



We trust everyone remains safe and well at this time.

COVID-19 BUSINESS SUPPORT

Following last week's major updates to a number of programmes, there are just two things to note this week – with the second being particularly relevant for those who have not yet received any grant support so far:

1. **Self Employed Income Support Scheme [SEISS] - Closing Date for first applications**
2. **Local Authority Discretionary Grants – FOR THOSE WHO DO NOT QUALIFY FOR GRANTS ELSEWHERE**

1. SELF EMPLOYED INCOME SUPPORT SCHEME [SEISS]

Following confirmation that the SEISS has been extended to allow for a second payment, the first phase concludes on **MONDAY 13 JULY 2020**. No new applications for the first payment will be accepted after this date, regardless of reason. If you have not been contacted directly by HMRC yet and feel you may qualify, please use the following link: <https://www.tax.service.gov.uk/self-employment-support/enter-unique-taxpayer-reference>. You will need your Unique Taxpayer Reference (UTR) and National Insurance (NI) number to complete the check – these can be found on the front of your last tax return. As ever, if anyone has any issues accessing this service, please contact us immediately so that we can have maximum available time in which to assist you.

You do not need to have claimed the first payment to claim for the second; although you will still need to meet the eligibility criteria - these are the same for both payments. Individuals will need to confirm that their business has been adversely affected by coronavirus during the latter phase. Further details regarding the second phase are due to be announced after Friday 12 June 2020, and we hope to update you on these next week.

2. LOCAL AUTHORITY DISCRETIONARY GRANTS

IMPORTANT: FOR THOSE WHO HAVE NOT QUALIFIED FOR GRANTS ELSEWHERE

The Local Authority Discretionary Grants Fund is an additional support measure that is aimed at small businesses that were not eligible for other funds – such as the Small Business Rate Relief Grant, the Rural Rate Relief Grant Fund or the Retail, Hospitality and Leisure Grant Fund. The funding allocation for the Discretionary Grant scheme is much smaller and hence it is likely the new fund will be oversubscribed, meaning only a minority of business applicants are likely to be successful in securing funding from this scheme; so please be aware of this when making an application.

Applications for discretionary grant funding has a **closing date of Sunday 14 June 2020** so applications must be made a priority this week. Applications received after the closing date will only be considered in exceptional circumstances.

Qualifying Criteria

The discretionary grants fund is aimed at small and micro businesses that are not eligible for the other support schemes (excluding the Job Retention Scheme for furloughed employees), have ongoing fixed property related costs and can demonstrate a significant drop in income due to the Coronavirus restriction measures.

Local authorities have been asked to prioritise the following types of businesses for grant funding, but it is important to note that funding is not restricted to these areas only:

- Small businesses in shared offices of flexible workspaces
- Regular market traders with fixed stall locations who do not have their own business rates assessment and have their main domestic residence in the relevant Local Authority district
- Bed & Breakfast which pays Council Tax instead of Business Rates
- Charities that are in receipt of charitable Business Rate relief that would otherwise have been eligible for Small Business Rate Relief

The Local Authority Discretionary Grant Fund also allows for additional discretion to make payments to other businesses outside of this priority group based on local economic need, for example where a grant award would make a significant contribution to protecting local jobs.

Some businesses are excluded from receiving a discretionary grant payment:

- Businesses that have received cash grants from any central government COVID related scheme
- Businesses that were not trading on 11th March 2020
- Companies that are in administration, are insolvent or where a striking off notice has been made

Application Procedure

Applications are made online directly with your relevant local authority and vary slightly from place to place. All do require significant supporting documentation to be presented, so please do investigate what paperwork is specifically required in your area prior to making an application.

WHO SHOULD APPLY:

While there are priority businesses, we recommend all those who have so far not been eligible to apply for other programmes take time to investigate an application, as any additional funding would assist with cashflow at the current time. The Government admits that a number of businesses will be unsuccessful in their applications, this is not a grant that has been widely publicised up to now, so there may well be an opportunity to claim a small grant to assist in day-to-day running costs during the next stage of the pandemic.

If you need any support producing the documentation required for such an application, please do contact us as soon as is possible, so we can help produce everything prior to Sunday's deadline.

As per usual, please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any questions regarding the above or anything further relating to the government's Covid-19 business support initiatives. Your regular primary contact, or if they are not available our Covid-19 Business Support Co-ordinator, Mr Russell Nash [russell@butler-co.co.uk] remain available across the working week to answer any queries arising.

Please do contact us as soon as possible should you require any further assistance.

Best regards and stay well