

1. Why had SASSA not appointed new service providers by the end of 2019?

SASSA went out on a tender process which was duly closed and evaluated, however during the adjudication stage, some technicality was detected in the process and upon seeking advice from National Treasury, SASSA was advised by National Treasury to cancel that tender. Reason being that the identified technicality was encroaching on the 'fairness principle'

2. What happened to the service providers which SASSA had worked with since 2016, if their original contract ended in August, were the contracts extended?

SASSA cancelled the tender as advised by NT and because the contracts which were awarded in 2016 were extended until end of December 2019; when National Treasury granted such extension advised SASSA that it was not going to approve any further extension on those contracts. Upon cancellation of the tender, SASSA had to then request National Treasury to approve that it sources quotations from the service providers that passed functionality on the cancelled bid to contract them for 6 months whilst re-running the new tender. Such approval was duly approved by the Treasury however the appointment of service providers was concluded in April 2020 for a period ending in June 2020.

3. Why is the current tender for six months instead of three years?

As mentioned above (2), this was on quotation basis to allow the tender process to be re-run and winning bidders appointed for limited period to allow SASSA to re-run the tender process. However, with the lockdown, SASSA could not go ahead with the advertisement of the tender. Treasury advised all institutions to refrain from advertising new tenders during the lockdown period, justifiably so.

4. Will SASSA be advertising for SRD suppliers soon?

With the relaxation of restrictions, SASSA has the intention of advertising the tender.

5. In terms of managing the service providers, am I correct in understanding that the national Department of Social Development appoints the service providers who then work with the provinces?

The Department of Social Department has its own programmes and processes to appoint its service providers. SASSA provides SRD in terms of the Social Assistance Act and it appoints its own service providers nationally, that is, regions (provinces) included. These service providers are appointed by SASSA and are accountable to SASSA.

6. Are the current service providers working to distribute food parcels on behalf of SASSA to South Africans impacted by the coronavirus pandemic?

Firstly, these service providers distribute food parcels to SASSA beneficiaries who applied and qualify for Social Relief of Distress (SRD) as per social assistance act. SASSA has a clear qualification criteria for such which include but not limited to people approved for grants, but awaiting for the payment so food parcels are then provided as an immediate relief of distress and discontinued once the grant payment has been made. Secondly, SASSA has, in terms of the social assistance Act an obligation to assist during disasters. COVID 19 being declared as a national disaster, SASSA provides the SRD to individuals who faces undue hardship. These service providers also do so on behalf of SASSA as per SASSA issued purchase orders.