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**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**QUESTION FOR WRITTEN REPLY**

**QUESTION NUMBER: 2370**

**DATE OF PUBLICATION IN INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER: 09 JUNE 2023**

**INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER NUMBER: 23 – 2023**

**2370. Ms B S Masango (DA) to ask the Minister of Social Development:**

(1) (a) How does a beneficiary who no longer requires the R350 Social Relief of Distress (SRD) grant cancel the grant, (b) what number of beneficiaries stopped receiving the R350 SRD grant in (i) 2021, (ii) 2022 and (iii) 2023, (c) what number of cancellations have been (i) received and (ii) successfully cancelled for (aa) April 2023 and (bb) May 2023;

(2) whether there is an option on the *srd.sassa.gov.za* website to cancel the grant for April 2023 and May 2023; if not, why not; if so, what are the relevant details;

(3) how does the SA Social Security Agency ensure that the total number of applicants who are pending and/or declined is not skewed by the applicants who cannot cancel their grants?

  **NW2707E**

**REPLY:**

(1)(a) A beneficiary can cancel the COVID SRD grant by logging onto the platform (<https://srd.sassa.gov.za>) which they used to apply for the grant, select the cancel option and follow the prompts for cancellation. The cancellation is not based on a month, but a permanent cancellation. If cancelled, the client will need to reapply for the grant, if they need it in future.

(1)(b)(i), (1)(b)(ii), (1)(b)(iii) The number of grants which were stopped due to cancellations received for the years under this enquiry are:

(i) 2021 – 341 896

(ii) 2022 – 435 432

(iii) 2023 – 211 814

It should be noted that despite canceling the grants, quite a number of clients re-instate their grants at a later period in the same year. In this regard, SASSA is not able to indicate which of the above numbers were reinstated again as their might have been multiple cancellations and re-instatements per client.

Given the aforementioned explanation, SASSA unfortunately cannot answer this question without a significant amount of analysis of tens of millions of records, which will take a considerable amount of time. Given that the grant is not permanent and a client can receive it one month, then stop for a month or two due to them receiving other forms of assistance, (as alluded to above) and then qualify again for a few months; the analysis of the data is further complicated.

1 (c) the number of cancellations which have been (i) received

(aa) April 2023 – 169 635

(bb) May 2023 – 181 867

(ii) Successfully cancelled for

(aa) April 2023 - 169 635

(bb) May 2023 - 181 867

(2) There is an option to cancel the grant for April and May 2023 on the website. As indicated in 1(a), a beneficiary can cancel the COVID SRD grant by logging onto the platform (<https://srd.sassa.gov.za>) which they used to apply for the grant, select the cancel option and follow the prompts for cancellation.

(3) As indicated it is possible for clients to cancel their grants. Despite this, unfortunately there is no way for SASSA to know if a client no longer needs the grant and wants to cancel it, unless they inform SASSA. The process to cancel the grant is as easy as the process to apply, if not easier, and remains the responsibility of the beneficiary to notify SASSA if their circumstances change.

It is very likely that the reason why clients who no longer need the grant can be because they are receiving income. This will be picked up when SASSA checks income on a monthly basis before approving the grant for that month. Hence the numbers for “declined”, may be skewed by those who should have cancelled their grant. However, given the current economic situation in the country, these numbers are likely to be small, even negligible.