



22 June 2022

## **Letter to the President proposing a solution to the current SRD Grants crisis**

Dear President Ramaphosa,

We write to request your intervention in the non-payment of SRD Grants. Following your announcement, after the Parliamentary budget debate, that outstanding SRD grant payments would be made from last week, and the statement by Minister Zulu that all outstanding grants would be paid by June, it appears that SASSA remains bogged down in bureaucratic processes and that back pay for the outstanding April and May SRD grants will not be made this month.

This runs counter to the spirit of government pronouncements on this matter, and is grossly unfair to the people who have made applications through the prescribed processes, and we believe ways should be found to urgently correct this.

According to public statements by a senior SASSA official responsible for administering the Grants -

- Only August- Nov 2021 outstanding appeals started being paid last week.
- June payments started this week.
- April and May back payments won't be made in June. April back payments will be made in July, and May back payments will be paid in August

[See interview here.](#)

It is extremely worrying that up to 10 million people who have virtually zero income are being made to wait for three to four months before receiving their Grants that were due in April and May - as you know this is the only income for many that stands between them and hunger.

While we understand that in normal circumstances, certain bureaucratic procedures have to be observed to minimise abuses, we believe that this is an emergency situation that requires extraordinary measures:

- An emergency condonation and payment of all April-May applications ie payment based on declarations people have made – all applicants have had to disclose information via the payment systems. This would not set a precedent for the future, but be an acknowledgement by government that applicants have not been paid not due to any fault on their side, but because the change in procedures took place without the necessary systems being established. Further that government cares about their plight.
- Any fraudulent claims can be dealt with in due course (the grants have been one of the best administered government programmes with only around 0,2% of payments being fraudulent)
- If necessary an emergency amendment should be made to the Regulations to facilitate this intervention.



An alternative remedy that could be implemented speedily is to pay all those who applied in April and May, and had also been approved as beneficiaries up to March 2022. This would mean that they had previously been verified. It is likely these would constitute the overwhelming majority of applicants. The remaining applications could be fast-tracked via the banking verifications.

We hardly need to stress the magnitude of this crisis- taking into account dependents of those receiving the Grant, nearly half the South African population are affected (10-11 million beneficiaries each with around 2 dependants).

We believe that an intervention of this nature would be an important step in demonstrating the seriousness with which government regards this situation.

Yours sincerely  
Neil Coleman

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