

As outlined we want to provide you with updates and potentially useful information for your business. This is our update for Monday 23rd March.

The Chancellor has set out a package of temporary, timely and targeted measures to support public services, people and businesses through this period of disruption caused by COVID-19.

This includes a package of measures to support businesses including:

- a Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme
- deferring VAT and Income Tax payments
- a Statutory Sick Pay relief package for SMEs
- small business grant funding of £10,000 for all business in receipt of small business rate relief or rural rate relief

Below is a link to the Fife Council page relating to this, at present they have no information about how it will be paid.

<https://www.fife.gov.uk/kb/docs/articles/business2/business-rates/covid-19-business-rates-support>

- grant funding of £25,000 for retail, hospitality and leisure businesses with property with a rateable value between £15,000 and £51,000
- the Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme offering loans of up to £5 million for SMEs through the British Business Bank. Below is a link to the British Business Bank.

<https://www.british-business-bank.co.uk/ourpartners/coronavirus-business-interruption-loan-scheme-cbils/>

- a new lending facility from the Bank of England to help support liquidity among larger firms, helping them bridge coronavirus disruption to their cash flows through loans
- the HMRC Time To Pay Scheme

Support for businesses through the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme

Under the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme, all UK employers will be able to access support to continue paying part of their employees' salary for those employees that would otherwise have been laid off during this crisis.

Eligibility

All UK businesses are eligible.

How to access the scheme

You will need to:

- designate affected employees as 'furloughed workers,' and notify your employees of this change - changing the status of employees remains subject to existing

employment law and, depending on the employment contract, may be subject to negotiation

- submit information to HMRC about the employees that have been furloughed and their earnings through a new online portal (HMRC will set out further details on the information required)

HMRC will reimburse 80% of furloughed workers wage costs, up to a cap of £2,500 per month. HMRC are working urgently to set up a system for reimbursement. Existing systems are not set up to facilitate payments to employers.

Support for businesses through deferring VAT and Income Tax payments

The Government will support businesses by deferring Valued Added Tax (VAT) payments for 3 months. If you're self-employed, Income Tax payments due in July 2020 under the Self-Assessment system will be deferred to January 2021.

VAT

For VAT, the deferral will apply from 20 March 2020 until 30 June 2020.

In the absence of clarity consider cancelling your direct debit, if applicable

Eligibility

All UK businesses are eligible.

How to access the scheme

This is an automatic offer with no applications required. Businesses will not need to make a VAT payment during this period. Taxpayers will be given until the end of the 2020 to 2021 tax year to pay any liabilities that have accumulated during the deferral period. VAT refunds and reclaims will be paid by the government as normal.

Income Tax

For Income Tax Self-Assessment, payments due on the 31 July 2020 will be deferred until the 31 January 2021.

Eligibility

If you are self-employed you are eligible.

How to access the scheme

This is an automatic offer with no applications required.

No penalties or interest for late payment will be charged in the deferral period.

HMRC have also scaled up their [Time to Pay offer](#) to all firms and individuals who are in temporary financial distress as a result of Covid-19 and have outstanding tax liabilities.

Support for businesses who are paying sick pay to employees

The Government will bring forward legislation to allow small-and medium-sized businesses and employers to reclaim Statutory Sick Pay (SSP) paid for sickness absence due to COVID-19. The eligibility criteria for the scheme will be as follows:

- this refund will cover up to 2 weeks' SSP per eligible employee who has been off work because of COVID-19

- employers with fewer than 250 employees will be eligible - the size of an employer will be determined by the number of people they employed as of 28 February 2020
- employers will be able to reclaim expenditure for any employee who has claimed SSP (according to the new eligibility criteria) as a result of COVID-19
- employers should maintain records of staff absences and payments of SSP, but employees will not need to provide a GP fit note. If evidence is required by an employer, those with symptoms of coronavirus can get an isolation note from [NHS 111 online](#) and those who live with someone that has symptoms can get a note from the [NHS website](#)
- eligible period for the scheme will commence the day after the regulations on the extension of SSP to those staying at home comes into force
- the government will work with employers over the coming months to set up the repayment mechanism for employers as soon as possible

Eligibility

You are eligible for the scheme if:

- your business is UK based
- your business is a small or medium-sized and employs fewer than 250 employees as of 28 February 2020

How to access the scheme

A rebate scheme is being developed. Further details will be provided in due course once the legalisation has passed.

If you are self-employed

You are able to [claim Universal Credit](#), providing you meet the usual eligibility criteria.

To support you with the economic impact of the outbreak, and allow you to follow government guidance on self-isolation and social distancing, from 6 April the requirements of the Minimum Income Floor will be temporarily relaxed. This change will apply to all Universal Credit claimants and will last for the duration of the outbreak.

New claimants will not need to attend the jobcentre to demonstrate gainful self-employment.

In conclusion

We are aware of businesses that are looking at online options for delivering their services. We would be happy to promote these if you let us know.

As always get in touch if you have questions.