

06 April 2020

SASSA Statement on Lapsed Temporary Disability Grants during Lockdown

SASSA has provided a solution to temporary disability grants which lapsed or expired in March resulting in some beneficiaries not being paid.

SASSA offices were closed since the lockdown and this posed a challenge for beneficiaries whose grants expired in March and were therefore unable to re-apply at SASSA offices. The payment file for April payments was extracted before the lockdown was announced, meaning that all temporary disability grants which were due to lapse at the end of March 2020 had already lapsed and were not generated for payment in April.

In order to deal with this unintended consequence of the lockdown, SASSA is providing social relief of distress in the form of food parcels and vouchers to beneficiaries whose disability grants expired in April as an interim measure to cushion the impact of the termination of the grant benefit.

The situation will be fully remedied for those grants expiring in April because Ministerial directions issued on 30 March 2020 enable continued payment of temporary disability grants throughout the lockdown period. This development should be able to eliminate the panic caused by recent media reports.

Temporary disability grants have a lifespan of twelve months and beneficiaries have to re-apply after the prescribed period. In twelve months there is a possibility that a medical condition might have improved to the extent that it does not require continuation of temporary disability grant.

A WhatsApp message displaying an application form with a SASSA logo has been doing the rounds calling on the public to apply for food parcels. This exaggerated copy and paste message is not from SASSA. Grant beneficiaries who did not receive their grants for whatever reason will be prioritised. Preference for support will be given to citizens who are not receiving support from any other source, to ensure that the limited resources reach as many citizens as possible.

Social relief of distress requires an application process but during the declared state of disaster, applications will be done telephonically on 0800 60 10 11. The forms which have been circulating on social media and other platforms will not be accepted from the public because applications are done telephonically and only an authorised SASSA official completes the forms. Provincial Joint Operations Centres and the Department of Social Development are coordinating the issuing of food parcels at Food Distribution Centres to alleviate the impact of the lockdown.

Issued on behalf of the South African Social Security Agency

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