



## Introduction

All social grants in South Africa are run by the South African Social Security Agency (SASSA). In 2004 the South African Social Security Agency Act 9 of 2004 was published to “ensure the provision of comprehensive social security services against vulnerability and poverty within the constitutional legislative framework”.

Social grants are different to the unemployment fund maternity benefits.

The Act gives SASSA the guidelines on managing social grants and gives South Africans the information they need to access social grants.

Please note: Some of this information is unaudited or subject to revision. Content has been taken from the latest budget speech 2018 and SASSA website ([www.sassa.gov.za](http://www.sassa.gov.za)). Please note that the amounts referred to in this document will change annually.





## 1. Social grants in South Africa

### 1.1 Why does SA have social grants?

The reason SA has social grants is to improve the standards of living for the vulnerable.

Remember South Africans have rights. 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.

### 1.2 Who can get a social grant?

**Grants are targeted at categories of people who are vulnerable to poverty and in need of state support.**

**These are:**

- Older people;
- people with disabilities;
- children; and
- war veterans.

### 1.3 What social grants are available?


**Grants available include:**

- Child support grant, this grant is available to an unemployed mother to care for her child
- Older person's grant
- Disability grant
- Grant in aid
- Care dependency grant
- War veteran's grant
- Foster child grant
- Social relief grant

### 1.4 What are the requirements to apply for a grant?

**Applicants for social grants must be:**

- South African citizens;
- a permanent resident;
- or refugee; and
- currently living in South Africa.

 A "means test" is used to see if a person is qualified for a social grant. The means test is a system that SASSA uses to see if you can qualify for a grant. When doing the means test, SASSA looks at your income and any assets and assesses to see if they are below the maximum earnings to be able to apply for a grant.

Note: Foster child grant and grant in aid are not required to go through the "means test".



Grant in aid is a grant given to a person who cares for a person who is receiving one of the following grants that cannot care for themselves:

- Disability grant
- War veteran grant
- Older person grant

The person receiving a grant must be cared for at home and not in a state facility such as a mental institution.


You can only apply for a grant if your income and assets fall below a certain amount.

## 2. How to apply for a grant?


All applications for grants must be made at the SASSA office that is nearest to you.

### 2.1 What is the process to apply for a grant?

- Visit the SASSA office with your original or a certified copy of your 13 digit ID document (if you have lost your ID document and do not have any identification you must get an affidavit from the police station stating that you have lost your ID document. The affidavit must include your ID number).
- If you have a disability, you need to bring the medical doctor / practitioners report.
- An officer will assist you with completing the appropriate application form. This form must be completed in front of the SASSA officer (The form cannot be completed and bought to the office).

 **Note:** 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.

- When you hand in your form, you will be given a receipt. This is the proof that you submitted your application.

 **Note:** The application is free and you can get the forms from the SASSA's offices.


- When the application is processed, you will receive written notification of the outcome. A letter will be sent to the address given on your application form.

### 2.2 What documents must I take to apply for a grant?

You must take your green bar-coded identity book. If you are applying for a grant for a child, you must have the birth certificate for the child/children. This may be the original or a certified copy.


Other documents required for application:

- If you are married, provide the identity document of your spouse and proof of spousal relationship (marriage certificate, divorce order, a sworn statement, or spouse's death certificate).
- Sworn statement or affidavit stating the income and assets of yourself and your spouse.

 **Note:** When affidavits are required, SASSA will provide the affidavits for you to complete, so you do not need to go to a police station to fill in an affidavit.

- Supporting documents to prove your income and assets.
- You must also provide proof of the income of dependent children.



 Note: The application process takes up to 90 days, and your first payment will include back-pay for the time you wait to receive the grant. This is calculated from the first day of application. For example, if your grant is R2,000 and you apply for your grant on the 1st May, when you receive your money you will receive your grant for May, June and July so it will be R2,000 (May) + R2,000 (June) + R2,000 (July) = R6,000 for the 90 days.

Remember, when you apply for a grant you will need to have money for transport as you may need to visit the offices more than once.

**2.3 What do I do if I am not happy with the outcome of the application?**


If your grant was not approved and you are not happy you can ask them to look at your application again, you can appeal, and you have 90 days to submit your appeal.

**2.4 Your SASSA card**

If your grant application is successful, you will receive a SASSA card and a bank account where your money will be deposited each month. This card is associated with MasterCard and can be used as a debit card, and you can either use it to make purchases, check your balance or withdraw cash at till points wherever MasterCard is accepted without incurring any transaction costs. If you draw money at a till point for example Spar, you do not need to spend your money in the Spar.

You can also withdraw money with your card at ATMs, but you will be charged transaction charges. You and other people can also deposit money into this account.

**2.5 Important information on grant amounts**

 Note: This amount you will receive is different for all the grants. If you are married, or single, this also has an impact on the means test. If you are married, both incomes will be used to do the means test. This is linked to the means test.

Once you have been through a means test, you may receive the maximum amount offered by SASSA, or you may receive a percentage of the full amount.


Example: You collect paper and sell it and earn R600 a month. When you apply for your grant, you will have to inform SASSA that you earn R600 a month. Your earnings could affect the amount of money you receive each month from the grant. You will be required to disclose what you earn a month, and provide proof thereof in a bank statement or salary slip.


It is possible for you to earn an income and still qualify for an additional financial support in the form of a grant from the government. But remember, the amount of money you get every month will be reduced by the amount of money you earn. For example, if you are supposed to get R2,000 a month from the grant, and you earn R600 from selling recycled items, you will only get R2,000 – R600 = R1,400.


If for mental or health reasons you are admitted to a state institution (for example mental institution, state hospital, step down care) for more than three months, your grant will drop by 25% from the 4th month. This will apply until you are discharged from the state institution.

- This will apply to:
- old age grant,
  - disability grant or
  - war veteran's grant.



 Note: If you get an old age grant, disability grant or war veteran's grant and you are admitted to a state institution for more than three months (on the 4th month) you will only receive 75% of your grant. In other words, if you were to get R2,000 a month and you spent 4 months in a state institution you would get R500 (25%) less, so you would get  $R2,000 - R500 = R1,500$ .

 Note: The grant money must be a last resort, as the amount of money you receive will never be enough to cover all you monthly expenses.

 Note: You may qualify for more than one of the grants, 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.

### 3. What is each grant about?

#### 3.1 Child support grant


The value of the child support grant is R380 per month. It increased by R20 as of 1st April 2018 and by R10 on the 1st October 2018. Every year the Minister of Finance will make an announcement in his budget speech notifying consumers of any increases in the monthly grant amounts. You need to listen to his speech every year in February.

**A child support grant will only be granted to:**

- The primary caregiver of a child; (mother, father, grandparent, close friend, or grandfather for example).
- On condition that the child or children must live with you.
- The child must be younger than 17 years.

 Note: The grant will be terminated when the child turns 18 years old.

- The primary caregiver, if a child is not in a state institution (orphanage or foster care).
- The primary caregiver, if the child lives in South Africa.

 Note: The maximum amount of children you can apply for a child support grant is six children if you are not the biological parent of the children or you have legally adopted the children.

**What do you need to qualify for the child support grant?**

Remember, to work out if you can apply for this grant; the means test will be used.

**The requirements of the means test are:**

- Single – Must not earn more than R45,600 per year (R3,800 per month)
- Married – Your earnings together with your partner's earnings must not be more than R91,200 per year (R7,600 per month)

#### 3.2 Care dependency grant

The value of the care dependency grant is R1,600 per month. It increased to R1,695 per month as of the 1st April 2018.

The care dependency grant is for people who look after children who have a disability.



## More about



### To apply for this grant:

- You will need a medical officer's report from a professional person like a doctor that confirms that the child is permanently and severely medically disabled.
- The child must be under the age of 18.
- The child must be cared for at home and not in a state institution.



Note: Remember that people with a mental disability may also apply for a care dependency grant.

### What do you need to qualify for the care dependency grant?

The requirements of the means test are:

- Single – Must not earn more than R192,000 per year (R16,000 per month)
- Married – Your earnings together with your partner's earnings must not be more than R384,000 per year (R32,000 per month)

### What conditions qualify for a care dependency grant?

Care dependency grants are available to people with:

- Physical,
- Mental,
- Psychiatric,
- Intellectual and
- Sensory disabilities.



Note: When a medical professional like a medical doctor examines a person with a disability they must determine that the disability prevents them from getting a job.

You have to go to a SASSA accredited medical doctor / professional. To find out which medical doctors / professionals are registered with SASSA you need to visit their website [www.sassa.gov.za](http://www.sassa.gov.za).

The medical doctor / professionals report must not be older than 3 months, and the medical doctor / professional will determine if the disability is permanent or temporary. If the medical doctor / professional determines the report is temporary, they will state that you need to be re-evaluated. The report will give the time frame for the re-evaluation. It could be 6 months, a year or even 5 years.

### 3.3 Foster child grant

The value of the foster child grant is R920 per month. It has increased to R960 per month as of the 1st April 2018.

#### The requirements for this grant are:

- You must live in South Africa;
- the child must live in South Africa;
- the children must be under the age of 18; and
- there must be a court order indicating that you have been designated the foster carer for the child.



Note: The only means test is that the child must live with the foster parent and be under their permanent care.




### 3.4 Disability grant

The maximum value of the Disability Grant is R1,600 per month. It has increased to R1,695 per month as of the 1st April 2018.

**The disability grant is awarded to people who:**

- Are between the age of 18 and 59;
- do not receive another grant;
- are not cared for by the state in a state institution; and
- are found medically unfit for work by a medical officer because of a mental or physical disability.

 **Note:** If you are temporarily unable to work for between six to twelve months you may apply for a disability grant. If after six to twelve months you are still unable to work because of your disability you may apply for a permanent grant.

**What do you need to qualify for the disability grant?**

The requirements of the means test are:

- Single – Must not earn more than R73,800 per year (R6,150 per month) and your assets cannot be worth more than R1,056,000.
- Married – Your earnings together with your partner’s earnings must not be more than R147,600 per year (R12,300 per month) and your combined assets cannot be worth more than
- R2,112,000.

**Here is a list of conditions that do not qualify for the disability grant:**

- If your HIV status is positive and your medication is keeping your CD4 count constant, and you are healthy
- Diabetics, asthma and high blood pressure is controlled with medication
- Back, limbs and joint aches and pains that have no medical diagnosis
- Chronic tiredness that cannot be linked to a medical condition
- Determination of arms and legs making you unstable but you are still able to move around
- Controlled gout, osteoarthritis or rheumatoid arthritis that does not prevent you from doing your daily tasks
- Old healed fractures or injuries that do not stop you from doing your daily tasks

### 3.5 Grant in aid

The value of Grant in aid is R380 per month.

The grant in aid is for people who are living on a social grant but cannot look after themselves and need to pay a caregiver to look after them. For example, a granny who is receiving an older person’s grant (old age pension) but is unable to bath and feed themselves as they are too weak, they will require the help of a caregiver. This caregiver will be able to apply for the grant in aid.

 **Note:** There is no means test for this grant.

You need to be assessed by a medical officer who must declare that you cannot look after yourself without care.

 **Note:** You cannot receive this grant if you are being cared for in a state institution.



### 3.6 Older person's grant (old age pension)

The maximum value of the older person's grant is R1,600 per month. It has increased by R90 as of 1st April 2018 and increased by a further R10 on the 1st October 2018.



Note: If you are over the age of 75 you will receive an additional R20 per month.

#### You may apply for this grant if:

- You are over the age of 60;
- you do not receive any other grant and
- you are not looked after by the state in a state institution

#### What do you need to qualify for the older person's grant (old age pension)?

The requirements of the means test are:

- Single – Must not earn more than R73,800 per year (R6,150 per month)
- Married – Your earnings together with your partner's earnings must not be more than R147,600 per year (R12,300 per month)
- Combined assets must not be more than R2,112,000

### 3.7 War veterans grant

The maximum value of the grant is R1,620 per month. It has increased by R90 as of 1st April 2018

#### To get this grant, you must have fought in:

- World War I;
- World War II; or
- Korean War.

#### You must:

- Be over the age of 60;
- not receive any other grants and
- not be cared for in a state institution.

#### What do you need to qualify for the war veteran's grant?

The requirements of the means test are:

- Single – Must not earn more than R73,800 per year (R6,150 per month)
- Married – Your earnings together with your partner's earnings must not be more than R147,600 per year (R12,300 per month)
- Combined assets must not be more than R2,112,000

### 3.8 Social relief of distress



Note: There is a grant called social relief of distress. This grant is for people who need immediate assistance but for only a short period. This assistance could be because of:

#### Social relief of distress is temporary assistance for people in the following situations:

- Awaiting payment of an approved social grant
- Not fit to work for less than six months due to medical reasons
- No legal maintenance received that was due to you
- The death of the breadwinner in the family





 Note: This will only be granted if an application for the social relief grant is made within three months of the death of the breadwinner.

- A breadwinner is admitted to a state institution or prison for less than six months;
- Some disaster, for example, a flood or fire causing you to lose all your possessions.

**This grant could be in the form of:**

- Voucher;
- Food parcels; or
- Money

 Note: The grant will not be for a period longer than three months. In exceptional cases, you may apply for a further three months.

**What do you need to qualify for the social relief grant?**

**The requirements of the means test are:**

- You must not receive any other grant

### 3.9 Scams

SASSA is always warning people who receive social grants to be careful of scams.

**Never give anyone:**

- Your personal information
- Your pin number
- Your SASSA card

**Reported scams are:**

- People phone saying they need to verify your information
- People say that they need to test your card and ask for the PIN
- People asking you to sign a letter so that they can apply for your grant

**SMS Phishing**

In computing, SMS phishing or smishing is a form of criminal activity using social engineering techniques. Phishing is the act of trying to get your personal information such as passwords and details by posing to be a trustworthy entity in an electronic communication.

 Note: Never answer an SMS if you are not 100% sure of the originator.

**E-Mail Phishing**

In emails look out for the following:

- Look at the email address to see if there is anything strange for example the sender is from North Bank, but if you look at the email address, it has a Gmail account from a completely different name.
- Check links in the email. Hover your mouse over them, do not click them. Delete the email.
- Check for spelling mistakes.
- Analyse the salutation. For example “valued customer”, a legitimate business would use your name.
- Beware of urgent or threatening language.
- Review the signature. Lack of details about the signer or how to contact them suggests phishing (a fraudulent practice of sending emails pretending to be from reputable companies in order to induce individuals to reveal personal information, such as passwords and credit card numbers).



## More about



### Remember

- Never give out any personal information
- Never click on a link
- Never respond
- Do not believe everything you see

Beneficiaries must not hesitate to contact SASSA on the toll-free number: 0800 60 10 11 from 08:00 – 16:00 during the weekday Monday – Friday to enquire or report scams.

## 4. What happens when a person dies who receives a social grant?

All deaths are registered with Home Affairs. The Home Affairs population register is linked to SASSA's database, so when a death is registered SASSA will be automatically notified and will cancel the grant at the end of the month when the death occurred. For example, if a person died on the 10th of May, the granted will be stopped from the 31st May.

If the money is not withdrawn for three consecutive months, the grant will automatically be cancelled, and the money will be returned to SASSA.

## 5. SASSA Hotline 0800 601 011

**SASSA Offices**  
Monday – Friday 07h30-16h00  
Saturday & Sunday: Closed  
Anti-fraud: 0800 701 701  
Toll free: 0800 60 10 11  
Website: [www.sassa.gov.za](http://www.sassa.gov.za)

**Head office**  
501 Prodinsa Building  
Cnr Steve Biko and Pretorius Streets,  
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Phone: 0800 60 10 11 (toll free) or  
012 400 2000 (switchboard)  
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**Free State**  
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