

COVID-19: BUSINESS SUPPORT

A guide to Government
measures and other
useful resources



COVID-19 is the largest public health crisis in living memory, which has also generated a major economic crisis, with a halt in production and a collapse in consumption.

In response, the government has issued several new measures to help businesses through the pandemic. There is also a range of support on offer from non-governmental bodies.

This guide is designed to summarise Government measures and highlight other sources of support to help identify which are applicable to your business.

Government support

Since mid-March, the government has announced a package of measures to support businesses and the self-employed. Several schemes are available which are designed to ease some of the cost pressures that businesses face.

Details regarding these schemes are on the next few pages with links to further information on GOV.UK or Bank of England websites. Some of the schemes have changed since they were launched and there may well be further developments. It is always worth checking to see if the latest developments apply to your business.

In addition to the links provided in this document, you can subscribe to the GOV.UK Coronavirus Information Service on WhatsApp. Add 07860 064422 in your phone contacts and then message the word 'hi' in a WhatsApp message to get started.

To speak to someone for general advice on how the government can help your businesses, call the relevant business support helpline number adjacent. If you think you might not be able to pay your tax bill, use the HMRC helpline number.

Business Support Helplines

0300 456 3565: England
0300 060 3000: Wales
0300 303 0660: Scotland
0800 181 4422: Northern Ireland

The new HMRC helpline number is 0800 024 1222 and is open from 8am to 4pm Monday to Friday

[Connect with your local Growth Hub](#) for practical support and guidance or visit these pages in [Scotland](#), [Wales](#) and [Northern Ireland](#).

Funding

Government backed loans and grants

Name	Description:	Eligibility:	How to access
Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme (CBILS)	<p>The Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme (CBILS) will provide loans of up to £5 million, with no interest due for the first 12 months. Finance can be provided as term loans, overdrafts, invoice finance and asset finance.</p> <p>On 3 April, the government ordered lenders not to request personal guarantees for loans under £250,000. For loans over £250,000, personal liability is limited to 20% of any amount outstanding on the loan after any other recoveries from business assets.</p>	<p>A business will be eligible for the scheme if it is UK based; has turnover of no more than £45m p/a; is operating within an eligible industrial sector (a small number of industrial sectors are not eligible for support); and has not received de minimis State aid beyond €200,000 equivalent over the current and previous two fiscal years.</p> <p>The scheme has been opened to businesses who would have previously met the requirements for a commercial facility. Insufficient security is no longer a condition to access the scheme.</p>	<p>All the major banks will offer the scheme. Approach one of the participating lenders to discuss the borrowing needs and the proposed business plan.</p> <p>The list of accredited lenders and details of how to apply are on the British Business Bank website.</p>
Coronavirus Large Business Interruption Loan Scheme (CLBILS)	<p>The Coronavirus Large Business Interruption Loan Scheme (CLBILS) will support large businesses, with an annual turnover of between £45 million and £500 million to access loans of up to £25 million. The government will provide lenders with an 80% guarantee on individual loans for businesses that would be otherwise unable to access the finance they need.</p>	<p>You're eligible if your business is UK-based; has an annual turnover of between £45 million and £500m; and is unable to secure regular financing.</p> <p>You must also have a borrowing proposal which the lender would consider viable and believes will enable you to trade out of any short-term to medium-term difficulty.</p>	<p>The scheme is expected to be delivered through commercial lenders.</p> <p>This scheme is not available yet. It is expected to launch before the end of April 2020.</p> <p>More info on GOV.UK</p>
COVID-19 Corporate Financing Facility (CCFF)	<p>The COVID-19 Corporate Financing Facility (CCFF) will purchase up to one-year duration Commercial Paper on terms comparable to those prevailing in markets before COVID-19 economic shock. The scheme will operate for at least 12 months and the Bank of England has committed to providing six months' notice before it withdraws the facility.</p>	<p>Credit rating must be "Investment Grade" (ST rating of A-3/P-3/F-3 or LT rating of BBB-/Baa3/BBB-). A split rating is not eligible.</p> <p>A company must also provide a 'material benefit to the UK economy' in order to be eligible.</p>	<p>Full details on the Bank of England Website.</p>

UK Export Finance (UKEF)	UK Export Finance (UKEF) works with banks and insurance brokers to help companies of all sizes fulfil and get paid for export contracts. It will ease cash flow constraints by guaranteeing bank loans and export insurance. It will support finance for overseas buyers to continue to buy your goods & services.	Business facing disruption due to late payments, cancellation of payment or drop in custom from foreign buyers.	To access Export Working Capital Support, exporters should discuss their potential application with their bank. More info on GOV.UK
Small Business Grant Funding of £10,000	£10,000 for small businesses that already pay little or no business rates because of small business rate relief (SBBR), rural rate relief (RRR) and tapered relief.	The scheme is available to businesses that are based in England; already receive SBBR and/or RRR and occupy property.	Businesses do not need to do anything. Their local authority will write to them if they are eligible for this grant. More info on Gov.UK
Grant funding of £25,000 for retail, hospitality and leisure businesses	The Retail and Hospitality Grant Scheme provides businesses in the retail, hospitality and leisure sectors with a cash grant of up to £25,000 per property. Businesses with a rateable value of under £15,000 will receive a grant of £10,000. Businesses with a rateable value of between £15,001 and £51,000 will receive a grant of £25,000.	To be eligible, the business has to be based in England and in the retail, hospitality and/or leisure sector. Properties that will benefit from the relief will be occupied hereditaments that are wholly or mainly being used: as shops, restaurants, cafes, drinking establishments, cinemas and live music venues; for assembly and leisure; and as hotels, guest and boarding premises and self-catering accommodation.	Businesses do not need to do anything. Their local authority will write to them if they are eligible for this grant. More info on Gov.UK

Employment

Support for employers and the self-employed

Name	Description:	Eligibility:	How to access
Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme	<p>The Government will provide grants which will cover 80% of the salary of retained furloughed workers, up to a cap of £2,500 a month. There is no limit on the funding available.</p> <p>The scheme will be in place for at least three months but will be extended as needed. The minimum period an employee can be furloughed for is three weeks.</p> <p>The scheme will be open for claims to be submitted in the week commencing 20 April.</p>	<p>The scheme will be open to any employer in the country, regardless of size or sector, and will cover the cost of wages backdated to 1 March. The employee must have a PAYE scheme.</p> <p>The scheme covers employees who have been made redundant since 28 February provided they are re-hired. It does not cover any employees hired after 28 February.</p>	<p>Claim must be made to HMRC via an online portal (not yet available).</p> <p>Employers will need to designate affected employees as “furloughed workers”, and notify their employees of this change</p> <p>The employee should not undertake work for the employer while furloughed.</p> <p>More info on GOV.UK</p>
Self-Employed Income Support Scheme	<p>Cash grant of 80% of an individual’s average monthly profits over the last three years of up to £2,500 per month (mirroring the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme in many regards).</p>	<p>It will apply where individuals who:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Have taxable trading profits of up to £50,000 per annum• Earn most of their income from self-employment• Are registered self-employed and have submitted 2018/19 tax return	<p>Access to the Scheme will start from the beginning of June, and payments will be back dated from March. HMRC will contact individuals to complete a required form and the grant will be paid directly into their bank account.</p> <p>More info on GOV.UK</p>
Statutory Sick Pay (SSP) relief package for SMEs	<p>Employers will be able to reclaim up to two weeks SSP per eligible employee paid for sickness absence due to COVID-19. The government has amended the SSP rules to clarify that employees who are self-isolating on medical advice can receive SSP from 13 March.</p>	<p>Small and medium sized UK businesses with less than 250 employees (based on the number of people employed as of 28 February 2020).</p>	<p>Employers will be able to apply for reimbursement of SSP paid for the two weeks. The repayment mechanism is currently being set up.</p> <p>More info on GOV.UK</p>

Premises

Name	Description:	Eligibility:	How to access
Rates holiday	<p>The following sectors will not have to pay business rates for the 2020 to 2021 tax year.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Businesses in the retail, hospitality and leisure sectors in England. This includes businesses that operate as a: shop; restaurant, café, bar or pub; cinema or live music venue; leisure property e.g. gym or hospitality property e.g. hotel.• Childcare providers• Estate agents, lettings agencies and bingo halls that have closed as a result of Covid-19 measures	<p>Your business must be based in England.</p> <p>Properties accessible by members of the general public will benefit from the relief. Head office premises would not, therefore, qualify.</p> <p>Nurseries on Ofsted's Early Years Register and cater for children up to 5 years old are eligible.</p>	<p>You do not need to take any action. Your local council will apply the discount automatically.</p> <p>More info on GOV.UK</p>
Commercial rent payments and enforcement	<p>Commercial tenants who cannot pay their rent because of coronavirus will be protected from eviction. No business will be forced out of their premises if they miss a payment in the next 3 months.</p>	<p>Commercial tenants.</p>	<p>Landlords and tenants will have to work together to reach commercial arrangements as to how and when rent will be paid.</p> <p>More info on GOV.UK</p>
Residential rent payments and enforcement	<p>The government has announced a complete prohibition on residential landlords taking action to evict tenants for the next three months. Landlords will also be protected as the 3-month mortgage payment holiday will be extended to buy-to-let mortgages.</p>	<p>Residential landlords who have buy-to-let mortgages.</p>	<p>Landlords and tenants will be expected to work together to establish an affordable repayment plan.</p> <p>More info on GOV.UK</p>

Tax

Name	Description:	Eligibility:	How to access
Time to Pay	Time to Pay (TTP) is operated by HMRC with the aim of agreeing arrangements on delaying the payment of tax liabilities. It has been in existence for several years, although it has been expanded recently to specifically cover the difficulties caused by COVID-19. The agreements under TTP are reached on a case by case basis and are tailored to individual circumstances.	Any business paying tax that has or expects to have outstanding tax liabilities. Most taxes are covered - including PAYE & National Insurance, VAT, Corporation tax and income tax.	The new HMRC helpline number is 0800 024 1222 and is open from 8am to 4pm Monday to Friday. More info on GOV.UK
VAT Deferral	VAT payments falling between the beginning of March and 30 June 2020 are being deferred and do not need to be paid until the end of the 2020/21 tax year.	All UK businesses.	No application required. Simply don't make the payment during this period. If you pay your VAT by direct debit, you should cancel this with your bank if you are unable to pay. This should be done in sufficient time so that HMRC does not attempt to automatically collect on receipt of your VAT return. More info on GOV.UK
Income Tax Deferral	For Income Tax Self-Assessment, payments due on 31 July 2020 will be deferred until 31 January 2021.	All self-employed individuals	No application required. More info on GOV.UK
Deferral of IR35	The government announced on 17 March that the off-payroll working rules (commonly known as IR35) – that would have applied for people contracting their services to large or medium-sized organisations outside the public sector – will be delayed for one year from 6 April 2020 until 6 April 2021.	All contractors providing a service (via a personal services company) to medium to large organisations outside the public sector based in the UK.	N/A

Other Support

Non-Government Grants

[Arts Council England £160 million](#) Emergency response package for artists, freelancers and cultural organisations.

[COVID-19 Film and TV Emergency Relief Fund](#) Provides one-off grants of between £500 and £2,500 to freelancers who have been hit hardest by the closure of film and television productions. BFI with donations from Netflix, BBC and others.

[Facebook Small Business Programme](#) \$100m in cash grants and credits for up to 30,000 eligible small businesses in over 30 countries where Facebook operates. More details will become available soon – you can sign up for updates.

[Funding for SMEs in the manufacturing sector](#). For manufacturers who will integrate key enabling technologies into their manufacturing to solve clean production challenges

[Sport England £20 million Community Emergency Fund](#) Targeted at organisations who have a role in supporting the nation to be active but who are experiencing short-term financial hardship or the ceasing of operations due to the impact of coronavirus (COVID-19).

[Tesco Bags of Help](#) is providing a short-term fund to support local communities. The fund will provide a single payment award of £500 to organisations who are supporting vulnerable groups.

[The Prince's Trust and NatWest Enterprise Relief Fund](#) £5 million grant fund for young entrepreneurs whose businesses have been affected by the coronavirus outbreak. 18-30-year olds.

Cash flow

[The Small Business Commissioner's office](#) can offer support with getting paid on time and other cashflow issues. [The BEIS Pay Practice Reporting Portal](#) allows SMEs to check large companies' average payment terms.

Organisations that can help

[The FSB](#) has advice for small businesses and the self-employed.

[The Institute of Directors](#) (IoD) offers advice and specific guidance on business continuity planning.

[The CBI](#) delivers daily COVID-19 webinars that look at (amongst other things) how to access government support.

General business advice

[Employee payment advice](#) from Make UK.

[Working from home wellbeing action plan](#) from the Charlie Waller Memorial Trust

[Advice on coronavirus disclosure](#) from Financial Reporting Council.

[Tips for communicating with employees in a time of crisis](#) - from CIPR.

[How employers should respond to coronavirus](#) from the CIPD.

[Guidance for employers and employees](#) from Acas.

COVID-19 updates

[Coronavirus: what you need to do](#) from Public Health England.

[Latest information and advice](#) from the government.

The NHS has produced [guidance on COVID-19 symptoms](#). [Doctors of the World](#) have also translated this into 32 languages.

[Keep Safe](#) have written accessible and easy-read resources on keeping safe during the coronavirus outbreak.

Government guidance on [how to keep yourself and your household safe](#).

Mental health

[The Samaritans](#) have published information on how to protect your mental health during the coronavirus outbreak. They are no longer providing face to face support in their branches, but they are continuing to offer support by phone or email.

[The Mental Health Foundation](#) has collated tips on looking after your mental health during the outbreak.

[Mind](#) has published information which includes guidance on work, benefits and housing. They continue to provide advice by COVID-19: Business Support

phone but their centres have closed and they are unable to respond to emails.

[The Campaign Against Living Miserably \(CALM\)](#) provides support to those bereaved by suicide but has also produced tips on coping with coronavirus and staying well during self-isolation. Their helpline and webchat continue to operate.

[Blurt](#) has put together a comprehensive coronavirus hub, including information on managing mental ill health; guidance on money worries and caring during self-isolation; a list of the specific support available for NHS workers and support for children and parents (including a list of resources to support education from home). They also provide information on the support available in crisis.

Other government links

Sign up to government email updates on coronavirus [here](#)

[Connect with your local Growth Hub](#) for practical support and guidance.

[Social distancing in the workplace during coronavirus \(COVID-19\): sector guidance](#)

[Guidance for employers and businesses on coronavirus](#)

Guidance on [moving goods through customs](#) and [customs authorisations](#)

Finally

Some inspiration from [Four Start-ups That Pivoted Their Way Out Of The COVID-19 Crisis](#) and Mark Cuban's [advice for small business owners](#).