

FOR PSA MEMBERS: SOUTH AFRICAN SOCIAL SECURITY AGENCY (SASSA) -
LIMPOPO

07-04-2020

COVID-19: Deployment of SASSA officials to paypoints without personal protective equipment

The PSA was alerted by members who were concerned about their safety after they were deployed to paypoints in Limpopo to register beneficiaries without being provided with personal protective equipment (PPE) such as gloves and masks.

Although payment of social grants was regarded as one of the essential services in terms of the amended Regulations issued by the Minister of COGTA, the employer failed to ensure that employees are provided with PPE. This failure unfortunately exposes employees to the risk of being infected with the virus when they have to interact with beneficiaries without having masks and gloves.

SASSA could only provide sanitisers as it is awaiting the Treasury process to procure gloves and masks. It is disheartening that the employer and Treasury are gambling with the lives of members. The PSA will continue to engage with the employer and Treasury to resolve this matter.

The employer indicated that arrangements have been made with the SA Post Office (SAPO) to assist SASSA employees with PPE. The PSA thus calls on members to advise if they are provided with the protective equipment by the Post Offices and other paypoint providers. The employer cannot force employees to work without protective equipment as this will contravene the *Occupational Health and Safety Act*.

Members are advised to report the matter to the nearest police station should the employer insist that they must work without protective equipment as such instruction will be illegal and against the *OHS Act*, the *Disaster Management Act* and COVID-19 Regulations. The PSA will continue to monitor the situation and members are advised to always exercise caution when dealing with beneficiaries and ensure they always have PPE. Members can contact the PSA through Phillip.maponya@psa.co.za or 082 880 8967.

GENERAL MANAGER