

Social Grants and Unemployment Insurance Fund

As of 25/05/2020

In these tight times, it is helpful to look at what assistance Government is providing to individuals and families. It is important to remember that these grants have very specific criteria and if you would like more information to call the SASSA National Call Center: 0800 60 10 11 or email: grantenquiries@sassa.gov.za.

For UIF and TERS benefits, talk to your employer and request assistance in applying for these benefits. Only employees of employers who have paid UIF will qualify for these benefits.

A small reminder that these processes require time and there is a bit of red tape to wade through and payments may not be immediate.

Unemployment Insurance Fund ('UIF'), Temporary Employee Relief Scheme ('TERS') and Compensation for Occupational Injuries and Diseases Act (COIDA)

Under what circumstances will the UIF come into play?

- If an employer has no choice but to close its operations during the lockdown, an employer has the option to temporary lay-off employees. This means that the employees will not receive any income for the duration of temporary lay-off.
- If an employer has no choice but to close its operations permanently and employees are retrenched.
- Another option available to employers is to implement reduced working hours leading to the employee only receiving part of his/her monthly income.
- The UIF can be approached to claim benefits and the Department of Employment and Labour has urged that the employers to assist with submitting the claims. The following documents must accompany a claim to the UIF:
 - UI 19 and UI 2.7 (completed by employer);
 - UI 2.1 (application form);
 - UI 2.8 (bank form that must be completed by the bank);
 - A letter from the employer confirming that the reduced working hours or temporary lay-off is due to the COVID-19 virus and the lockdown; and
 - Copy of identity document.
- During the lockdown and COVID-19 crisis, claims for UIF benefits can also be done online by visiting <https://www.ufiling.co.za/uif/unemployment-benefits>.
- Email: Online.BCP@labour.gov.za for guidance.

What is this "TERS" that everyone is talking about?

- TERS is a special benefit created for under the UIF and aims to provide emergency relief to employers so that they may continue to pay their employees during a temporary lay-off.
- The benefits under TERS are available to an employer who closes its operations due to the COVID-19 crisis for a period of three months or less and as a result are in financial distress.
- It is important to note that the employer submits a claim for the TERS benefit and, if successful, pays the necessary over to its employees. This will lead to a less cumbersome and quicker procedure, rather than having individuals receiving payments from the UIF.

- The benefit will be capped to a maximum threshold of R17 712.00 (may change from time to time) and will be calculated in terms of the income replacement rate sliding scale as provided in the Unemployment Insurance Act (from 38% for high earners up to 60% for low earners).
- When applying for this TERS benefit, an employer must include proof of being registered with the UIF, a letter of authority and a signed agreement between the employer and the UIF.
- Employers can apply for the TERS benefit by sending an e-mail to covid19ters@labour.gov.za and they will then receive an automated response outlining the process and further requirements.
- Unfortunately, no manual claims will be accepted, however, queries may be directed to the dedicated hotline number at 012 337 1997.

Can you claim for the normal UIF benefits and the TERS benefits?

- The simple answer is no. Seeing as TERS is a benefit specifically for temporary lay-offs and also being a separate benefit scheme, an employer who implemented temporary lay-offs cannot make a claim in terms of TERS and normal UIF.

What happens if an employee tests positive for COVID-19 and is unable to work?

- The COVID-19 virus has been declared an occupational disease. This means that if an employee is absent from work due to contracting the virus during the course and scope of his/her employment, such leave will be covered in terms of the Compensation for Occupational Injuries and Diseases Act (“COIDA”).
- If the COVID-19 virus was not contracted during the course and scope of employment, leave taken will be considered as sick leave.
- The employee must give written notice of the disease to his/her employer and to the compensation commissioner and follow the process in place.
- However, there is also an illness benefit that can be claimed from the UIF if the employee and the employer agreed to the employee being placed under a 14-day quarantine period. If this is the case, the claim must also include proof of this agreement between the employee and employer.

In light of the above, there are specific measures and benefits put in place to assist employers and employees during the COVID-19 crisis and the lockdown. Employers are urged to make use of these measures and benefits as far as possible. The website of the Department of Employment and Labour (<http://www.labour.gov.za/>) can be visited for further information.

Social Grants

More information: <https://www.westerncape.gov.za/directories/services/1055>

Phone the toll-free helpline at 0800 601 011 for information on:

- Pay-out dates.
- Qualifying rules for all government grants.
- District office addresses and contact numbers.
- For help with what has happened to your application.
- How you can also report any fraud or corruption.

Child Support Grant

What is the child support grant?

The child support grant is aimed at lower-income households to assist parents with the costs of the basic needs of their child. The grant isn't meant to replace other income but intended to bridge the gap in the cost of living.

Who can apply for the grant?

If you're the primary caregiver of a child (a parent, grandparent or anyone who's mainly responsible to look after the child) you'll need the following to qualify for a grant:

- Be a South African citizen or have permanent residency.
- Not earn more than R48 000 a year (R4 000 a month) if you're single. If you're married, your combined income shouldn't be above R96 000 a year (R8 000 a month).

If you're not the parent, then you'll have to provide proof that you're the child's primary caregiver. You can use an affidavit from a police official or the biological parent, a report from a social worker or a letter from the principal of the child's school.

For the child to qualify they must:

- be under 18 years old,
- not be in the care of a state institution,
- live with the primary caregiver, who isn't paid to look after the child.

You and the child must live in South Africa. You can't get the grant for more than 6 children who aren't your legally adopted or biological children.

You're unable to get a grant if you're:

- being paid to look after the child,
- not the child's primary caregiver,
- someone is already getting a grant for the child,
- you represent an institution that takes care of the child.

Only people whose financial situation is below a certain level can get the grant. The test to decide whether you qualify is called a means test.

What's the grant amount?

The amount changes every year, but the child support grant is currently R440 per month per child.

Child support grant beneficiaries will receive an extra R300 in May and from June to October they will receive an additional R500 each month.

What is the application process?

You can apply for the child support grant by filling in an application form at your nearest SASSA Office or counter service point of a Regional Office. Application is free.

Your application form will be completed in the presence of an officer of SASSA. When your application is completed, you'll be given a receipt. The receipt must be kept as proof of your application.

You'll also need to show certain documents and provide some information, including:

- your South African identity document (ID), which must be bar-coded,
- the child's birth certificate, which must have an ID number,
- your salary slip, bank statements for 3 months, or pension slips, and any other proof of income,
- if you're unemployed, your Unemployment Insurance Fund (UIF) card – "blue book" – or a discharge certificate from your previous employer,
- if you're not the child's parent or guardian, a written note of permission from the parent or guardian that you should take care of the child,
- if you're not the child's parent or guardian, information about how you've tried to get the parents to pay maintenance,

- information that shows that you're the child's primary caregiver.

When you make the application, you should say how you'd like the money to be paid. The money can be paid out in cash on specific days at a pay point, or the money can be paid electronically into your bank account.

Payments will stop if:

- the child dies,
- the end of the month in which the child turns 18,
- if the caregiver doesn't claim for 3 consecutive months.
- If the child is absent from the country, or
- The child is admitted to a state institution.

Your grant will be reviewed from time to time to check this. You must also inform the department of any changes in your or your child's circumstances.

Disability grant

If you have a physical or mental disability which makes you unfit to work and unable to support yourself then the disability grant will assist you. If approved, you'll get a pre-determined amount of money during your disability period.

The maximum amount that can be paid through the disability grant is R1 860 and if your grant is approved, you'll be paid from the date on which you applied.

An increase of R250 per month from May – October was announced by President Cyril Ramaphosa on 21 April 2020.

There are 2 types of grants you can apply for:

- A temporary disability grant
This grant is for a person whose disability will last for a continuous period of not less than 6 months and not more than 12 months.
- A permanent disability grant
This is for someone who'll be disabled for more than 12 months, but that doesn't mean you'll get the grant for life. It simply means that it will continue for longer than 12 months.

To qualify for a disability grant, you'll need to:

- be a South African citizen or permanent resident or refugee and living in South Africa at the time of application,
- be between 18 and 59 years old,
- not be cared for in a state institution,
- have a valid South African identity document (ID),
- earn less than R 78 120 (R6510 a month) if you are single or R 156 240 (R13 020 a month combined) if married.
- not have assets worth more than R1 115 400 if you are single or R2 230 800 if you are married
- undergo a medical examination where a doctor appointed by the state will assess the degree of your disability, and
- bring along any previous medical records and reports when you make the application.

Where to apply

You can apply for a disability grant at your nearest SASSA office. If you're too old or sick to travel to an office near you, a family member or friend can apply on your behalf. Your application form will be completed in the presence of an officer from SASSA. When your application is completed, you'll be given a receipt as proof of your application (make sure you keep your receipt in a safe place).

There's no cost involved in applying for a disability grant.

What if your application is not approved?

- If your application is not approved by SASSA, you must be given valid reasons why the application has been declined in writing.
- You have the right to ask SASSA to reconsider your application if you're unhappy with their decision.
- This appeal must be lodged with SASSA within 90 days of you being informed of the outcome of your initial application.

How will you be paid?

When you make the application, you should say how you would like the money to be paid. A grant will be paid to you through one of the following methods:

- Cash at a specific pay point on a particular day.
- Electronic deposit into your bank account, including Postbank (the bank may charge you for the service).
- An institution not funded by the state – for example, a home for people with disabilities.

The disability grant will be cancelled:

- if you die,
- if you are admitted to a state institution.
- if your income or assets improve so much that you no longer qualify in terms of the means test, or
- in the case of a temporary disability grant, when the period of the temporary disability had lapsed.

Remember that it is your responsibility to inform the department of any changes in your circumstances and means. This includes changes in either your physical or postal addresses and/or banking details. Failure to do so may result in the suspension of your grant.

Grants for older persons (old age pension)

You qualify for an older person's grant if you:

- Are a South African citizen or permanent resident or refugee.
- Live in South Africa
- Are 60 years or older
- Are not living in a state institution
- Are not receiving payments from another social grant
- Your spouse must comply with the means test.
- You must submit your identity document (ID)
- not earn more than R82 400 if you are single or R 164 880 if married.
- not have assets worth more than R1 174 800 if you are single or R2 349 600 if you're married.

How much is the old person's grant?

The amount of the old person's grant changes every year. Currently, the maximum amount that you'll get is R1 860 per month. If you're older than 75 years, you'll get R1 880. Any changes in the grant amounts are reflected every year in the national budget speech or at the opening of Parliament.

An increase of R250 per month from May – October was announced by President Cyril Ramaphosa on 21 April 2020.

What you need to know about the grant application process

You can apply for the old age grant by filling in an application form at your nearest SASSA office and bringing the following information with you:

- Your official identity document (ID).
- If you don't have an ID:
 - You must complete an affidavit on a standard SASSA form in the presence of a Commissioner of Oaths who's not a SASSA official.
 - You must bring a sworn statement signed by a reputable person (like a councillor, traditional leader, social worker, minister of religion or school principal), who can verify your name and age.
 - The SASSA official will take your fingerprints. You'll be referred to the Department of Home Affairs to apply for the ID even as your application is processed. If you don't get an ID, your grant will be suspended.
- Proof of your marital status (if applicable).
- Proof of your address.
- Proof of your income and/or dividends.
- Proof of your assets, including the value of the property you own.
- Proof of your private pension (if any).
- Your 3-month bank statement.
- If you were employed, an Unemployment Insurance Fund (UIF) ('blue book') or discharge certificate from your previous employer.
- If your spouse died within the last 5 years, a copy of your spouse's death certificate, their will, and the first and final liquidation and distribution accounts where applicable.

Note: If you're too old or sick to travel to the office to apply, a family member or friend can apply on your behalf. The person should take a letter from you and/or a doctor's note saying why you can't visit the office.

Complete the application form in the presence of the SASSA officer (note that only you as the applicant or a SASSA official can complete the application form). The officer will interview you and tell you if you qualify for the grant.

Although the application is free, you'll be given a receipt. Keep it as proof that you applied.

How long will it take for the application to be processed?

- It may take up to 3 months to process your application.
- If your grant is approved, you'll be paid from the date on which you applied.
- If your application is refused, you'll get a letter explaining why it has been refused and how you can appeal within 90 days of being notified.

The old persons grant will be cancelled if you die, if you're admitted to a state institution or if your income or assets improve so much that you no longer pass the means test. You must inform the department of any changes in your circumstances.

General

To apply for any one of these grants, visit your nearest South African Social Security Agency (SASSA) office or contact them on 0800 6010 11 for more information.

Social Relief of Distress

Social relief of distress is temporary provision of assistance intended for persons in such a dire material need that they are unable to meet their families' most basic needs.

This could be due to any of the following factors:

- you need help while you wait for your children’s grants to be processed
- a crisis or disaster has occurred (e.g. your house has burnt down)
- you do not qualify for a grant, and you are in a desperate situation
- you are unable to work for a period of less than six months because you are medically unfit
- you are unable to get maintenance from the other parent of your child or children
- the breadwinner in the family has died
- the breadwinner has been sent to prison for a short time (less than six months)
- you have been affected by a disaster, but the area or community in which you live has not been declared a disaster area.

What do you get?

The Social Relief of Distress may be in the form of a food parcel or a voucher to buy food. Some provinces give this assistance in the form of cash. Social Relief of Distress is given for a short time only – usually for up to three months, which may be extended for another three months.

Who to contact?



social relief of distress

As a result of the lockdown, a number of people are facing a loss of income, or the loss of the ability to generate income. SASSA continues to provide hope to thousands of people, through the social relief of distress. SASSA will have staff manning all district offices in every province as from Monday, 06 April 2020. These staff will deal with telephonic applications for SRD and activate local teams which are on standby.

sassa
SOUTH AFRICAN SOCIAL SECURITY AGENCY

Regional contacts

for Social Relief of Distress (SRD) Applications

Applications could be made by either calling 0800 60 10 11 or email to grantenquiries@sassa.gov.za. SASSA also has contact staff in every province, to try and relieve the congestion at the national call centre. The contact numbers are as follows:

Eastern Cape:	043 707 6300 or 043 707 6335
Free State:	051 410 8339
Gauteng:	011 241 8324
KwaZulu-Natal:	Whatsapp 071 607 1514 (Send a message) or phone 033 846 3300
Limpopo:	Mr Veli Maphuta – 083 455 1535
Mpumalanga:	013 754 9428 or 013 754 9454
Northern Cape:	0800 003 077
North West:	018 397 3360
Western Cape:	021 469 0235/072 205 8693

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COVID Social Relief Grant of R350 per person from May to October 2020

R350 Social Relief Grant

The Special COVID-19 Social Relief of Distress amount is R350 per month, from the date of approval until October



Who can apply?

Applicants must be:

- ✓ South African Citizens, Permanent Residents or Refugees registered with Home Affairs;
- ✓ Resident within the borders of the Republic of South Africa;
- ✓ Above the age of 18;
- ✓ Unemployed;
- ✓ Not receiving any income;
- ✓ Not receiving any social grant;
- ✓ Not receiving unemployment insurance benefit and does not qualify to receive unemployment insurance benefit;
- ✓ Not receiving a stipend from the National Student Financial Aid Scheme;
- ✓ Not receiving any other government COVID-19 response support; and
- ✓ Not resident in a government funded or subsidised institution.

✓ Citizens without bank accounts can also apply. In this case payment will be effected through a money transfer, once all the necessary validations have been completed.

What do you need to apply?

- ✓ Applicants are cautioned not to provide their banking details to anyone.
- ✓ SASSA will only request banking information once the application has been approved.
- ✓ All beneficiaries and applicants should never give their PIN number or the CVV number on the back of the banking card to anyone – not even SASSA.
- ✓ We only require the residential address to be provided on the application.
- ✓ SASSA does not require any applicant to scan in supporting documents such as ID, proof of address or bank statements.



Do not attach any documents when applying for the Special COVID-19 Social Relief of Distress Grant in any of the **SASSA application platforms** (email, WhatsApp and website)

How do you apply?

Applications can be received through one of the following channels:

- ✓ Whatsapp Number: **082 046 8553**
- ✓ USSD Number: ***134*7737#**
- ✓ Email: **srd@sassa.gov.za**
- ✓ Call centre IVR: **0800 60 10 11**
- ✓ Website: **https://srd.sassa.gov.za**

Extra Information

- ✓ Once applications are approved, SASSA will request confirmation of bank account through a secure site – this will also be done electronically.
- ✓ Any applicant has the right to request confirmation that this request is from SASSA to protect themselves.
- ✓ **APPLICATIONS ARE FREE:** There is no charge to apply – applicants are cautioned not to buy “application forms” – these are not genuine and will not be processed.

- ✓ By lodging an application, applicants give consent for SASSA to validate the financial and other information against data sources held by government and financial institutions – including SA Revenue Services and banks.
- ✓ The provision of false information in an effort to qualify for the grant is an offence and will result in prosecution.

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Toll free: 0800 60 10 11
www.sassa.gov.za

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*[paying the right social grant, to the right person,
at the right time and place. NJALO!]*



If you need any assistance with this process, please email simoneb@jubilee.org.za.