

Written 6 November 2020

C19 NEWSLETTER

FURTHER CHANGES IN SUPPORTS FOR BUSINESS

Government extends Furlough to March and increases self-employed support scheme

As the lockdown has now started for England and continues elsewhere, the Government has changed its mind again about business supports and decided to extend the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme (CJRS) and the Self-Employment Income Support Scheme (SEISS) across all regions of the UK.

The Chancellor has announced that CJRS will be extended until the end of March 2021 for all parts of the UK. For claim periods running to 31 January 2021, the UK Government will pay 80% of employees' usual wages for hours not worked, up to a cap of £2,500 per month. The UK Government will review the policy in January to decide whether economic circumstances are improving enough to ask employers to contribute more.

It was also confirmed that the Job Retention Bonus will no longer be paid in February 2021, as CJRS will be available at that time. An alternative retention incentive will be put in place at the appropriate time.

There have been many announcements this week and we have summarised these below. Please talk to us about getting Government support during these tough times. We are here to help and can work plans out with you.



The CJRS will remain open until 31 March 2021. For claim periods running to January 2021, employees will receive 80% of their usual salary for hours not worked, up to a maximum of £2,500 per month. The £2,500 cap is proportional to the hours not worked.

The Government will review the policy in January to decide whether economic circumstances are improving enough to ask employers to contribute more.

Claims can be made by employers across the UK that meet the eligibility criteria.

We will update all our clients on the eligibility criteria after the 11 November expected details of how the scheme will be run.

If we processed your previous claims rest assured we will be updating our systems for the extended scheme and we will be able to estimate your claims under the new scheme shortly.

Similarly, support for millions more workers through the Self-Employment Income Support Scheme (SEISS) will be increased, with the third grant covering November to January calculated at 80% of average trading profits, up to a maximum of £7,500.

Already announced earlier this week are:

- Grants of up to £3,000 per month for businesses which are closed worth more than £1 billion every month
- £1.1 billion is being given to Local Authorities, distributed on the basis of £20 per head, for one-off payments to enable them to support businesses more broadly
- Plans to extend existing government-backed loan schemes and the Future Fund to the end of January, and an ability to top-up Bounce Back Loans
- An extension to the mortgage payment holiday for homeowners
- Up to £500 million of funding for councils to support the local public health response.

More information from the Government on yesterday's announcement can be seen here: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/932977/ECONOMIC_SUPPORT_FACTSHEET_5_November.pdf

NHS Test and Trace in the workplace

In light of the lockdown in England guidance on NHS Test and Trace for employers, businesses and workers has been updated to show that everyone should work from home where possible during the increased national restrictions from 5 November 2020.

See: https://www.gov.uk/guidance/nhs-test-and-trace-workplace-guidance?utm_source=91e2dae2-ec22-4a78-9b99-97d0b9045f04&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm_content=immediate

Working safely during coronavirus

As you would expect, the guides have been updated to include guidance on national restrictions from 5 November: Anyone who can work from home should and clinically extremely vulnerable individuals should not attend work for this period of the restrictions.

These 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=d7a4292d-6861-4aec-b61b-7fe57fa2acc6&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm_content=immediate

Advice for people in England with animals

Advice for pet owners and livestock keepers on looking after the welfare of animals during the lockdown has been updated. This advice applies to England only.

See: https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-advice-for-people-with-animals?utm_source=5e51cab6-625f-4c0e-87b7-6f26cb206f14&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm_content=immediate

Information for farmers, landowners and rural businesses form the Rural Payments Agency (RPA)

As National restrictions will apply from 5 November, RPA confirm they are continuing to deliver the range of services to agricultural and rural communities across the country while the majority of their people work from home.

Following government guidance, RPA inspectors will continue with most inspection work to ensure that they meet regulatory targets and do not cause any delay to payments. They will continue to follow COVID-19 Secure health and safety procedures (including social distancing and other approaches to reduce face to face contact) that they put in place earlier in the year.

See: https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-information-for-farmers-landowners-and-rural-businesses?utm_source=5778ce7f-dd82-42fc-b292-6b2b8acda70f&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm_content=immediate

£134 million support announced to help UK businesses build back greener

The Government is to invest to keep UK's greenest, most innovative businesses going during coronavirus pandemic.

This includes projects to service offshore wind turbines autonomously, using AI to reduce beer waste in the brewing process and converting seaweed into compostable packaging to tackle plastic waste are set to benefit.

See: https://www.gov.uk/government/news/134-million-boost-to-help-uk-businesses-build-back-greener?utm_source=3016491b-5c51-4c47-9469-25f4029ac91e&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm_content=immediate

The Marine Management Organisation (MMO) fast-tracks grants to help England's ports and fishing industry



Applications invited by MMO for grants to help ports or harbours impacted by Covid-19 pandemic and for health and safety equipment for fishing vessel owners.

The Marine Management Organisation (MMO) is inviting applications for grants to help ports or harbours impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic and to provide health and safety equipment for fishing vessel owners.

MMO has re-purposed the balance of the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF) and allocated £500,000 to projects for ports or harbours and £300,000 to fishing vessel owners or licence holders for health and safety improvements.

Grants of up to £100,000 each are available for existing projects that are aimed at mitigating impacts of Covid-19 at ports and harbours and bringing benefits to the local area.

Applications will be assessed and judged on a competitive basis with grants awarded to those best meeting the criteria and aims of this fund. The closing date for fully formed applications including all required documentation is 29 November 2020.

Awards of up to £50,000 each are available for health and safety improvements on board fishing vessels. This fund is open now and applications will be assessed and awarded on individual merit as and when they are received, until the fund is fully committed. The fund criteria is available here. Applicants are asked to note that their requests will only be considered once all the required documentation is received. Incomplete applications will be returned to the applicant for resubmission.

See: https://www.gov.uk/government/news/the-marine-management-organisation-mmo-fast-tracks-grants-to-help-englands-ports-and-fishing-industry?utm_source=7e8b34a7-68d7-4a39-85fd-38aa8c6c48a8&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm_content=immediate

The Future Fund

This scheme will issue convertible loans between £125,000 to £5 million to innovative companies which are facing financing difficulties due to the coronavirus outbreak.

The Future Fund provides government loans to UK-based companies ranging from £125,000 to £5 million, subject to at least equal match funding from private investors.

These convertible loans may be an option for businesses that rely on equity investment and are unable to access other government business support programmes because they are either pre-revenue or pre-profit.

The scheme is open for applications until 31 January 2021.

A business is eligible if:

- it is UK-incorporated - if your business is part of a corporate group, only the parent company is eligible
- it has raised at least £250,000 in equity investment from third-party investors in the last 5 years
- none of its shares are traded on a regulated market, multilateral trading facility or other listing venue
- it was incorporated on or before 31 December 2019
- at least one of the following is true:
 - half or more employees are UK-based
 - half or more revenues are from UK sales

See: https://www.gov.uk/guidance/future-fund?utm_source=0f1c86a1-76e8-47de-b390-7bcfa20e319f&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm_content=immediate

The Coronavirus Large Business Interruption Loan Scheme

The Coronavirus Large Business Interruption Loan Scheme (CLBILS) provides financial support to larger businesses affected by coronavirus (COVID-19).

The scheme helps medium and large sized businesses to access loans and other kinds of finance up to £200 million.

The government guarantees 80% of the finance to the lender and recently announced that the scheme will be extended and is open to applications until 31 January 2021.

See: https://www.gov.uk/guidance/apply-for-the-coronavirus-large-business-interruption-loan-scheme?utm_source=61b117b3-7089-44f5-829b-af84c68c4fc9&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm_content=immediate

Bounce Back Loans

The scheme helps small and medium-sized businesses to borrow between £2,000 and up to 25% of their turnover. The maximum loan available is £50,000. The government guarantees

100% of the loan and there won't be any fees or interest to pay for the first 12 months. After 12 months the interest rate will be 2.5% a year.

The scheme has been extended and is now open to applications until 31 January 2021.

See: https://www.gov.uk/guidance/apply-for-a-coronavirus-bounce-back-loan?utm_source=c7cea23d-a8b9-43df-a18c-104d4423f70c&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm_content=immediate

Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme

The scheme helps small and medium-sized businesses to access loans and other kinds of finance up to £5 million. The government guarantees 80% of the finance to the lender and pays interest and any fees for the first 12 months.

The scheme has been extended and is open until 31 January 2021.

See: https://www.gov.uk/guidance/apply-for-the-coronavirus-business-interruption-loan-scheme?utm_source=63fd2f34-693e-4f1b-b01c-6c90370bc39f&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm_content=immediate

Eat Out to Help Out Scheme

HMRC have issued guidance on information about the recovery of over claimed Eat Out to Help Out payments. It also describes the penalties HMRC can charge.

An over claimed Eat Out to Help Out payment includes any amount of a payment which the business was not entitled to receive.

Please talk to us if you need assistance.

See: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/eat-out-to-help-out-scheme-receiving-payments-you-were-not-entitled-to/eat-out-to-help-out-scheme-receiving-payments-you-were-not-entitled-to>

Find out how to pay back all or some of the payments your business claimed when taking part in the Eat Out to Help Out Scheme here: https://www.gov.uk/guidance/repay-eat-out-to-help-out-scheme-payments?utm_source=4d65fbaf-06a2-418b-a53e-ea3c4024fe7a&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm_content=immediate

Kickstart Scheme employer resources

If you've been offered Kickstart Scheme funding, you can use these resources to show your support for the scheme.

See: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/kickstart-scheme-employer-resources?utm_source=6343a68d-8253-4605-a83b-d05619aea2e6&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm_content=daily