

Business Support Coronavirus

Updated 20 March 2020

Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme,

New scheme to become available week commencing **23 March 2020**.

The maximum value of a loan provided under the scheme will be **£5 million pounds**.

To be eligible for support via CBILS, the small business must:

- Be UK based, with turnover of no more than £41 million per annum
- Operate within an eligible industrial sector (a small number of industrial sectors are not eligible for support)
- Be able to confirm that they have not received *de minimis* State aid beyond €200,000 equivalent over the current and previous two fiscal years
- Have a sound borrowing proposal, but insufficient security to meet the lender's requirements
- Full eligibility criteria will be published shortly

Finance terms are from three months up to ten years for term loans and asset finance and up to three years for revolving facilities and invoice finance.

To apply for an CBILS-backed facility, businesses may wish to consider approaching one or more participating lenders to discuss their borrowing needs.

Eligibility restrictions

Please note that a limited number of further eligibility restrictions do apply. [Full details can be found here.](#)

CBILS will be available from 23 March. British Business Bank are using existing fund managers to distribute; a list of North East partners are on their website; <https://www.british-business-bank.co.uk/ourpartners/coronavirus-business-interruption-loan-scheme-cbils/accredited-lenders/>

Business Rate Relief – update on the types of businesses that are eligible

Properties that will benefit from the relief will be occupied hereditaments that are wholly or mainly being used:

- a. as shops, restaurants, cafes, drinking establishments, cinemas and live music venues,
- b. for assembly and leisure; or
- c. as hotels, guest & boarding premises and self-catering accommodation.

Sections 10 to 15 of the detailed guidance set out those properties that will benefit from the relief.

Sections 16 of the detailed guidance sets out those properties which are not eligible for this relief.

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/873622/Expanded_Retail_Discount_Guidance.pdf

Business Rate Relief

The government will introduce a business rates retail holiday for retail, hospitality and leisure businesses in England for the 2020 to 2021 tax year.

Businesses that received the retail discount in the 2019 to 2020 tax year will be rebilled by their local authority as soon as possible.

Any enquiries on eligibility for, or provision of, the reliefs should be directed to the relevant **local authority**. Guidance for local authorities on the business rates holiday will be published by **20 March**

Business Grants

A £25,000 grant will be provided to retail, hospitality and leisure businesses operating from smaller premises, with a rateable value between £15,000 and £51,000.

The government will provide additional funding for local authorities to support small businesses that already pay little or no business rates because of small business rate relief (SBBR). This will provide a one-off grant of £10,000 to businesses currently eligible for SBBR or rural rate relief, to help meet their ongoing business costs.

If your business is eligible for SBBR or rural rate relief, you will be contacted by your **local authority** – you do not need to apply.

Funding for the scheme will be provided to local authorities by government in **early April**. **Guidance for local authorities on the scheme will be provided shortly.**

Coronavirus: if your company cannot file accounts with Companies House on time

If Coronavirus (COVID-19) has affected your company and you need more time to file your accounts, you should act before your filing deadline.

Your company should take appropriate measures to ensure accounts are filed on time. You should also [file your accounts online](#) if you're able to.

If, immediately before the filing deadline, it becomes apparent that accounts will not be filed on time due to your company being affected by Coronavirus (COVID-19), you may make an application to extend the period allowed for filing – using the link below.

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/apply-for-more-time-to-file-your-companys-accounts>

Pubs/Restaurants – to operate as takeaways

The government will introduce a time limited permitted development right through secondary legislation (negative SI) to allow the temporary change of use of a pub (A4 - drinking establishment) and a restaurant (A3 – restaurants and cafes) to a hot-food take away for a period of up to 12 months only.

Businesses will be required to tell the local planning authority when the new use begins and ends.

HMRC – Tax Helpline

All businesses and self-employed people in financial distress, and with outstanding tax liabilities, may be eligible to receive support with their tax affairs through HMRC's Time To Pay service. These arrangements are agreed on a case-by-case basis and are tailored to individual circumstances and liabilities.

If you are concerned about being able to pay your tax due to COVID-19, call HMRC's dedicated helpline on **0800 0159 559**.

Insurance

Businesses that have cover for both pandemics and government-ordered closure should be covered, as the government and insurance industry confirmed on 17 March 2020 that advice to avoid pubs, theatres etc is sufficient to make a claim.

Insurance policies differ significantly, so businesses are encouraged to check the terms and conditions of their specific policy and contact their providers. Most businesses are unlikely to be covered, as standard business interruption insurance policies are dependent on damage to property and will exclude pandemics.

Support for businesses who are paying sick pay to employees

We 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
- eligible period for the scheme will commence the day after the regulations on the extension of Statutory Sick Pay 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

North East Growth Hub Information

North East Growth Hub have also put together some resources -

<https://www.northeastgrowthhub.co.uk/toolkits/covid-19-coronavirus-toolkit>