

Status of Covid-19 business support measures

Purpose: To provide the West Midlands' Covid-19 economic impact group with the latest status of business support measures. This is vital so businesses are informed about when and how they will receive assistance, as well as the type of support on offer.

Content: It will add to information available through [government's website](#) with regional intelligence. All updates through coronavirusresponse@wmca.org.uk.

Type of support	Detail	Delivery route	Timing and status
Business Rates	12-month business rates holiday for all retail, hospitality and leisure businesses in England. Also now includes nurseries.	Via local authorities	Applied for business rates tax bill in April 2020. Local authorities are working hard to reissue £zero bills now. <u>No action is required from businesses to receive the holiday.</u> If firms would like to understand the value of the benefit to them, visit the government's business rates calculator .
Business Grants	Small business grant funding of £10,000 for all business in receipt of small business rate relief or rural rate relief	Via local authorities	<u>Businesses do not need to apply.</u> Funding will be paid to local authorities in early April.
	Grant funding of £25,000 for retail, hospitality and leisure businesses with property with a rateable value between £15,000 and £51,000	Via local authorities All enquiries on eligibility for and provision of grants should be directed to the relevant local authority.	Government guidance for councils published 24 March. Around £550 million expected to be paid to WMCA constituent councils across this and the small business grant , to be administered to around 40,000 businesses. Councils are working hard to collect bank details of all applicable businesses. This includes making direct contact and via secure online forms. The aim is to make payments as soon as possible, with the first expected in early April.
Pay and welfare	Government to reimburse up to 14 days statutory sick pay for each employee who is sick or self-isolates from day one	Via HMRC.	Government guidance awaited. <u>Could be several months until payment to firms.</u> Employees can get an 'isolation note' online from the NHS.

	Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme for all UK employers to continue paying 80% of furloughed workers wage costs, up to a cap of £2,500 per month for those employees that would otherwise have been laid off.	Via HMRC. Businesses will need to submit information to an online portal about furloughed employees.	Government published guidance for firms about which workers are covered and the steps they need to take. Guidance also available for employees . HMRC will be launching the online by the end of April, but payments can be backdated to 1 March 2020.
	People on low incomes and self-employed are eligible for Universal Credit. From 6 April the standard allowance and basic element in Working Tax Credit will each increase by £20 on top of the planned uprating for 1 year.	Via https://www.understandinguniversalcredit.gov.uk/coronavirus/	From 6 April the requirements of the Minimum Income Floor will be temporarily relaxed. New claimants will not need to attend the jobcentre to demonstrate gainful self-employment.
	Local Housing Allowance rates increased to the 30th percentile of market rents.	Automatically via universal credit.	This applies from April to all private renters who are new or existing Universal Credit housing element claimants and to existing Housing Benefit claimants.
	Self-employment income support scheme to provide a grant to self-employed individuals or partnerships, worth 80% of their profits up to a cap of £2,500 per month.	Via HMRC Detailed eligibility information and guidance for individuals is available via: https://www.businesssupport.gov.uk/self-employment-income-support-scheme/	Individuals should not contact HMRC now. HMRC will use existing information to check eligibility and invite applications once the scheme is operational. HMRC will then pay the grant directly to eligible claimants' bank account. Grants are expected to start to be paid out by beginning of June 2020. For eligible individuals who have not submitted their returns for 2018-19, they will have 4 weeks' notice (to 24 April) to file their returns and therefore become eligible for this scheme.
Business Loans	Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme (CBILS) offering loans of up to £5 million for SMEs through the British Business Bank	Via banks and commercial lenders, overseen by British Business Bank	CBILS available from Monday 23 March and businesses encouraged to discuss with banks immediately . If the accredited lender can offer finance on normal commercial terms without making use of the scheme, they will do so. Coverage includes: Term loans, Overdrafts, Asset finance and Invoice finance.

	Term Funding Scheme for SMEs (TFSME) A new lending facility from the Bank of England to the UK banks to help support lending to SMEs, helping them bridge coronavirus disruption to their cashflows through loans.	Via banks	Facility available. Businesses encouraged to discuss with banks immediately.
	Covid Corporate Financing Facility (CCFF) - a Bank of England/HMT scheme to purchase commercial paper from large, investment grade UK corporates to provide immediate cash flow support at pre-crisis terms.	Via Bank of England	See https://www.bankofengland.co.uk/news/2020/march/the-covid-corporate-financing-facility
Deferring tax liabilities	HMRC Time To Pay Scheme to renegotiate payment schedule.	HMRC helpline open now: 0800 024 1222.	Active now.
	Deferring VAT payments for 3 months (until 30 June 2020) for all UK businesses.	Via HMRC	This is an <u>automatic offer with no applications required</u> . Businesses will not need to make a VAT payment during this period. VAT refunds and reclaims will be paid by the government as normal.
	Self-assessed Income Tax payments due for self-employed people in July 2020 will be deferred to January 2021.	Via HMRC	This is an <u>automatic offer with no applications required</u> . No penalties or interest for late payment will be charged in the deferral period.