

MEDIA STATEMENT

TO ALL EDITORS/EDUCATION REPORTS

DATE: 25 March 2025

NSFAS STATEMENT ON THE SUBMISSION AND PAYMENT OF ACCOMMODATION CLAIMS

The National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS) acknowledges concerns raised by accommodation providers regarding the recent communication about the submission and payment of accommodation claims.

The communication regarding accommodation claims was prompted by delays in the submission of data, which ultimately impacted NSFAS's verification process and the communicated payment dates.

On January 27, 2025, NSFAS approved and disseminated the lease agreements to be uploaded to the accommodation portal. Through our portal provider – NSFAS made the functionality available for accommodation providers to begin signing on the same day across all four portals. The deadline for submitting payment claims for the current payment run was set for March 14, 2025.

The verification process is inherently complex, involving multiple checks to ensure compliance with NSFAS and government regulations. During the verification process, NSFAS has identified ghost students, who are neither funded by NSFAS nor enrolled in any public university or college. This discovery underscores the importance of the verification process, which is a crucial step for NSFAS in processing payments to accommodation providers. In response, NSFAS will investigate all accommodation providers who have submitted incorrect information in an attempt to unlawfully benefit from funds intended for legitimate NSFAS-funded students.

While NSFAS is committed to ensuring that funds are disbursed promptly, it is equally important to maintain a rigorous verification process to guarantee that all claims are legitimate and in accordance with established policies.

We appreciate the challenges faced by accommodation providers and strive to balance the needs of both students and accommodation providers while upholding compliance requirements in the disbursement of public funds ensuring public accountability.

NSFAS BOARD MEMBERS:

Dr Karen Stander (Chairperson) | Mr Waseem Carrim - Acting Chief Executive Officer | Adv Lavan Gopaul | Dr Mampiane Johanna Maphutha | Dr Marcia Socikwa | Dr Mongewena Maluleke | Dr Siyanda B Mngadi | Adv Richardt Tlou Ramashia | Ms Clarinda Elizabeth Simpson | Ms Karabo Mohale | Ms Ndileka Portia Loyilane | Ms Prashika Mahesh | Ms Philisiwe Sibiyi



National Student Financial Aid Scheme

Recognizing that payment delays have been a persistent challenge, NSFAS is actively working to streamline payment processes. We are reviewing our claims verification and payment procedures to identify opportunities for improvement. Additionally, we are exploring strategies to enhance communication with accommodation providers, ensuring that they are informed of any potential delays as early as possible.

We urge landlords to adhere to submission deadlines and follow the agreed-upon processes to minimize errors in the data submitted for payment. NSFAS understands the financial pressures that accommodation providers encounter, particularly at the beginning of the year following the festive season. Consequently, the scheme is seeking solutions to enhance the payment process.

NSFAS is deeply concerned about reports of some landlords threatening to evict students, whilst we are engaged in discussions to find amicable solutions. We therefore appeal to landlords with outstanding payments not to evict students because NSFAS is committed to resolving all legitimate claims. It is essential to consider the impact of evictions on both students and landlords, particularly during these challenging times.

At this point, NSFAS is adhering to the payment date of April 4th, 2025. However, we are continuously assessing our internal processes and the situation surrounding the payments. Should it become possible to expedite this payment date, we will promptly communicate any changes with all stakeholders, including accommodation providers and students.

Furthermore, NSFAS has noted the concerns expressed by some accommodation providers regarding the compulsory conditions outlined in the Standardized Fixed-Term Lease Agreement between private accommodation providers and NSFAS-funded students. In this regard, the scheme reiterates its commitment to constructively engage with all stakeholders to develop workable solutions that promote the stability of the post-school education and training (PSET) system and ensure the success of all NSFAS-funded students.

END

Enquiries: media@nsfas.org.za

Issued by the **National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS)**

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