



Wes-Kaapse Provinsiale Parlement  
Western Cape Provincial Parliament  
IPalamente yePhondo IeNtshona Koloni

11/4/1/1/2

**MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS**

**STANDING COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT**

Tuesday, 10 May 2022, (at 09:00) Chamber, 6<sup>th</sup> Floor

**PRESENT**

**Democratic Alliance**

Plato, D (Chairperson)  
Mackenzie, RD  
Philander, WF

**AL JAMAH**

Brinkhuis, G

**Additional Member**

BakuBaku-Vos, NG

**Additional Member**

Windvogel, R (ANC)

**Persons in attendance**

Mr. A Mahlangu, Acting Executive Manager: SASSA Western Cape Regional  
Mr. Ml Nhlangothi, General Manager for Grants Administration  
Ms. B Nieuwoudt, Director StellCARE, Stellenbosch

**1. Opening and welcome**

The Chairperson opened the meeting and allowed for brief introductions.

**2. Briefing by the South African Social Security Agency (SASSA) Western Cape Regional Office on the Social Relief of Distress (SRD) Grant**

Mr. Nhlangothi proceeded to brief the Committee on the Social Relief of Distress (SRD) Grant. He informed the Committee that the COVID-19 R350 Grant was introduced in May 2020 under the COVID-19 National State of Disaster Regulations and with the lifting of the disaster regulations, the grant will now be provided under a new legislative framework within the Social Assistance Act.

The Committee was informed that 8% of the SRD Grant recipients in the country were from the Western Cape. All the recipients have to re-apply for the new SRD Grant. SASSA stated that the applications for the new SRD Grants commenced on 23 April 2022 and more than 9.7 million clients already applied.

SASSA reported that beneficiaries of the former COVID-19 Grant are obliged to re-apply for the SRD R350 Grant. The regulations in this regard were published in the Government Gazette in April 2022. It was reported that a person who needs temporary assistance may qualify for the SRD Grant if she or he is a person with insufficient means. The person with insufficient means must in addition be; a person who is a South African citizen, a permanent resident of South Africa, a refugee, or a holder of a special permit under the Special Angolan Dispensation, the Lesotho Exemption Permit Dispensation, or the Zimbabwe Exemption Permit Dispensation or an asylum seeker whose section 22 permit or visa is valid and registered on the Department of Home Affairs database or registered on the Agency's social grant database with a unique system-generated identifying number for the people without identify documents. The applicants must be between the ages of 18 to 60 years of age; currently residing within the borders of South Africa; not a resident in a government-funded or subsidised institution and not unreasonably refuse to accept employment or educational opportunities.

The Committee was informed that to validate insufficient means, SASSA may use a declaration form. The applicant attesting to such, and a screening questionnaire; a proxy means test consisting of checks against databases that may indicate income or alternative financial assistance; and verification of insufficient means with banks. It was reported that if the result of the means-testing with the bank contradicts the result from the data checks with external databases, the results from the means testing with the banks will be used to make the final legibility determination. SASSA highlighted that the income threshold for insufficient means, contemplated in this regulation is R350 per person per month, and if a person has more than one bank account, the criteria for insufficient means is deemed to have been met if all the bank accounts are assessed individually are below the income threshold.

SASSA reported that there are two application channels for the SRD R350 Grants. The SRD Grants applicants can send a message to a WhatsApp number 082 046 6553. The number was not yet active during the meeting, SASSA reported that they were busy with the reactivation of the number and testing it on the WhatsApp platform, it will be working in June 2022, alternatively, the applicants can visit the SASSA SRD Website <https://sassa.gov.za> to access the application forms, complete and submit the applications. SASSA pointed out that the applicants needed to provide SASSA with valid mobile numbers where SASSA will be able to reach the applicant with an SMS regarding the outcome of the application.

It was reported that as part of the application process, SASSA was verifying and validating the applicant's details and life status of applicants with Home Affairs. The ID numbers of applicants are matched against approved databases such as UIF, SARS, NFSAS, GEPIF, Persal, Persol, and Correctional Services. The applications are assessed according to the responses to the application questions as submitted by the applicants. In addition, applications are validated with Banks for the R350 income threshold for insufficient means-testing. The Committee was informed that Fraud Risk scoring was also done with the Fraud prevention partners and once the submitted information is verified, the application was then approved or declined with reasons.

It was reported that the applicants can view the status of their RSD Grants applications on the SRD Website, WhatsApp, and toll-free call centre at 0800 60 10 11. SASSA mentioned that applicants can appeal with the Independent Appeals Tribunal within 90 days if their applications were declined. Appeals can be lodged on the website of Social Development.

### **3. Child Support Grant Top-Up**

SASSA proceeded to brief the Committee on the Child Support Top-Up (CSG) Grant. The Committee was informed that the Child Support Grant was R480 and the Top-Up was R240. It was reported that the Child Support Grant Top-Up was not a new grant but it builds on the CSG, hence the rules and the procedures for the CSG continue to be followed.

It was reported that relatives need to provide proof that they are relatives of the child by attesting to their relation to the child. Proof that the child is an orphan in the form of death certificate of the child's parents or one parent's death certificate and an affidavit attesting to their lack of knowledge as to whether the other parent is dead or alive. All orphans already in the court ordered foster care remain in the foster care system until they naturally age out when they turn 18 or 21 if they are still in education. A child heading household who is aged between 16 and 18 can apply for and receive the Child Support Grant for him or herself as well as receive the To-Up for the children under his or her care. SASSA highlighted that applicants for the Child Support Top-Up (CSG) Grant can go directly to SASSA without first needing a social worker investigation, report and a court order.

### **4. Input by StellCARE NGO in Stellenbosch**

Ms. Nieuwoudt, Director of StellCARE in Stellenbosch gave an input during the meeting. She reported that StellCARE and SASSA in Paarl have a good working relationship, this resulted in StellCARE offering SASSA a space on their premises on certain days when they visited Stellenbosch because people that needed SASSA services in Stellenbosch were struggling because there was no SASSA office in Stellenbosch and the public transport was a challenge from Stellenbosch to Paarl.

According to Ms. Nieuwoudt, SASSA officials used to provide services from StellCARE premises, however, SASSA has cancelled their latest MOU with StellCARE because SASSA expects to use StellCARE facilities for free which was not possible for the NGO to carry the electricity, water, and other utility costs without SASSA contribution. It was reported that ever since SASSA stopped visiting Stellenbosch, many people were left with no access to SASSA services because people do not have money to hire a vehicle to the SASSA offices in Paarl. Ms. Nieuwoudt further mentioned that StellCARE has requested training from SASSA to assist people in Stellenbosch with online applications. There was no response from SASSA and StellCARE was still waiting. Mr. Mahlangu undertook to schedule a meeting with StellCARE and look at whether SASSA can form a partnership with StellCARE in Stellenbosch.

The Committee deliberated on the presentations.

### **5. Information requested**

The Committee REQUESTED the Western Cape Regional SASSA Office to provide it with the following information by Friday, 8 July 2022.

- 5.1 Detailed information on what SASSA has put in place as a relief mechanism to assess the applicants for the Temporary Disability Grant since SASSA doctors are fully booked until August 2022. In addition, clarity on whether SASSA encourages clients to see a private doctor for the Temporary Disability Grant Applications?
- 5.2 A report from the provincial Department of Health on the number of SASSA clients that are seen by doctors from the Department on monthly basis.
- 5.3 Information on the plans of SASSA to expand SASSA services and open additional offices or introduced mobile satellite offices in areas where there are no SASSA offices, especially in rural areas of the Western Cape.

- 5.4 A detailed report on the number of SASSA mobile units and satellite offices in areas outside the Metro.
- 5.5 A total number of applications for the new SRD Grants that have lapsed in the province. This information should include the number of appeal cases lodged for the new SRD Grants and the total number of beneficiaries for the new SRD Grant in the province.
- 5.6 Information on the number of people from the Western Cape who are not going to benefit from the new SRD Grant because of the new criteria threshold.

## **6. Adoption of Minutes**

The Chairperson tabled the Draft Minutes of 5 April 2022 which were considered and adopted.

The meeting adjourned at 12:00.

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**MR D PLATO, MPP**  
**CHAIRPERSON: STANDING COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT**  
**WESTERN CAPE PROVINCIAL PARLIAMENT**