



SOCIAL GRANTS

Very under-utilised resources

Section 27 of the Constitution states:

"...Everyone has the right to have access to...social security, including, if they are unable to support themselves and their dependants, appropriate social assistance..."

The Social Assistance Act, (Act 59 of 1992), and its regulations make provision for a variety of grants. These include: **Care Dependency Grant**, **Child Support Grant**, **Foster Child Grant**, **Social Relief of Distress**, **Social Grants** (old age pension, disability grant and war veteran's grant)

Grants

Old Age Pension

Social grant for aged persons with a limited income

It is the sole source of income for 14 % of South African households.

It is crucial to ensure that all eligible caretakers are receiving their old age pension.

a. Eligibility criteria

- Age: ♂ > 65 years / ♀ > 60 years
- South African citizen resident in the country

b. Means test

- Considers marital status, income and assets

Child Support Grant

A poverty alleviation grant for the primary care giver of poor children

a. Eligibility criteria

- Children up to 14 years of age to a maximum of 6 children per household
- The applicant must be the primary care giver of the child
- The care giver must be over 18 years of age
- The child and care giver must be SA citizens resident in the country
- Applicant may not be in receipt of any other grant on behalf of the child

b. Means test

- Household income
 - < R 800,00 in a formal urban house
 - < R 1 100,00 in an informal urban or any rural house

c. Termination of grant

- When the child turns 14
- If the recipient of the grant is no longer looking after the child

Foster Care Grant

A grant paid to surrogate parents caring for a child who has been placed in their custody by the Children's Court in terms of the Child Care Act

a. Eligibility criteria

- Placement must be secondary to a Children's Court enquiry
- The foster parents and foster child must be resident in SA
- Foster parents need not be SA citizens
- The child must stay in the care of the foster parents; have a suitable place to live; be given enough food, clothing and good medical care; attend school

b. Means test

- The income of the foster parents is not considered
- The child's income must not exceed twice the annual foster grant amount

c. Termination of grant

- When the child turns 18 (can be extended to 21 years)
- When the last living foster parent or the foster child dies
- When the child is no longer in the care of the foster parents

Care Dependency Grant

A grant to facilitate the care of a severely handicapped child who needs full-time care

a. Eligibility criteria

- The child must be a SA citizen aged 1 – 18 years and severely disabled
- The child and care giver must be resident in South Africa
- The child may not be permanently cared for in an institution

b. Means test

- Combined income of the parents must not exceed R 48 000,00

c. Termination of grant

- When the child turns 18
- When the parent or child dies
- If the child is admitted to an institution

Social Relief of Distress

Temporary support for people who have no money and need immediate help in order to survive. Relief is usually food parcels for 3 months or a monetary payment not greater than a social grant.

Eligibility requirements

- Applicant waiting for approval of a permanent grant
- Sick adult who is unable to work but should be well within 6 months
- A mother waiting for child maintenance
- A recently widowed person with a family with no money
- A single person experiencing a disaster (home flooded/burnt down)

Documents

All grants

- 13-digit bar-coded ID document of applicant
- Proof of marital status
- ID document or birth certificate of the child

Old Age Pension

- Proof of income and assets of applicant and his/her spouse

Child Support Grant

- Proof of income of primary care giver and his/her spouse
- Proof that the applicant is the primary care giver of the child

Foster Care Grant

- Proof of income of the foster child
- Proof of regular school attendance
- An order of the Children's Court

Care Dependency Grant

- Proof of income of the applicant and his/her spouse as well as the child
- Medical report in respect of the child

Social relief of distress

- ID documents or birth certificates of all children
- Proof of income and assets
- Proof of efforts to get maintenance (letter from Maintenance Court)
- Proof that family has no money

Application process:

- All applications must be through the nearest office of the Department of Social Welfare
- An initial screening process is done to assess if the applicant meets the eligibility requirements for the specific grant and passes the means test
- Application forms are completed once all relevant documents have been submitted
- A receipt must be issued when the application forms are submitted
- Processing usually takes 3 months
- If successful, payment is due from the date of application for the grant

Always advise the caregiver to obtain the name and telephone number of the Welfare Officer receiving her grant request, and to obtain a receipt. Without these, blockages cannot be unblocked. Use the "[Support of grant-application letter](#)" to assist the caregiver with the application and its required documentation.