



**Ministry Justice and Correctional Services
Republic of South Africa**

**Media Statement
For Immediate Release
21 August 2020**

Deputy Minister visits Eastern Cape to investigate maintenance payment issues

The Department of Justice and Constitutional Development has previously reported that the migration from the Justice deposit account system (“Jdas” or legacy accounts) to the MojaPay payment system has on occasion caused technical problems relating to the payment of maintenance.

The Department is also aware of numerous complaints relating to problems being experienced with the payment of maintenance, predominantly in the East London and Makhanda areas.

With this in mind, the Deputy Minister of Justice and Constitutional Development, Mr John Jeffery, conducted a ministerial oversight visit in East London earlier today to meet with departmental officials and to receive a full progress report on how the matter is being resolved.

Although progress in addressing these problems has been made the Ministry has deemed it necessary to assess the progress first-hand.

The MojaPay system - which is the system that is used for the payment and receipt of maintenance - crashed on the evening of 4 May 2020 resulting in several maintenance beneficiaries not receiving their maintenance benefits. All provinces were affected by the crash, with the Eastern Cape and KwaZulu-Natal more severely affected as the disruption was exacerbated by the migration from the old payment system, known as the JDAS to the new MojaPay system.

The closure of the JDAS system was due to an earlier decision, taken by the Department, that all beneficiaries who were not on direct payments would be migrated to MojaPay by 31 March 2020.

However, certain courts had not been able to migrate the beneficiaries' data to MojaPay by that date, yet the old JDAS system was nonetheless still closed in the Eastern Cape and in KZN, despite the fact that not all courts in these provinces had been successfully migrated to the MojaPay system. The subsequent closure of the JDAS system thus interrupted the processing of payments for some courts.

In the Eastern Cape, the crash affected 622 maintenance beneficiaries, whereas in KZN 47 beneficiaries were affected (as at the end of June 2020). In total approximately 1 500 beneficiaries were affected as from 1 April 2020.

The IT crash has since been resolved and the Department has been making daily payments to beneficiaries since 12 May 2020. For the past three months some 90 898 payments were made for all regions.

Various interventions have been made to assist with resolving the issues. The Department deployed additionally dedicated capacity at National office to assist the Eastern Cape Region to process payments. Furthermore, the old JDAS accounts were re-opened to assist with deposits and payments to beneficiaries who have not yet migrated.

The National office subsequently cleared and assisted the Eastern Cape to effect payments with 354 payments being made in May, 1552 payments made in June, 431 payments in July and 125 payments as at 19 August for the month of August.

It should be noted that the Eastern Cape Region receives maintenance monies from a number of different employer institutions such as private companies, local government, provincial departments and national departments. These employers deduct the maintenance monies from their employees who owe maintenance and pay it over to the Department which then pays it to the maintenance beneficiaries.

The Regional Office has established a task team to engage these institutions, but challenges were experienced with the accessibility of certain major depositing institutions and these challenges were exacerbated by the lockdown. Revised payment procedures were implemented and the region succeeded in reducing payments in the legacy system from 9986 in December 2019 to 422 in July 2020. The Regional Office will be aided by officials from the National Department.

"Many households rely heavily on maintenance benefits in order to survive. Especially at a time when the impact of Covid-19 is making people even more vulnerable to hardship, we must ensure that people receive their maintenance benefits and receive them timely. No person should be left without their maintenance.

We view this matter in an extremely serious light and we are monitoring progress closely," said Deputy Minister Jeffery.

The Deputy Minister's visit comes after Minister of Justice and Correctional Services, Mr Ronald Lamola, launched an investigation into the maintenance matter at the end of July 2020.

The reports have revealed that following courts are most affected, maintenance beneficiaries who are still experiencing problems in the areas requested to either contact the following officials. Alternatively an email can be sent to EC1@justice.gov.za / EC2@justice.gov.za , Fmbashe@justice.gov.za .

Court	Contact Person
New Brighton	Mr. M Mbete +27 (0)76 8820 736
Willowvale	Mr. T Bennet +27 (0) 73 1692 856
East London	Mr. Z Sisusa +27(0) 66 11 565 41
Mdantsane	Mr. S Malinga +27 (0) 83 690 8777
Queenstown	Ms. D Oosthuysen +27(0) 73 236 6950
Whittlesea	Ms. N Mamase +27 (0) 78 769 5430
Grahamstown	Ms. N Mtombeni +27 (0) 83 318 5416

Enquiries

Chrispin Phiri

Spokesperson: Ministry of Justice and Correctional Services

Cell: 081 781 2261