

Business Report

Liberty and the FCSA partner to educate communities on unclaimed benefits

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CAPE TOWN – As part of the Money Smart Week South Africa (MSWSA) initiative Liberty Corporate is partnering with the Financial Sector Conduct Authority (FCSA) to educate communities on unclaimed benefits and heighten awareness around the importance of financial education.

Tiaan Kotze, Chief Executive of Liberty Corporate said: "Liberty believes passionately in the significant role financial education can play in uplifting people's lives. We are proud to be part of this campaign in conjunction with the FCSA. We aim to empower communities through this campaign with financial knowledge and skills, particularly with respect to unclaimed benefits."

Liberty is participating at events in Soweto, Alexandra and Mamelodi where they have teams on hand to assist the public in searching for their unclaimed benefits, as well as leading education sessions on how to prevent benefits becoming unclaimed.

"Any member of the community will have the opportunity to engage with the Liberty team and to search for their unclaimed benefits at the Liberty Corporate tables, as well as ask any questions on how to go about claiming their benefits", said Kotze.

According to Kotze, the Money Smart Week South Africa 2018 (MSWSA) is an initiative championed by National Treasury and implemented through the FCSA to promote financial education amongst South Africans through a dedicated week of activities focused around key areas in Gauteng from 8 to 12 October 2018.

Industry players were invited to participate and Liberty values the opportunity in order to assist the public in searching for their unclaimed benefits, as well as providing educational sessions on how to prevent benefits becoming unclaimed," said Kotze.

Unclaimed benefits, as defined by the Pension Fund Act, are benefits that have not been paid to members in more than two years following the termination of their employment from the sponsoring employer.

Liberty Corporate currently administers approximately 177,000 unpaid and unclaimed benefits with an asset value R1.8bn (of which 104,000 benefits with a value of R939m are in our Unclaimed Benefit Funds).

"We are in the process of tracing 96,000 of these members. As we make progress, we will extend our efforts to with the remaining members", said Kotze.

This has been made possible through the significant increase in tracing activity and payment capability over the last 12 months, allowing us to pay out over R330m in unclaimed benefits in the first nine months of 2018.

When asked if the company plans on doing more of the programmes across SA, Kotze said there is potential.

"Liberty Corporate is investigating the possibility of participating in any future industry events in other regions, and will certainly support these opportunities as they arise," said Kotze.

Here are three given by Kotze that you should consider when planning for your financial future:

- Liberty Corporate believes that responsible employers provide employees with well-considered employee benefits such as retirement fund saving opportunities and death and disability benefits in order to assist employees to save from as soon as they commence working.
- Most people retire without sufficient savings to sustain their retirement.

- It is also important to consider protection against life events such as disability to ensure you do not burden your family and dependents.