

Coronavirus Business Advice and Support Update – Friday 29 May 2020

The information in this newsletter is correct as of Friday 29 May 2020 but we suggest monitoring the key webpages outlined below as well as the [Council's website](#) for the latest updates.

Sources of information and support for businesses

The Government's [Business Support Helpline](#) number is FREEPHONE 0800 998 1098. The helpline provides free, impartial business support and signposting services to businesses in England – which currently includes business advice on Covid-19.

You can also find free support, advice and sources of finance through the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough [Growth Hub](#) or [speak to an advisor](#) on webchat about support for your business.

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1. Grants and funding

Additional business grants for small businesses

We are continuing to work to establish the eligibility criteria for the new [discretionary fund](#) announced by Government and to develop processes for distributing the grants.

Government guidance on the new fund [is available online](#). This has recently been updated so that businesses that are eligible for the Self-Employed Income Support Scheme (SEISS) are now also eligible to apply for the scheme.

Please keep an eye on future issues of this newsletter and on our website for more information. To register your interest in the upcoming discretionary grant scheme, please email: businessgrants@scamb.gov.uk.

Grants for small businesses from Salesforce and Enterprise Nation

Salesforce is partnering with Enterprise Nation to offer eligible small businesses the opportunity to receive a [£5,000 grant](#) to help them through the COVID-19 outbreak.

To be eligible to apply, companies must:

- Be registered at Companies House
- Been established for at least 12 months
- Have not received any other cash grant during 2020 in relation to COVID-19 from any Government
- Be based in the UK with a British bank account
- Have between 2 to 50 employees
- Meet all other eligibility requirements as stated in the grant programme terms [here](#).

Applications for Central England will open at 8.00 am on 1 June and close at 23.59 pm on 7 June.

There will be 134 grants awarded at £5,000 each in the UK. These will be split across six regions, with a fixed amount of grants available per region. Decisions on grants will be made by an independent judging panel to screen finalists and recommend grant awards. The judging panel will seek to ascertain how the applicant's business has been affected by COVID-19, how will this grant help the business continue to trade, and what will be the positive impact on the community.

GroceryAid

The [GroceryAid Covid-19 Fund](#) has been established to provide enhanced support for grocery colleagues during the Coronavirus crisis. They offer:

- Mental Health Support: Offering 'in the moment' emotional and practical support for grocery colleagues dealing with shock, anxiety, or stress, from day one of working in the grocery industry.
- Bereavement Financial Assistance: Providing financial assistance for the loss of a loved one through Covid-19.

- Crisis Grants: Non-repayable grants designed to help those struggling with exceptional hardship caused during Covid-19.

Coronavirus Community Support Fund is now open for applications

The Government's Coronavirus Community Support Fund is now open for applications.

This new funding stream makes available £200m in Government funding that will be aimed primarily at small to medium organisations in England.

The Fund has two key objectives:

- To increase community support to vulnerable people affected by the COVID-19 crisis, through the work of civil society organisations.
- To reduce temporary closures of essential charities and social enterprises, ensuring services for vulnerable people impacted by COVID-19 have the financial resources to operate, and so reduce the burden on public services.

Grants will allow organisations to meet service costs, where they are experiencing increased demand and/or short-term income disruption. Grants will also allow organisations to refocus services to address more immediate beneficiary needs in light of COVID-19.

They're looking to award [funding between £300 to £10,000](#) or [funding over £10,000](#) to cover spending for up to six months after award. This will give charities time to consider what the longer-term implications of the pandemic might be.

They will consider larger awards or longer timeframes, particularly for organisations working across more than one area of England, on a case-by-case basis.

Supporting older people hardest hit by the Coronavirus crisis

The [Independent Age Grants Fund](#) aims to help smaller charities across the UK who are working with some of the older people hardest hit by the Coronavirus.

They are supporting work with two groups of older people, who can too easily miss out:

- Older people living in particularly complex and challenging situations
- Older people in danger of being out of sight and out of mind

You must know what you want to do – or do better – to help make an immediate difference to their lives over the next six months.

The Fund comprises four separate funding rounds. In each round £500,000 will be made available where organisations can apply to receive up to £15,000 each. The closing date for the first round is 9am on 4 June 2020.

Projects engaging armed forces communities

The [Forces Communities Together programme](#) will award small grants of up to £10,000 towards creative and engaging projects, that can be delivered under social restrictions, for people from Armed Forces communities who are isolated as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic.

The programme is open to applications from registered charities and community interest companies, schools and Armed Forces bases and units. The closing date is 30 June 2020.

Voluntary organisations in the criminal justice system

Voluntary organisations working in the criminal justice system with under £500,000 annual income can apply for [grant funding](#) from Clinks to support their vital work during Covid-19.

Grants are available for activities and resources which help organisations deliver support to people in the criminal justice system during the crisis. For example, this could be additional equipment or a contribution towards a salary. They expect to provide grants of £3,000 - £5,000. No organisation will be granted more than £20,000.

Updates to Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme tools and guidance

The Government webpage where businesses can [check](#) which employees they can put on furlough and claim for through the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme has been updated with information that clarifies that eligibility depends on employment on or after certain dates.

The list explaining functions that can be tested on the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme calculator has [been updated](#) – the calculator can now be used to work out claims for employees who have received top ups or discretionary payments in the claim period. It has also been updated with information that the amount claimed for NICs cannot be more than 13.8% of the grant claimed for employee's wages.

The [guidance on claiming](#) via the Job Retention Scheme has been updated to explain that employers will be asked to give the amounts separately for the NICs, pension and wages they are claiming for. Information has also been added that employee authorised salary deductions can be made from grant payments.

2. Innovation funding and support

The Welsh Government has announced a [new funding competition](#) for digital solutions to help fight Covid-19. The competition is being supported by [Digital Health Ecosystem Wales](#) and funding is available for between five and eight projects to rapidly pilot products and solutions.

The competition is open to any UK business who has a digital solution to fight Covid-19. The solution must be developed and ready for testing during the application process. All solutions must tackle one of four themed areas:

- Remote diagnosis and triage of patients
- Optimising data collection and analysis
- Tracking, managing, and reporting hospital personal protective equipment (PPE) inventory
- Remote citizen support and treatment

These solutions will be judged by an expert panel from Welsh Government, NHS Wales and the NHS Wales Informatics Service (NWIS).

The deadline for applications is Monday 8 June at 9 am.

3. Support for businesses

Coronavirus and mental health at work

[Acas](#) has released [new guidance](#) and [resources](#) to help employers and employees cope in these challenging times.

Government webinars

Help and support if your business is affected by coronavirus is available from Government via a [range of free webinars](#) covering:

- Running your business through the coronavirus pandemic
- Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme
- Self-Employment Income Support Scheme
- Statutory Sick Pay (SSP) rebate scheme

4. Government guidance and legislation

Workplace guidance on test and trace

New [workplace guidance](#) on the NHS test and trace service for employers, businesses and workers has been published by Government.

It explains how employers and businesses can play their part in the NHS test and trace programme to slow the spread of the virus, protect the health and care system and save lives. The guidance should be used in conjunction with [Working safely during coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#).

New roadmap for opening retail premises

The Government [announced](#) a roadmap for reopening a broader range of shops starting from next month. From 1 June 2020, it intends to allow outdoor markets to reopen, subject to all premises being made COVID-secure, as well as car showrooms, which often have significant outdoor space and where it is generally easier to apply social distancing.

From 15 June 2020, UK Government intends to allow all other retailers to open, ranging from shops selling clothes, shoes, toys, furniture, books, and electronics, plus tailors, auction houses, photography studios, and indoor markets, if the Government's five tests are met and they follow the COVID-19 secure guidelines.

[Updated guidance](#) for the retail sector has been published alongside this announcement, detailing the measures retailers should take to meet the necessary social distancing and hygiene standards.

Reminder: Details of other [free webinars](#), hosted by the Department of Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, are available on how to make your workplace COVID-secure. The webinars cover a range of different types of workplace settings which are allowed to open in England.

New public health measures for all UK arrivals at the UK border

New measures at the UK border to guard against a second wave of coronavirus infections have been [announced](#). These measures are due to come into effect on 8 June 2020. They include 14 days self-isolation for anyone entering the UK, bar a [short list of exemptions](#). These include:

- road haulage and freight workers, to ensure the supply of goods is not impacted;
- medical professionals who are travelling to help with the fight against coronavirus;
- Anyone moving from within the Common Travel Area, covering Ireland, the Channel Islands and the Isle of Man;
- Seasonal Agricultural Workers who will self-isolate on the property where they are working

The changes will be subject to review every three weeks, to ensure they are in line with the latest scientific evidence and remain effective and necessary.

Providing home care

There is [new information](#) from Government for those providing personal care to people living in their own home during the coronavirus outbreak.

MOT tests

Guidance on [providing MOT tests](#) during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak has been updated with added information on working safely when carrying out MOT tests during the coronavirus pandemic.

Information has been added to the guidance on [MOTs due from 30 March 2020](#) about what happens if you take your vehicle for its MOT and it fails when the extension has been applied.

Exporting PPE

Guidance on [exporting personal protective equipment during coronavirus](#) has been updated to confirm that goods exported from the European Union after midnight on Monday 25 May 2020 will no longer require an export authorisation. The export authorisation requirement for personal protective equipment expired on 25 May 2020 and will not be extended.

Furloughed drivers and recording mobile working time

There is [new guidance](#) for operators and furloughed drivers on EU mobile working time rules and EU and AETR drivers' hours and tachograph rules.

Advice on home moves

Government advice on [moving home during the Coronavirus outbreak](#) has been updated to include custom and self-builders and tenants seeking mutual exchange.

Government to offer antibody tests to health and social care staff

All health and social care staff in England will be offered a test, to see if they have had coronavirus as part of a new national [antibody testing programme](#). The new [antibody testing programme](#), will start next week.

Preparing for the wider opening of early years and childcare settings from 1 June

The Government has issued a [planning guide](#) for early years providers, in England, to help prepare them to open their settings for all children from 1 June 2020. The guide should be read alongside [Actions for education and childcare settings to prepare for wider opening from 1 June 2020](#) and [Implementing protective measures in education and childcare settings](#).

5. Feed your experience back to Government

Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority is capturing the health of local business and the impact Coronavirus is having across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough. It will use this data to send back to Government and it will use the intelligence gathered to develop targeted support, information, advice and guidance. You can [fill out a survey](#) to let them know how Coronavirus is impacting your business.

The Department for Business, Enterprise, Innovation and Skills also welcomes information from businesses on the impacts of Coronavirus 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. Please do copy Openforbusiness@scambbs.gov.uk into your email as we are keen to understand the impacts of the crisis on the district's businesses.