**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY QUESTION FOR WRITTEN REPLY QUESTION NUMBER: 1127 DATE OF PUBLICATION IN INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER: 05 JUNE 2020**

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**1127. Ms N P Sonti (EFF) to as the Minister of Social Development:**

In light of the fact that one of the requirements for the unemployed to receive the social relief grant of R350 during the lockdown period to curb the spread of Covid-19 is to have a bank account and in view of the fact that this aspect alienated many who truly need the R350, more so in rural areas like Mpumalanga where traveling to and from town can cost up to R200, (a) in what way has his department made alternative means of ensuring persons can register for the grant even when they don’t meet the whole criteria and (b) how are beneficiaries of this particular grant being assisted in cases of not having (i) an identity document and/or (ii) proof of residence for the homeless? NW1429E

**REPLY:**

1. It is not a requirement for any applicant for the special relief grant of R350 per month to have a bank account. The various methods of payment which are available in order to ensure that all citizens are accommodated are:

* Direct deposits into bank accounts, where the applicant has a bank account and provides that information to SASSA on request;
* Money transfers into cell phones for those clients who have a cell phone and elect to receive the payment through this channel. The money transfer is then cashed out at one of four participating bank ATMs or at the retail outlets contracted to those banks;
* Payment through the South African Post Office. This channel is available for all citizens who do not have a bank account, or a mobile phone. Payment is made over the counter on production of an identity document and the SMS notification of payment.

1. (i) One of the requirements contained in the signed Directions is that the applicant must be a South African citizen, permanent resident or refugee as registered on the Department of Home Affairs database. This implies that applicants without identity documents cannot be accepted. The identity number is one of the very few control measures to ensure that the grant does go to the right person, and for purposes of auditability and accountability cannot be compromised.

(ii) Proof of residence is not a requirement. The only requirement is for the applicant to provide an address on the application – this address could even just be the name of the town in which he/she resides.