

MINISTER LINDIWE ZULU MP ISSUES DIRECTIONS TO PREVENT AN ESCALATION OF THE DISASTER AT THE SASSA OFFICES

By: Zethu Khoza

When COVID 19 was declared a disaster, Regulations made under the Disaster Management Act, 2002, provided the Minister of Social Development the right to issue directions concerning steps that may be necessary to prevent an escalation of the disaster, or alleviate, contain and minimize the effects of the disaster.

Minister of Social Development, Ms Lindiwe Zulu MP, issued updated Directions on 7 October 2020. SASSA thus wishes to inform clients that confirmation is provided that the temporary disability grants which should have lapsed from February to October will remain in payment until December 2020. This means that temporary disability grants which are due to lapse at the end of November will lapse (November will be the last payment month).

All Care Dependency Grants, where the care dependent child turned 18 in the months from February to December will be paid until end December. However, the care givers of these children are advised to contact the SASSA offices to make arrangements for the application for the disability grant to be made, as a new assessment will be required. Clients should not wait until the grant lapses.

SASSA is concerned about the significant number of temporary disability grants that will all lapse at the end of December as the numbers of people who will want to re-apply for the grant will be more than SASSA can manage. SASSA is currently working on a plan to see how these various categories of grants which will lapse can be accommodated within the limited resources available.

Disability grants are only paid to those citizens aged between 18 and 59, who are unable to work as a result of the impact of the condition or disability. It is not given on social grounds and is not an alternative for chronic unemployment

The applicant:

- ❖ Must be a South African citizen, permanent resident or refugee;
- ❖ Must be resident in South Africa;
- ❖ Must be 18 to 59 years of age;
- ❖ Must submit a medical / assessment report confirming disability;
- ❖ Medical assessment must not be older than 3 months at date of application;
- ❖ And spouse meet the requirements of the means test;
- ❖ Must not be maintained or cared for in a State Institution;
- ❖ Must not be in receipt of another social grant in respect of him or herself;
- ❖ Must submit a 13 digit bar coded identity document or the smart ID card.

Any person who does apply for a disability grant which is rejected; or which is approved for a temporary period when the applicant feels his/her condition is permanent; or is approved to be paid at a reduced rate following the application of the means test, has the right to request the decision to be reconsidered. This must be done within 90 days of being informed of the decision, If this right is not exercised within the set time frame, it cannot be exercised later once the grant is about to lapse. The form to file for the reconsideration can be obtained from the local office.

If the reconsidered decision is still unfavourable, then the aggrieved applicant has the right to appeal to the Independent Appeals Tribunal. Once again, the appeal must be lodged within 90 days of receiving the reconsidered outcome. The appeal is the final administrative step in challenging a decision made. The appeal to be sent to the Independent Appels Tribunal, Harlequins Office Park, 61 Totius Street, Groenkloof, Pretoria 0027 or to be submitted at the local SASSA office, for onward transmission to the Appeals Tribunal.

**SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT
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