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**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**QUESTION FOR WRITTEN REPLY**

**QUESTION NUMBER: 3562**

**DATE OF PUBLICATION IN INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER: 14 OCTOBER 2022**

**INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER NUMBER: 38 - 2022**

**3562. Ms L L van der Merwe (IFP) to ask the Minister of Social Development:**

(1) What total number of recipients from grants of the SA Social Security Agency (SASSA) are being paid (a) in person, (b) through electronic funds transfer and/or bank accounts and (c) through CashSend;

(2) what (a) total number of SASSA grant recipients are awaiting their appeals for grants to be finalised and (b) is the breakdown of such grant types;

(3) what (a) total number of grants have not been paid to date and (b) are the reasons that the grant payments are being delayed? NW4368E

**REPLY:**

1. SASSA clients are divided into two groups. Those who receive social grants and those that receive the Social Relief of Distress (SRD), including the COVID-19 SRD.
2. No social grants or SRD, with the exception of SRD for disasters, are paid in person as all grants are paid into bank accounts or via a mobile money option.

SRD for disasters are provided in-kind. This is in the form of food, blankets, mattresses, etc. that are supplied to individuals in shelters; or as vouchers that can be redeem at merchants.

In rural areas where normal banking infrastructure is limited, the Postbank provides cash paypoints for SASSA clients to access their funds from via Postbank accounts. The number of clients who utilise this facility varies from month to month from between 100 000 to 200 000. In the month of August 2022, 118,981 clients utilised this option.

1. All clients – both for SRD and social grants – and with the exception of those who are paid in-kind, are paid into their indicated bank accounts; and
2. approximately a 100 000 COVID-19 SRD clients are paid via a mobile money transfer (cash send) option.
3. In relation to the appeals relating to SASSA grant decisions:

(a) As at 30 September 2022 the Independent Tribunal for Social Assistance Appeals (ITSAA) received a total of 2 591 appeals that are related to the decisions of SASSA on social assistance applications to various grant types. A total of 1 014 appeals have been finalised and 1 577 is currently in the adjudication process. The total outstanding is still within 90 days period as the related appeals were all received during August and September 2022.

(b) The appeals are disaggregated as follows in terms, of the various grant types:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Grant Type** | **Total Received** | **Total Adjudicated** | **Outstanding** |
| **DISABILITY GRANT** | 2 335 | 933 | 1 402 |
| **OLD AGE GRANT** | 95 | 29 | 66 |
| **CARE DEPENDENCY GRANT** | 77 | 24 | 53 |
| **GRANT-IN-AID** | 50 | 24 | 26 |
| **FOSTER CARE GRANT** | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| **CHILD SUPPORT GRANT** | 33 | 3 | 30 |
| **WAR VETERANS GRANT** | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| **SRD (NORMAL)** | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| **GRAND TOTAL** | **2 591** | **1 014** | **1 577** |

In addition to the above, as at 30 September 2022, the Independent Tribunal received a total of 3 595 147 appeals in respect of the third (current) iteration of the Covid-19 SRD for the period of April 2022 to July 2022. The appeals were recorded for April, May, June and July totaling 1 165 369, 1 297 776, 516 442 and 588 401, respectively. Some appeals related to the month of June 2022, the 90-days period expired during the 1st week of October 2022. However, the Independent Tribunal has adjudicated all appeals received against the Covid-19 SRD applications declined by SASSA for the month of June 2022. The rest of the appeals that are outstanding are still within 90-days period which will expire during the relevant months in line with the period they were received. Below are the details in relation to the Covid-19 SRD appeals received as from 27 June 2022:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Grant Type** | **Total Received** | **Total Adjudicated** | **Outstanding** |
| **Covid-19 SRD** | 3 595 147 | 516 442 | 3 078 705 |

The adjudication processes relating to April – May 2022 are underway.

3.

(a) There are no social grants or SRD for disasters that are not paid to date. Payment challenges do however persist with the COVID-19 SRD assessments and payments. At present, assessments are running about 1 month behind (September assessments were conducted in October) and approximately 80% of approved clients have been paid. In August 2022, this represented approximately 1.4 million clients.

(b) The main reasons for delayed payments include:

* Awaiting bank account verification – before making a payment for the first time, SASSA needs to confirm with the bank that the bank account uploaded by the client belongs to the client to ensure that we are paying the correct person.
* Failed bank account verification – often clients upload incorrect banking details.
* For cash send options a similar verification of the mobile number used by the client for payment is required. A huge majority of these fail due to clients not using mobile numbers that are directly linked to them in terms of the Regulation of Interception of Communications and Provision of Communication Related Information Act 70 of 2002 (RICA).