

Luton BID are committed to helping the BID businesses.

This guide sets out further information on how your business can access support if you are experiencing financial difficulties because of COVID-19.

Please view the table of contents below, we will focus on delivering you the information to manage the impact of COVID-19. Latest update **20/07/21** and should be read as correct at the time of publication.

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New: Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme – Furlough

The Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme has been extended until **30 September 2021**.

From 1 July 2021, the level of grant will be reduced and you will be asked to contribute towards the cost of your furloughed employees' wages. To be eligible for the grant you must continue to pay your furloughed employees 80% of their wages, up to a cap of £2,500 per month for the time they spend on furlough.

Click [here](#) to view the table which shows the level of government contribution available in the coming months, the required employer contribution and the amount that the employee receives per month where the employee is furloughed 100% of the time.

Wage caps are proportional to the hours not worked.

A step by step guide has been prepared to explain the information that employers need to provide to HMRC to make a claim through the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme. It also describes the processes involved, to view please click [here](#).

Find out how to pay all or some of your grant back if you've overclaimed through the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme [here](#).

Find out if you're eligible and how much you can claim to cover wages for employees on temporary leave ('furlough') due to coronavirus (COVID-19) [here](#).

New: What is the current guidance for businesses?

The government has announced a 4-week pause at Step 3. Step 3 restrictions remain in place, and you should follow the guidance on this page, which explains what you can and cannot do.

It is expected that England will move to Step 4 on 19 July, though the data will be reviewed after 2 weeks in case the risks have reduced. The government will continue to monitor the data and the move to Step 4 will be confirmed one week in advance.

- You should continue to work from home if you can. When travelling within the UK, you should aim to do so safely and plan your journey in advance.
- You should get a test and follow the stay at home guidance if you have COVID-19 symptoms.

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- Gathering limits have been eased. Outdoor gatherings are limited to 30 people and indoor gatherings are limited to 6 people or 2 households (each household can include a support bubble, if eligible).
- New guidance on meeting friends and family emphasises personal responsibility rather than government rules. Instead of instructing you to stay 2m apart from anyone you don't live with, you are encouraged to exercise caution and consider the guidance on risks associated with COVID-19 and actions you can take to help keep you and your loved ones safe. Remember that the risks of close contact may be greater for some people than others and in some settings and circumstances, there will be specific guidance that you will need to follow even when you are with friends and family.
- Indoor entertainment and attractions such as cinemas, theatres, concert halls, bowling alleys, casinos, amusement arcades, museums and children's indoor play areas are permitted to open with COVID-secure measures in place.
- People can attend indoor and outdoor events, including live performances, sporting events and business events. Attendance at these events is capped according to venue type, and attendees should follow the COVID-secure measures set out by those venues.
- Indoor hospitality venues such as restaurants, pubs, bars and cafes can reopen.
- Organised indoor sport can take place for all. This includes gym classes. It must be organised by a business, charity or public body and the organiser must take reasonable measures to reduce the risk of transmission.
- All holiday accommodation can open, including hotels and B&Bs. This can be used by groups of up to 6 or 2 households (each household can include a support bubble, if eligible).
- The rules on weddings and civil partnership ceremonies and wedding receptions or civil partnership celebrations changed on 21 June. See the [weddings and civil partnership ceremonies and wedding receptions or civil partnership celebrations](#) section of this guidance.
- The rules on commemorative events following a death such as a wake, stone setting or ash scattering changed on 21 June. See the [funerals and linked commemorative events](#) of this guidance.
- The rules on care home visits changed on 21 June. See the [care home visits](#) section of this guidance.
- The rules on domestic residential visits for children changed on 21 June. See the [childcare](#) section of this guidance.

Financial support for self-employed, small and large businesses

Find your COVID financial support for your business

You may be eligible for loans, tax relief and cash grants. Use the [business support finder](#) to see what support is available for you and your business.

Please see a comprehensive summary of the existing support on offer, please click [here](#).

Register for free webinars to learn more about the support available

Take advantage of the free webinars that have been launched by HMRC to help and support if your business is affected by coronavirus (COVID -19). To register and watch the free the webinars please click [here](#).

Restart Grant

The Restart Grant scheme has now closed. If you have applied and not yet received your monies, please contact Luton Borough Council [Luton Borough Council](#)

Additional Restrictions Grant (ARG)

The Additional Restrictions Grant (ARG) has now closed. If you have applied and not yet received your monies, please contact [Luton Borough Council](#)

Recovery Loan Scheme launched

The Recovery Loan Scheme will ensure businesses continue to benefit from Government-guaranteed finance throughout 2021.

With non-essential retail and outdoor hospitality reopening, Ministers have ensured that appropriate support is still available to businesses to protect jobs. Businesses – ranging from coffee shops and restaurants, to hairdressers and gyms – and can access loans varying in size from £25,000, up to a maximum of £10 million. Invoice and asset finance is available from £1,000.

Further information can be found [here](#)

Bounce Back Loan borrowers will now have the option to tailor payments

The government announced, Businesses that took out government-backed Bounce Back Loans to get through Covid-19 will now have greater flexibility to repay their loans.

- Bounce Back Loan borrowers will now have the option to tailor payments according to their individual circumstances
- Government provides an option to delay all repayments for a further six months
- Pay as You Grow will be available to over 1.4 million businesses, which collectively took out nearly £45 billion through the Bounce Back Loan Scheme
- For further information please click [here](#).

Kickstart Scheme opens for employer applications

As part of the government's Plan for Jobs, a new £2 billion Kickstart Scheme will create hundreds of thousands of new, fully subsidised jobs for young people across the country. There will also be extra funding to support young people to build their experience and help them move into sustained employment after they have completed their Kickstart funded job.

Employers will receive funding for 100% of the relevant National Minimum Wage for 25 hours a week, plus associated employer National Insurance contributions and employer minimum auto-enrolment pension contributions.

For further information please click [here](#).

New raft of measures to prepare our high streets and seaside resorts for summer

A new £56 million Welcome Back Fund will help councils boost tourism, improve green spaces and provide more outdoor seating areas, markets and food stall pop-ups – giving people more safer options to reunite with friends and relatives.

Part of this funding will be allocated specifically to support coastal areas, with funding going to all coastal resorts across England to safely welcome holiday makers in the coming months.

For further information click [here](#).

Twice weekly rapid testing available to everyone in England

Everyone in England is able to access free, regular, rapid coronavirus (COVID-19) testing.

For further information, please click [here](#).

Statutory Sick Pay (SSP)

If you are a small- or medium-sized business, you may be entitled to reclaim the costs of Statutory Sick Pay (SSP) for sickness absence due to COVID-19:

- This refund will cover up to two weeks' SSP per eligible employee who are either ill or been told to self-isolate because of COVID-19. This is in line with the recommended isolation period. To view Guidance on self-isolation please click [here](#).
- 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. If you're an employer, find out if you can use Coronavirus Statutory Sick Pay Rebate Scheme, to view click [here](#).
- Employers will be able to reclaim expenditure for any employee who has claimed SSP (according to the new eligibility criteria) because of COVID-19. How to use the Coronavirus Statutory Sick Pay Rebate Scheme to claim back employees' coronavirus-related Statutory Sick Pay (SSP) to view click [here](#).
- Employers should maintain records of staff absences, but employees will not need to provide a GP fit note.
- The eligible period for the scheme began on 13th March.