

Treasury considering return of Covid-19 R350 grant

By [Liez Human](#)

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The National Treasury is considering a request from the Department of Social Development to reintroduce the Social Relief of Distress grant.



The Covid-19 Social Relief of Distress Grant came to an end in April 2021. The National Treasury says the reintroduction of the grant is being considered. Archive photo: Masego Mafata

During the Covid-19 lockdown, the R350 grant brought some relief to millions of people who were unemployed or had lost their jobs due to the pandemic. Civil society activists, under the umbrella of the #PayTheGrants campaign, have been calling for the extension of the grant since it was terminated in April. This they say will cushion some hardship until the state is ready to introduce a Basic Income Grant.

Minister Lindiwe Zulu made a request to the Treasury in April asking for the grant to be extended.

On Tuesday, Treasury confirmed to GroundUp that it had received the department's request and that the matter is being discussed in Cabinet.

Amandla.mobi started a campaign in April this year, demanding that the Covid-19 SRD grant be extended. Activists at Amandla.mobi have been collecting signatures to petition the state to reintroduce the grant. They had over 62,000 signatures at the time of publication.

Amandla.mobi said that discussions around the Basic Income Grant had been “lagging” and “disappointing”, with “no clear indication of when the grant will become a reality”.



"It's hunger, my sister," says Brakpan looter

Kimberly Mutandiro 15 Jul 2021



PAIA application submitted

The organisation submitted a Promotion of Access to Information Act (PAIA) application to the Department of Social Development (DSD), asking to see the application made to the Treasury for the extension of the R350 Covid-19 SRD grant.

“We knew the only way we could compel DSD to respond was through a PAIA application,” said Tlou Seopa, a campaigner at Amandla.mobi.

The department, however, refused their PAIA request, saying in a letter that consultations around the extension are “currently underway” and that “the release of the requested record will jeopardise this process and may compromise the decision around this matter”.

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