

Coronavirus (COVID-19) – Businesses and Employers Bulletin

3 April 2020

This bulletin is issued by the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy and provides information for employers and businesses on Coronavirus (COVID-19). All guidance, information and announcements can be found at [GOV.UK](#). Organisations should pay particular attention to the [guidance for employees, employers and businesses](#) which is being updated regularly with the latest advice.

The UK Government is supporting businesses and their employees through a package of measures during this period of unprecedented disruption. The [Business Support website](#) helps businesses find the right support, advice and information to help with the impact of Coronavirus (COVID-19) and the [support measures that are available](#). This website will continue to be updated as information becomes available. Some aspects of business support are devolved. Specific information for businesses and employers in [Northern Ireland](#), [Scotland](#), and [Wales](#) is available.

In England, Growth Hubs can advise on local and UK Government business support - including schemes to help businesses through the current COVID-19 situation - and help businesses build their resilience. Find your local Growth Hub [here](#).

All previous Coronavirus Bulletins can be found [here](#). Please note the information in previous bulletins was accurate on the date it was published and will not be updated.

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Chancellor of the Exchequer strengthens support on UK Government offer for business

The Chancellor of the Exchequer, Rishi Sunak is taking [further action to support firms](#) affected by the coronavirus crisis by bolstering business interruption loans for small businesses and announcing a new scheme for larger companies.

Extended Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme (CBILS)

The UK Government has extended the CBILS so that all viable small businesses affected by COVID-19, and not just those unable to secure regular commercial financing, will now be eligible, should they need finance to keep operating during this difficult time.

More than £90 million of loans to nearly 1,000 small and medium sized firms have been approved under the government's Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme (CBILS) since its launch last week. And a UK government-backed scheme to provide financing to larger companies, being operated by the Bank of England, has also provided almost £1.9 billion of support to firms and a further £1.6 billion has been committed.

UK Government is also stopping lenders from requesting personal guarantees for loans under £250,000 and making operational changes to speed up lending approvals. The government will continue to cover the first twelve months of interest and fees. Please find further details [here](#).

New Coronavirus Large Business Interruption Loan Scheme (CLBILS)

The new CLBILS will ensure that more firms are able to benefit from UK government-backed support during this difficult time. It will provide a UK government guarantee of 80% to enable banks to make loans of up to £25 million to firms with an annual turnover of between £45 million and £500 million.

Loans backed by a guarantee under CLBILS will be offered at commercial rates of interest and further details of the scheme will be announced later this month. Please find initial details [here](#).

Upcoming Webinars

UK Government's Business Support Website has a list of upcoming webinar events from Government and non-government partners. You can find more information [here](#).

HMRC are delivering a programme of webinars on measures to support employers, employees and the self-employed through this period of disruption caused by COVID-19. You can watch a video of the recorded webinar on the [HMRC YouTube channel Coronavirus – \(COVID-19\): helping employers to support employees](#)

Update from the Prime Minister

The Prime Minister has posted an update on Twitter paying tribute to the huge effort everyone has made to delay the spread of the virus. He reiterates the importance for people to stay at home over the weekend, in spite of the expected warm weather.

See the update from the Prime Minister [here](#).

New Updates and Guidance

New

Rules and regulations relaxed to support businesses

The Government has relaxed some rules and regulations to help businesses handle any disruption they are experiencing due to coronavirus. Click [here](#) for a list of some of the ways businesses are being supported.

Cash support for food redistribution during coronavirus outbreak

The government has announced a £3 million fund for organisations redistributing safe surplus food to those who need it during the coronavirus outbreak. Find out more [here](#).

Pay it forward campaign - Supporting businesses through the coronavirus crisis

The Business Support campaign is working with Crowdfunder to build awareness about the support provided to small businesses through the [Pay it Forward campaign](#). Small businesses can set-up a Pay it Forward campaign to pre-sell their services and diversify trading now to ensure continuous cash flow. Crowdfunder is covering all platform and transaction fees making it free to small businesses. Enterprise Nation is providing access to free training and support for business, to help with online sales, marketing, cashflow, and diversifying, if necessary. This campaign is nationwide and you can someone who is self-employed, a micro or small businesses can set-up a Pay it Forward campaign [here](#).

Slides and datasets to accompany coronavirus press conference: 2 April 2020

Press conference [slides](#) and datasets used by Matt Hancock.

Slides and datasets to accompany coronavirus press conference: 3 April 2020

Press conference [slides](#) and datasets used by Matt Hancock.

£20 million for ambitious technologies to build UK resilience following coronavirus outbreak

Businesses to help boost the UK's resilience to the long-term impact of coronavirus and similar future situations as a result of £20 million government funding. Find out more [here](#).

Data sharing during this public health emergency

Health and care information will be vital in our response to coronavirus. We must continue to use it well and inform the public to maintain and build trust. Find further information [here](#).

Updates

Business rates: expanded retail discount – guidance

Guidance on the operation of expanded retail discount 2020 to 2021 coronavirus response, announced at Budget 2020. [Guidance updated](#) to confirm that the government's assessment that the expanded retail discount is not a state aid, and that local authorities should therefore award relief to all eligible properties.

Coronavirus (COVID-19): business support grant funding - guidance for local authorities

[Guidance](#) for local authorities setting out details of the Small Business Grants Fund (SBGF) and Retail, Hospitality and Leisure Grant Fund (RHLGF). The grant funding allocations by local authority have now been added.

MHRA guidance on coronavirus (COVID-19)

[Guidance](#) has been produced for the pharmaceutical and healthcare industry covering the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak. Published a new page on Guidance on coronavirus (COVID-19) tests and testing kits.

Requests for Business Intelligence and Assistance

COVID-19: Call for rapid sanitising technology for ambulances

Do you have an innovative or novel approach to get ambulances cleaner quicker to help combat Coronavirus? Find out more [here](#).

Coronavirus (COVID-19): tell us if you can produce testing kits and services

[Forms](#) for organisations that can manufacture and supply testing consumables, equipment and laboratory PPE as part of the coronavirus (COVID-19) response.

Can your business offer coronavirus (COVID-19) support?

UK Government is looking for businesses who can offer support in multiple areas and has set up an online tool where businesses can register. To find the list of areas, and offer support, click [here](#).

Business Intelligence: share the impact Coronavirus is having on your organisation

We welcome information from businesses on impacts across supply, demand and labour markets, actions to address these impacts, and any gaps in the Government response from your perspective. Please send your intelligence to intel@beis.gov.uk. We are aware that individual company information may be commercially sensitive, and it will be treated accordingly. Please note that this inbox is only for receiving intelligence and does not provide business advice.