

Coronavirus - COVID 19

Financial & Grant Support for Qualifying Businesses



Community
Pharmacy Wales
Fferylliaeth
Gymunedol Cymru

CONTRACTOR NEWS

This edition of Contractor News provides details of the financial and grant support available to qualifying businesses during the Covid-19 emergency.

Business Rates Relief

The UK Government and Welsh Government has announced a package of support worth more than £1.4bn for small Wales based businesses to help them during the coronavirus outbreak. This funding includes Business Rate Relief and a grant scheme, details of the grant can be found below.

The new package includes a year-long business rates holiday for retail, leisure and hospitality businesses in Wales. Local Authorities will be looking to **automatically award the business rates holiday to all eligible parties** as soon as possible, and you will receive a new bill when the award has been made.

Guidance on eligibility for the relief can be found [here](#).

As this will be automatically awarded local authorities have asked you to be patient and not to follow-up by phone. We very much appreciate the major challenges being faced by businesses, and staff will make every effort to get details to you as soon as possible.

Financial Support and Grants

Welsh Government Business Grants

The Business Grant has 2 different components.

Grant 1 :

For retail, leisure and hospitality businesses in Wales, a grant of £25,000 will be offered for businesses in these sectors with a rateable value of between £12,001 and £51,000.

Grant 2 :

For all other sectors the Welsh Government package also provides a £10,000 grant to all businesses eligible for Small Business Rates Relief with a rateable value of £12,000 or less.

CPW has confirmed with local authorities that community pharmacies are classed as retail businesses and qualify for this support.

Local authorities are administering these two grants in Wales. To enable quick and efficient payments, you will need to confirm some details with your local authority.

For more information click [here](#). The application form you are required to complete is local authority specific and you can access each local authority site via the link. You will require the Business Rates reference number and the Rateable Value of the Property.

Please do not try to call your local authority. The information you need will be available on-line.

Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme

Under the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme, all UK employers will be able to access support to continue paying part of their employees' salary for those employees that would otherwise have been laid off during this crisis, all UK businesses are eligible.

To access the scheme businesses will need to:

- designate affected employees as 'furloughed workers,' and notify your employees of this change - changing the status of employees remains subject to existing employment law and, depending on the employment contract, may be subject to negotiation
- submit information to HMRC about the employees that have been furloughed and their earnings through a new online portal, this portal is not yet in place and we will publish details as soon as they are available (HMRC will set out further details on the information required)

HMRC will reimburse 80% of furloughed workers wage costs, up to a cap of £2,500 per month. HMRC are working urgently to set up a system for reimbursement. Existing systems are not set up to facilitate payments to employers.

Business Interruption Loan Scheme

A new temporary Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme, covering a variety of different products such as loans, overdraft, invoice finance and asset finance, delivered by the British Business Bank, has launched on the 23 March to support primarily small and medium sized businesses to access bank lending and overdrafts. The government will provide lenders with a guarantee of 80% on each loan (subject to a per-lender cap on claims) to give lenders further confidence in continuing to provide finance to SMEs. The government will not charge businesses or banks for this guarantee, and the Scheme will support loans of up to £5 million in value. Businesses can access the first 12 months of that finance interest free, as government will cover the first 12 months of interest payments.

Further details can be found at: <https://www.british-business-bank.co.uk/ourpartners/coronavirus-business-interruption-loan-scheme-cbils/>
Protection for business who miss rent payments

Commercial tenants who cannot pay their rent because of coronavirus will be protected from eviction, the UK government has announced. These measures will mean no business will be forced out of their premises if they miss a payment in the next 3 months. Please visit the [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk) website for further information

Statutory Sick Pay Support

The UK Government is bringing forward legislation to allow small and medium-sized businesses and employers to reclaim Statutory Sick Pay (SSP) paid for sickness absence due to coronavirus. The eligibility criteria for the scheme will be as follows:

- this refund will cover up to two 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
- the 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

RUSSELL GOODWAY
CHIEF EXECUTIVE

30 March 2020