

ECDs urged to update information for relief fund

The Department of Social Development has urged Early Childhood Development (ECD) service organisations to update their information for the ECD Employment Stimulus Relief Fund (ECD-ESRF) by Saturday, 20 March 2021 to enable speedy processing of the payments.



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This follows the finalisation of the ECD-ESRF payments by the department recently.

“The department must ensure due diligence as part of the verification process for payment to be made and it must be emphasised that it is the responsibility of the ECD service-provider to ensure that all the information that is captured on their applications is correct. Failure to do so may result in the applications being rejected,” the department said.

Over 3,000 applications submitted by government employees

As part of the ongoing verification process, the department noted that, in addition to the 98 applications of deceased persons that have been previously reported, 3,729 applications have now been found to be made by government employees who are on the PERSAL System.

The department emphasised that it will not process any payments, if applications have bank and staff verification inaccuracies as a result of wrong information submitted by applicants.

“It is important for applicants to verify their details and do the necessary corrections to enable payment.”

The common issues that have been picked up, included incorrect Identity Document (ID) numbers and names of applicants; incorrect banking information (the status of bank verifications can be checked on the Central Supplier Database (CSD) website); and incorrect addresses.

Application with incorrect classification of being, either a funded or unfunded service; and incorrect documents being uploaded like Non-Profit Organisations' registration certificates instead of partial care registration certificates, were also picked up.

Applicants may log onto <https://ecd.gov.za/ecd/login>, and this should be done by using the reference number received when applications were sent to the GovChat platform.

If there is a need for any assistance, applicants must contact the call centre on 0800 089 666.

SRD grant payments under investigation

Meanwhile, the Portfolio Committee on Social Development has heard that about 67,000 Social Relief and Distress (SRD) grant payments should be subjected to investigations. This as they may have been paid to undeserving beneficiaries.

This came during a briefing from the Office of the Auditor-General regarding Special Reports relating to the Covid-19 grants.

Committee Chairperson Mondli Gungubele, warned that double-dipping, particularly by people employed in the public service, is unacceptable and should be eliminated.

“The SRD grant is intended for the most vulnerable of our society, who had no form of income. The attitude of getting government funding at all cost has a potential to undermine the good work the department and South African Social Security Agency (SASSA) are doing.

“This is a huge number to have undeservingly received the R350 grant and the committee therefore asks that the department spares no effort in getting to the bottom of this challenge and that if there is a need to recover the money, such should be done,” Gungubele said in a statement on Wednesday.

The SRD grant was started during the Covid-19 outbreak in April last year, with an aim to lessen the impact of lockdown on unemployed, distressed and vulnerable persons.

The committee also heard that although 146,936 food parcels had been distributed as part of the Covid-19 relief response, the procurement process was affected by poor planning.

Gungubele said the committee will fulfil its oversight function, in order to make sure that the implementation of projects reaches the people that government interventions intend reaching.