his and his wife's share to his son's former girlfriend.

"Though my son has a child with her, they parted 15 years ago. They were never married and didn't cohabit and she was not nominated as a beneficiary," says Mengwayi.

He says his son allocated 20% to him and another 20% to his wife.

"The remaining 60 percent was allocated to my granddaughter who lives with her mother. Now the mother wants the remaining portion of the allocation to be given to her."

Mengwayi says Alexander Forbes told him he was not a dependant of his late son and therefore could not benefit from his son's provident fund.

Mengwayi gets a stipend from the church and his wife had temporary employment at the Department of Justice. Her contract has not been renewed.

"My son bought me a car, repaid its monthly instalments and also



STILL WAITING: Mbhekiseni Dichabe will finally receive his share of his late adoptive father's provident fund PHOTO: MOHAU MOFOKENG

gave me and my wife an allowance of R1 100 each every month," he says.

"The person they want to give our share to is a director, and earns extra money by leasing out her property. She was never dependent on my son but Alexander Forbes wants to believe her story," he says.

He says they want to erect a tombstone for their son, but Alexander Forbes's indecision is making it harder for the family to move on.

Alexander Forbes failed to honour a promise to respond to Consumer Line's questions by 4pm yesterday.

● Meanwhile, Mbhekiseni Dichabe's misery will soon be over. Alexander Forbes will pay what is due to him.

His brother Thabiso Dichabe died before getting his portion of an inheritance and Mbhekiseni says he does not know what will happen to it.

The Dichabes were adopted by the late Lucas Marobane after their parents died.

Marobane died in 2008 and five beneficiaries were to share R1.2-million of the man's provident fund.

They did not know that they would benefit from his provident fund but were battling to get it from Kimberly-Clark, where Marobane worked.

Dichabe says when he turned 18 he applied for his payout, but he is still waiting.

Kimberly-Clark said the funds were being administered by Fairheads Benefit Services. The company denied administering the funds.

Alexander Forbes has finally confirmed that it held the funds and has asked Dichabe to submit his banking details and a copy of a certified ID so they can pay him his money.