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**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY QUESTION FOR WRITTEN REPLY**

**QUESTION NUMBER: 486**

**DATE OF PUBLICATION IN INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER: 26 FEBRUARY 2021**

**INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER NUMBER: 4 - 2021**

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

(1) What (a) total number of children without birth certificates were paid grants by the SA Social Security Agency (SASSA) in the December 2020 pay-run and (b) is the breakdown of the specified number for each province;

(2) what (a) total number of children without birth certificates were paid grants by SASSA in January 2021 and (b) is the breakdown of the specified number for each province;

(3) what (a) total number of these children had their grants stopped on 31 December 2020 due to SASSA enforcing its internal 3-month rule in terms of which the caregiver must submit the outstanding identity document (ID) and/or birth certificate or proof that she has applied to Home Affairs for these documents and (b) is the breakdown of the specified number for each province;

(4) taking into account that the country is under lockdown level 3 to curb the spread of COVID-19 and the Department of Home Affairs is not processing new ID applications or late birth registrations, what are the reasons that SASSA allowed the grants to lapse at the end of 2020;

(5) whether SASSA intends to reinstate these children’s grants; if not, why not; if so, for how long will they remain in payment before they lapse again? NW542E

**REPLY:**

1(a) The total number of children in payment in December 2020 without birth certificates was 24 756.

(b) The numbers per province are indicated below:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Province** | **Number** |
| Eastern Cape | 1 967 |
| Free State | 161 |
| Gauteng | 14 696 |
| KwaZulu-Natal | 1 637 |
| Limpopo | 275 |
| Mpumalanga | 584 |
| Northern Cape | 358 |
| North West | 99 |
| Western Cape | 4 979 |

2(a) The total number of children in payment in January 2021 without birth certificates was

 28 178.

(b) The numbers per province are indicated below:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Province** | **Number** |
| Eastern Cape | 2 064 |
| Free State | 418 |
| Gauteng | 15 852 |
| KwaZulu-Natal | 2 080 |
| Limpopo | 353 |
| Mpumalanga | 665 |
| Northern Cape | 1 124 |
| North West | 193 |
| Western Cape | 5 429 |

3(a) The total number of grants for these children which were lapsed at the end of December were 1 792.

(b) The breakdown per province is as follows:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Province** | **Number** |
| Eastern Cape | 73 |
| Free State | 155 |
| Gauteng | 358 |
| KwaZulu-Natal | 302 |
| Limpopo | 37 |
| Mpumalanga | 32 |
| Northern Cape | 87 |
| North West | 575 |
| Western Cape | 173 |

4. Applications for social grants are accepted, where the applicant does not have the required critical documents, The applications are conditionally approved, with the applicant required to show proof of having applied for the required documentation, within a 3 month period of have applied for the grant. It is important to note that the applicant does not necessarily have to produce the required document within the 3 month period, but just produce proof of having approached the Department of Home Affairs to apply for the required documents. Should the applicant not provide that proof, then the grant is lapsed.

 This action is taken to mitigate the risk of continuing to pay a grant to someone who does not qualify to obtain South African identity documents. However, SASSA is working closely with the Departments of Social Development and Home Affairs to determine alternative methods to mitigate these risks, without necessarily putting the responsibility on individual citizens.

 The lapsings of the grants for the above children were initiated when the country was under level 1 of lockdown restrictions. However, as soon as the country moved back to level 3, discussions were entered into with the Department of Social Development to obtain approval to reinstate these grants. In addition, an agreement has been reached not to lapse any grants for any beneficiaries who do not have the relevant critical documents (both ID documents for adults as well as birth certificates for children) for as long as the state of disaster persists, regardless of the lock down level.

5. All 1 792 children’s grants which lapsed at the end of December were reinstated, with back pay for the month of January and paid in February 2021.

 The total number of children’s grants for children without birth certificates in payment for February 2021 has increased to 29 064, as indicated below:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Province** | **Number** |
| Eastern Cape | 2 074 |
| Free State | 431 |
| Gauteng | 16 585 |
| KwaZulu-Natal | 2 108 |
| Limpopo | 367 |
| Mpumalanga | 671 |
| Northern Cape | 1 153 |
| North West | 203 |
| Western Cape | 5 472 |