**\_**

**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**QUESTION FOR WRITTEN REPLY**

**QUESTION NUMBER: 1068**

**DATE OF PUBLICATION IN INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER: 05 JUNE 2020**

**INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER NUMBER: 19 - 2020**

**1068. Ms L L van der Merwe (IFP) to ask the Minister of Social Development:**

(1) Whether all SA Social Security Agency (SASSA) offices have personal protective equipment (PPEs) for staff such as gloves, masks, sanitisers and thermometers to screen and protect both citizens and officials; if not, why not; if so, what are the relevant details;

(2) what total amount has her department budgeted for the procurement of PPEs for the 2020-21 financial year;

(3) what steps has her department taken to ensure social distancing in queues at SASSA paypoints? NW1362E

**REPLY:**

1. All SA Social Security Agency (SASSA) officials have personal protective equipment (PPEs). Officials have been supplied with gloves and masks. Sanitizers have been placed at strategic points within the offices and all persons entering the offices are sanitised. Officials who required gloves are issued with same. All persons, including beneficiaries and officials are screened when entering the offices and records of the screening is kept. In certain instances, front line staff dealing directly with clients have been provided face shields. Offices and vehicles have been disinfection.
2. There was no budget allocated for the procurement of PPEs, however with the arrival of COVID-19, SASSA had to prioritise within its budget to procure PPEs as this was an emergency. An amount of R31,978,051.67 has been set aside as budget for this purpose and actual spend is R11,390,817.76 for the financial year 2020-21.

(3) The measures implemented by SASSA to ensure compliance to the hygiene protocols at all social grant access points include the following:

1. Splitting the payment file so that older persons and persons with disabilities are paid on the 3rd of each month and all children’s grants are paid on the 5th of each month.
2. Additional support has been utilised from volunteers (CDW), the National Development Agency, Department of Social Development and the Department of Co-operative Governance, Offices of Premiers, SANDF, SAPS, Department of Safety and Traditional Affairs to assist with social distancing regulations and queue marshalling.
3. Engagements with local authorities has also resulted in support being provided. In some towns entire streets were cordoned off, and chairs placed in the streets, with the minimum distancing between the chairs for older persons to sit while waiting for their turn in the retail outlets and post offices.
4. A standing forum exists between SASSA, retailers, Banking Association and Post Office, to plan for the payment cycle. All retailers and the Post Office have implemented measures to ensure that social distancing is maintained at all times.