



Financially
SMART

SOCIAL GRANTS:

UNDERSTANDING SOCIAL GRANTS

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. What is a social grant and why does it exist?

A social grant is money that is paid by the government via the South African Social Security Agency (SASSA) to people of retirement age for example. The reason SA has social grants is to improve the standards of living for the vulnerable. Remember South Africans have rights for example the need for social grants is addressed in Sections 24 through 29 of the Bill of Rights. The South African Constitution also highlights the socio-economic rights of citizens, including the right to social security.

2. Can I apply for a social grant if I am not a South African citizen?

You can apply if you are a permanent resident or refugee.

3. Do I have to pay for the application?

The application is free, and you apply in person at the nearest SASSA's offices. For a list of SASSA's offices visit www.sassas.gov.za or call 0800 60 10 11.

4. How do I apply for grant in South Africa?

There are various grants that one can apply for, however, there are pre-requirements to qualify for these grants. Some grants also require that the applicant undergo a means test.

The application process is as follows:

- Go to your nearest SASSA's offices
- Take all your important documentation with you like your ID, proof of address, bank statements, marriage certificate etc.
- A SASSA's official will assist you in person to fill out the forms.
- You will then get a receipt
- If your application is approved you will get an SMS notification.

- You will be provided with a SASSA's card that operates like a bank card or the money can be transferred to your bank account monthly.

Note that the approval process can take up to 3 months. If approved, you will be back-paid from the date of application.

5. What is a 'means' test?

In South Africa, Social Assistance is subject to means testing which implies that SASSA evaluates the income and assets of the person applying as well as his/her spouse in order to determine whether the person's means are below a stipulated amount. This Means Test is a way of determining whether a person qualifies to receive a grant as grants are indeed meant for those who have insufficient means to support themselves. The Means Test varies from one grant type to another.

Do not lie on the means test. You will get caught out!

Visit the SASSA's website www.sassa.gov.za or call them on 0800 60 1011 to get more information on the pre-requirements and financial thresholds to apply for the various grants.

Note: Grants for older persons, war veterans and disabled are paid on a sliding scale. that is, the more private income you have, the smaller the government support you may qualify for.

For the thresholds click the link below:

<https://www.sassa.gov.za/publications/Documents/08%20March%20%202023%20ENGLISH%20YOU%20AND%20YOUR%20GRANTS%202022-23.pdf>

6. What are the different types of grants?

- Child support grant
- Child support Top-up
- Care dependency grant
- Foster child grant
- Disability grant
- Grant in aid
- Older person's grant (old age pension)
- War veterans grant

- Social relief of distress
- Covid-19 Social Relief of distress

Remember: There are requirements that need to be met for each type of grant.

7. How much money does each grant provide?

Amounts of grants as of October 2023 is as follows:

Grant type	October 2023
Old Age Grant (Below 75 years)	R2090
Old Age Grant (Above 75 years)	R2110
War Veteran’s Grant	R2110
Disability Grant	R2090
Care dependency Grant	R2090
Foster Child Grant	R1130
Child Support Grant	R510
Child support Grant top-up	R250
Grant in Aid	R510
Covid-19 Social Relief of Distress Grant	R350

8. How will I receive my grant?

You will be given a SASSA card which works and looks like a bank card.

9. What if my ID card is lost or stolen?

If you have lost your ID book or card and do not have any identification, you must get an affidavit from the police station stating that you have lost your ID book or card. The affidavit must include your ID number.

10. Can I apply online?

No, you must go to the SASSA office nearest to you.

11. Can I fill in the application form at home?

This form must be completed in front of the SASSA officer, the form cannot be completed at home and brought to the office.

12. What if I cannot go to the SASSA office to apply?

If you are too old or too sick to apply for the grant at the office, you may have a friend or family member apply on your behalf. You can also arrange for a home visit, although you may wait a while for this.

13. Do I need to go to the police station to get an affidavit?

When affidavits are required, SASSA will provide the affidavits for you to complete.

14. What do I write on SASSA affidavit?

Depending on the social grant you are applying for, the contents of the affidavit must be written as follows: "I hereby state under oath that I am not currently receiving a grant for older persons, war veterans grant, or disability grant, and I am applying for a Grant in Aid. I confirm that I am not in a state-funded or subsidised institution, and I require regular attendance by another person." You must complete an affidavit on a standard SASSA form in the presence of a Commissioner of Oaths who is not a SASSA official. You must bring a sworn statement signed by a reputable person (like a councilor, traditional leader, social worker, minister of religion, or school principal), who can verify your name and age.

15. What can I do with my SASSA card?

Your SASSA card is like a debit card. You can make purchases, check your balance, or withdraw cash at till points wherever MasterCard is accepted.

16. Will I have to pay to use my SASSA card?

If you withdraw money at a till point, you will not have to pay any transaction costs on your SASSA card. But if you withdraw money with your card at ATMs, you will be charged transaction charges. Cash withdrawal at a South African Post Office branch: the first withdrawal per month is free, thereafter, R 4.07 + (amount withdrawn *0.68%) + R 0.17.

17. When do I receive my grant?

Once a month.

SASSA's grant payment schedule:

- Older persons grant: 3rd of every month
- Disability grant: 4th of every month
- All other grants: 5th of every month

SASSA will communicate any date changes to beneficiaries.

18. Can I put money into my SASSA card?

You and other people can also deposit money into this account.

19. How long until I know when my grant application is approved?

You will get notified via SMS.

Alternatively,

You can check your application status online:

- Log into grants.gov
- Click the check application status link, which appears under the Grant Applications heading in the Applicant Center page. This will take you to the Check Application Status page.
- Enter search criteria and a date range to narrow your search results.
- Click the search button. To review your search results in Microsoft Excel, click the Export Detailed Data button.
- Review the status column. For more information, read the Application Statuses.

20. Where can I withdraw my grant?

Beneficiaries can withdraw their money from the Post Office, Pick'nPay, Boxer, Checkers, Shoprite, or Usave supermarkets. Grant money can be accessed from the day it has been received and the beneficiary can continue with withdrawals until all money is withdrawn.

21. If I draw money from a till point, do I need to spend money in that shop?

No, if you draw money at a till point in a Spar, for example, you do not need to spend your money in the Spar.

22. Can I get more than one grant at a time?

You may qualify for more than one grant, for example, you may have a child and can claim a child support grant, but you are also looking after your mother, so you can claim a care dependency grant.

23. My application for a grant has been denied. What do I do?

You may apply to SASSA for a reconsideration within 90 days of your grant application being refused. If this is unsuccessful, you can also launch an appeal to the Independent Tribunal for Social Assistance Appeals.

24. I have lost my SASSA's card, what do I do?

If you have lost or damaged your SASSA card, you can visit your local branch office to receive a new card. You should be issued one immediately.

25. If I move to another province, do I need to re-apply for my grant or can I have it transferred?

You do not need to transfer your grant or re-apply, but you do need to inform your local SASSA office of your change of address immediately.

26. I have a serious problem with my SASSA grant and I have struggled to get help or information from SASSA. What do I do now?

Call the SASSA Hotline on 0800 60 10 11. It is free from a landline. If you are unable to get help here and you feel you may need paralegal advice, the Black Sash offers free paralegal advice. Black Sash will listen to your story and advise you on your rights and what to do. Their advice hotline number is 072 66 33 739. You can SMS them or even send them a “please call me” if you have no airtime.

27. What is a grant review?

It is your responsibility to update SASSA on any changes in your health or income status or the death of a beneficiary. SASSA conducts regular reviews of the income and health status of beneficiaries to check that they are still eligible for a grant. SASSA should give you 90 days’ notice of this review, during which time you must present the relevant information to SASSA. If SASSA finds that you are no longer eligible for a grant or you do not present them with the required documents, you will be given 90 days’ notice that your grant will be suspended. You can apply for a reconsideration if you do not agree that your grant should be cancelled.

28. Can you give me an example of a grant application process for child support grant, old age pension, disability and social relief/distress grant?

Child support grant

Firstly, to apply for a child support grant you must:

- Be the child’s primary caregiver (e.g., parent, grandparent, or a child over 16 heading a family). Note: If you are not the child’s parent, you must provide proof that you are the child’s primary caregiver through an affidavit from a police official, a social worker’s report, an affidavit from the biological parent, or a letter from the principal of the school attended by the child.
- Be a South African citizen or permanent resident.
- Not earn more than R52,800.00 per year if you are single. If you are married, your combined income should not be above R105,600.00 per year. *(These amounts change yearly, refer to your SASSA’s official for the latest amounts)*

The child must:

- Be under the age of 18 years.
- Not be cared for in a state institution.
- Live with the primary caregiver who is not paid to look after the child.

Both you and the child must live in South Africa.

Note: You cannot get this grant for more than six children who are not your biological or legally adopted children.

Old age pension

You must:

- Be a South African citizen, permanent resident, or refugee.
- Live in South Africa.
- Not receive any other social grant for yourself.
- Not be cared for in a state institution.
- Not earn more than R86,280.00 if you are single or R172,560.00 if you are married.
- Not have assets worth more than R1,227,600.00 if you are single or R2,455,200.00 if you are married.

Disability grant

To qualify you must:

- Be a South African citizen, permanent resident, or refugee living in South Africa at the time of application.
- Be between 18 and 59 years old.
- Not be cared for in a state institution.
- Have a 13-digit, bar-coded ID book or card.
- Not earn more than R86,280.00 if you are single or R172,560.00 if you are married.
- Not have assets worth more than R1,227,600.00 if you are single or R2,455,200.00 if you are married.
- Undergo a medical examination where a doctor appointed by the state will assess the degree of your disability.
- Bring along any previous medical records and reports when you make the application and when the assessment is done.

The doctor will complete a medical report and will forward the report to SASSA. The report is valid for three months from the date you are assessed.

Note: If you are under 18 and need permanent care due to your disability, your primary caregiver can apply for a Care Dependency Grant. If you don't have an ID, you will be required to complete an affidavit and provide proof of having applied for the document from the Department of Home Affairs. If you have not applied for an ID, you must do so within three months of applying for the grant.

Social relief or distress

Social relief of distress is a temporary provision of assistance intended for persons in such dire material need that they are unable to meet their families' most basic needs.

This could be due to any of the following factors:

- You need help while you wait for your children's grants to be processed.
- A crisis or disaster has occurred (e.g., your house has burned down).

- You do not qualify for a grant, and you are in a desperate situation.
- You are unable to work for a period of less than six months because you are medically unfit.
- You are unable to get maintenance from the other parent of your child or children.
- The breadwinner in the family has died.
- The breadwinner has been sent to prison for a short time (less than six months).
- You have been affected by a disaster, but the area or community in which you live has not been declared a disaster area.

29. When does a grant lapse?

- When the beneficiary or primary care giver dies
- In respect of a child grant, when the child dies
- Admission to a State institution
- When the period of temporary disability has lapsed
- You are absent from the Republic, for a period longer than 90 days.
- If you cease to be a refugee.
- If the child for whom the grant is received, turns 18.
- If the grant was not collected for 3 consecutive months.

30. How can I stay safe from scams targeting grant beneficiaries:

- Never give out any personal information like your bank account number, your ID number or your bank pin.
- Never click on a link in an email if you do not know who sent it or if you suspect that the source of the email is not legitimate.
- Never respond to an email or SMS with any of your SASSA related or personal information.
- Do not believe everything you see, beware of SMS's. Scam artists use SMS to scam anyone.
- Never give anyone your pin number.
- Never give anyone your SASSA card.
- Never give someone money to apply for a grant for you. You can nominate someone to go and apply for the grant if you are too ill or unable to do so yourself.

31. Where can I get more information on social grants?

Visit www.sassa.gov.za or call 0800 60 10 11

Or www.fscamymoney.co.za and email CED.Consumer@fsca.co.za

Herewith a list of supporting resources on Social Grants in South Africa:

- [Social Grants Booklet](#)
- [Social Grants Infographic](#)