**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**QUESTION FOR WRITTEN REPLY**

**QUESTION NO. 1490**

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**INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER 25 – 2020**

**1490. Ms T A Khanyile (DA) to ask the Minister of Home Affairs:**

(1) By what date does he envisage that his department will be open for more services, such as letters for retention of SA Citizenship and passport applications and/or renewals;

(2) by what date does he envisage that his department will be open for applications for new identity documents, as many South Africans are unable to apply for the social relief of distress grant announced by the President of the Republic, Mr M C Ramaphosa;

(3) what steps will his department take to deal with the new backlog caused by the lockdown to curb the spread of Covid-19, whilst noting that the opening up of the specified services will enable his department to deal with the new and remaining backlog and long queues which have remained a challenge for the longest time within various Home Affairs offices? NW1861E

**REPLY:**

1. As to whether the Department opens for more services or not and by what date will be determined by lockdown regulations and this decision will be taken by the National Coronavirus Command Council structure when it is ready to do so.

(2) On 3rd of July 2020,I signed into amended regulations, the provision for applications for identity cards or documents for learners. These are essentially new identity document applications (1st issues) that are being catered for. However, since Alert level 5 of lockdown regulations, eligible South African Citizens were allowed to apply for Temporary Identity Card (TIC) which is a valid and authentic enabling document. Therefore, a person who is issued with TIC can also use it to access Social Services including Social Relief grant. Up to so far nobody needing new ID for purposes of accessing social grants was presented to us. If you have any list of such people, please present same to us.

(3) The Department has opened its offices and Services to receive and process applications while observing Covid-19 regulations by allowing one third (1/3) of the Staff compliment at their respective offices at a time. The Department has prioritised and staggered its services which should be applied for and processed. As the country progress from one alert level to the other, the Department will also gradually add other services to enable its offices to cope with the demand whilst complying with Covid 19 regulations.

**END**