

Written 2 October 2020

C19 BUSINESS UPDATE

Welcome to the latest news on business, Government supports and the economy.



This week we have seen stricter lock down rules in many parts of the country including Government rules to include not attending amateur sports events as spectators, only visiting care homes in exceptional circumstances and the Government states people should not travel unless it is essential - for example to school and work.

Following on from last week's Winter Economy Plan we are still awaiting the details of the new supports issued and we will keep you up to date when these are known.

There is a pattern with COVID driving sales online and we are seeing more high street shops close.

Many of our clients are looking to pivot their businesses online or move into new areas, taking the time to think about a strategy to survive and prosper with customers changing buying patterns. We can help you with this and it's something we've done regularly with our clients. Please talk to us and we will be delighted to assist.

The EU has begun legal proceedings against the UK after it did not remove plans to override sections of the Brexit divorce deal. The EU deadline for the government to remove sections of the Internal Market Bill has expired and the "letter of formal notice" might eventually lead to a court case against the UK at the European Court of Justice.

The good news is that negotiations continue, and we will be providing you with planning advice and information to prepare for the changes from 1 January 2021, later this month.

The latest Government guidance and rules on COVID -19 are outlined below. Please stay safe and remember we are with you all the way!

CHECK IF YOU ARE ELIGIBLE FOR THE CORONAVIRUS LOCAL LOCKDOWN RESTRICTIONS SUPPORT GRANT

Published 24 September the Local Restrictions Support Grant (LRSB) supports businesses that have been required to close due to temporary COVID-19 local lockdown restrictions imposed by the government.

The Local Restrictions Support Grant (LRSB) supports businesses that were open as usual, providing services in person to customers from their business premises, but which were then required to close for at least 3 weeks due to local lockdown restrictions imposed by government.

It is for businesses that pay business rates on their premises. Local councils may at their discretion also provide funding for businesses that don't pay business rates.

Eligibility

Your business may be eligible if it:

- occupies property on which it pays business rates
- Is in a local lockdown area and has been required to close because of the formal publication of local restrictions guidance that resulted in a first full day of closure on or after 9 September. This funding is not retrospective
- has been required to close for at least 3 weeks because of the lockdown
- has been unable to provide its usual in-person customer service from its premises

For example this could include non-essential retail, personal services or cafes/restaurants that operate primarily as an in-person venue, but which have been forced to close those services and provide a takeaway-only service instead.

Eligible businesses will get one grant for each property liable for business rates within the lockdown zone.

Businesses that are required to close but do not pay business rates may be eligible for funding at the discretion of the local council, as may businesses not required to close but which are severely impacted.

If your business is eligible and has a property with a rateable value of less than £51,000, you will receive a cash grant of £1,000 for each 3-week period your business is closed.

If your business is eligible and has a property with a rateable value of £51,000 or above, you will receive a cash grant of £1,500 for each 3-week period your business is closed.

The grant will be extended to cover each additional 3-week period, so if your business is closed for 6 weeks it will receive £2,000 or £3,000, depending on the rateable value of the property.

Grants will be based on the rateable value of the property on the first full day of local lockdown restrictions.

DISCRETIONARY FUNDING

You may receive a grant of up to £1,500 at the discretion of your local council if:

Your business is required to close but you do not pay business rates

If your business is not required to close, but has been severely affected, for example as a result of customer businesses being closed

Your local council will publish details of discretionary funding on their website.

Exclusions

- businesses which are able to continue to operate during the lockdown because they do not depend on providing direct in-person services from their premises
- businesses that have chosen to close, but have not been required to close as part of a local lockdown
- businesses that are still subject to national closures such as nightclubs
- businesses that have reached the state aid limit

If you already get state aid

The Local Restrictions Support Grant counts towards state aid.

Payments count towards the total de minimis State aid you're allowed to get over a 3-year period - €200,000. If you have reached that threshold, you may still be eligible for funding under the COVID-19 Temporary Framework. The limit for the framework is €800,000.

Your local council will ask you to complete a declaration confirming that:

- You will not exceed the relevant State aid threshold
- You were not an 'undertaking in difficulty' on 31 December 2019. This applies only to the COVID-19 Temporary Framework

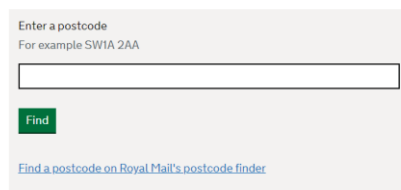
The undertaking in difficulty test does not apply to small and micro undertakings (less than 50 employees and less than EUR 10 million of annual turnover and/or annual balance sheet) unless they were already in insolvency proceedings, have received rescue aid that has not been repaid, or are subject to a restructuring plan under State aid rules.

How to apply

Visit your local council's website to find out how to apply:

Find your local council

Find the website for your local council.



Enter a postcode
For example SW1A 2AA

Find

[Find a postcode on Royal Mail's postcode finder](#)

See: <https://www.gov.uk/find-local-council>

NEW LEGAL DUTY TO SELF-ISOLATE CAME INTO FORCE 28 SEPTEMBER

People in England will be required by law to self-isolate if they test positive or are contacted by NHS Test and Trace.



The Department of Health and Social care has announced the Legal duty to self-isolate and to ensure compliance and reduce spread of COVID-19.

Support is now available for people on low incomes who are unable to work while self-isolating through the £500 Test and Trace Support Payment

Fines for those breaking the rules now in place starting at £1,000 and increasing up to £10,000 for repeat offenders

Those on lower incomes who cannot work from home and have lost income as a result will also be eligible for a new £500 Test and Trace Support Payment.

Local authorities will be working to set up Test and Trace Support Payment schemes and have a target date of 12 October. Those who are told to self-isolate from 28 September will receive backdated payments, if they are eligible, once the scheme is set up in their local authority.

See: https://www.gov.uk/government/news/new-legal-duty-to-self-isolate-comes-into-force-today?utm_source=b792957a-826d-4586-8ed3-7ddf3f59c25c&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm_content=immediate

WORKING SAFELY DURING CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19)

Business owners should regularly review these, the 14 guides cover a range of different types of work. Many businesses operate more than one type of workplace, such as an office, factory and fleet of vehicles. You may need to use more than one of these guides as you think through what you need to do to keep people safe. Priority actions are outlined at the top of each guide.

See: https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19?utm_source=32c2c803-d1cd-4fe7-a621-9301c38daa78&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm_content=immediate

INFORMATION FOR INDIVIDUALS AND BUSINESSES IN SCOTLAND

This page navigates the guidance on the virus for people in Scotland. Recent changes made include information from the Winter Economy Plan.

See: https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-information-for-individuals-and-businesses-in-scotland?utm_source=bb465f5e-dbdb-4a12-8a45-54e724d8d8bd&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm_content=immediate

TRAVEL GUIDANCE FOR PASSENGERS

Guidance on Walking, cycling, and travelling in vehicles or on public transport during the coronavirus outbreak has changed to include: "Safer travel guidance"



Coronavirus (COVID-19): safer travel guidance



What you can do to travel more safely

See: https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-safer-travel-guidance-for-passengers?utm_source=2e99479d-7a9e-4bd1-a289-29a7d1ddae9b&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm_content=immediate

NHS TEST AND TRACE IN THE WORKPLACE

The guidance on NHS Test and Trace for employers, businesses and workers has changed and updated to reflect the launch of the COVID-19 app and how it should be used in the workplace. The guidance has corrected the period that people are infectious to say: “from 2 days before the person was symptomatic up to 10 days from onset of symptoms”.

See: https://www.gov.uk/guidance/nhs-test-and-trace-workplace-guidance?utm_source=556aae85-05fd-40ac-acef-c0da0f0d8609&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm_content=immediate

INFORMATION FOR FARMERS, LANDOWNERS AND RURAL BUSINESSES

The latest information for farmers, landowners and rural businesses during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak. Read this page for regular updates. The latest update is:

Bank helpline opening hours - The bank helpline has returned to normal opening hours.

To change your bank account details, call 03000 200 301, Monday to Friday between 8.30am and 5pm.

See: https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-information-for-farmers-landowners-and-rural-businesses?utm_source=c23c1c09-59bf-437e-8773-c401a91b50f5&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm_content=immediate

JOBS THAT QUALIFY FOR TRAVEL EXEMPTIONS AND ARE EXEMPT FROM UK BORDER RULES

Some people don't have to fill in a passenger locator form or self-isolate on arrival in the UK, because of the jobs they do.

This guidance lists the jobs that qualify for an exemption and tells people:

- if they need to self-isolate
- if they need to complete a passenger locator form
- any conditions they will need to meet or evidence they will need to show

If you do one of these jobs, you still need to follow the same health guidance as people who live in the UK.

See: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-travellers-exempt-from-uk-border-rules/coronavirus-covid-19-travellers-exempt-from-uk-border-rules>

TRAVEL CORRIDORS – LATEST LIST OF COUNTRIES YOU CAN TRAVEL TO ENGLAND AND MAY NOT HAVE TO SELF - ISOLATE.

If you travel for business or leisure it is worth keeping an eye on this webpage as Countries, territories and regions can be taken off or added to this travel corridor list at any time.

See: https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-travel-corridors?utm_source=effdb1a3-1b80-4d38-8b1a-36ccd3415a02&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm_content=immediate