

Hunter Simmons Limited

Advice to All Clients

Special Measures Announced by the Chancellor of the Exchequer on 17 March 2020 to Support Businesses during the COVID-19 Pandemic

Tax Debts

All businesses and self-employed people in financial distress, and with outstanding tax liabilities, may be eligible to receive support with their tax affairs through HMRC's Time To Pay service. These arrangements will be agreed on a case-by-case basis and are tailored to individual circumstances and liabilities.

The HMRC Helpline is 0800 0159 559

Financial Support for Hospitality Businesses

All hospitality sector businesses will pay no business rates for 12 months. Each business will receive a new rates bill from their local authority.

These businesses can also access an additional cash grant of up to £25,000 per business. We are still waiting for details as to how these grants can be accessed.

Financial Support for All Small Businesses

Small Businesses of all sectors can access grants of up to £10,000 to support their cash flow. We are still waiting for details as to how these grants can be accessed.

Small and medium sized businesses will be able to access the new Business Interruption Loan Scheme which will provide loans of up to £5 million, with no interest due for the first 6 months. Details have not yet been released about how this can be accessed, but we think you will need to approach your Bank for this.

Support for self-employed workers

If you're not eligible for Statutory Sick Pay because you're self-employed or earn below the Lower Earnings limit of £118 per week, the government is making it easier to claim for Universal Credit or Contributory Employment and Support Allowance during the Covid-19 outbreak.

Universal Credit

The Universal Credit Minimum Income Floor will be temporarily relaxed for those who have Covid-19 or are self-isolating in line with government advice. You'll be able to claim Universal Credit and get advance payments upfront with no requirement to go to the Jobcentre if you're advised to self-isolate.

How do I get this support?

The government website has details on eligibility and how to claim Universal Credit.

Employment and Support Allowance

If you're eligible, and ill or self-isolating due to Covid-19, you'll be able to claim Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) of £73.10 a week, from day one of your sickness rather than the usual day eight. You need to be over 25 to receive ESA.

How do I get this support?

The government website has details on eligibility and how to claim ESA.

New Temporary Rules – Statutory Sick Pay

For businesses who employed less than 250 employees as of 28.02.2020. The following rules apply from 12 March 2020.

SSP is payable from day 1 of sickness for any employee taking sick leave as a result of COVID 19.

The Government will refund the employer up to 14 days per employee any SSP paid.

Employers should keep full records of these absences, but your employees do not need to provide a GP fit note unless, you as an employer, require it.

We are waiting for HMRC to put in place the repayment mechanism. In the meantime, we will calculate the repayments due, and deduct them from any PAYE/NIC liability that we notify you about.

At the moment there is no guidance regarding payments to employees the case of a complete lockdown.

Please find below a link to Advice for Employers:-

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-to-employers-and-businesses-about-covid-19/guidance-for-employers-and-businesses-on-coronavirus-covid-19>

Businesses who Supply Services to Other Businesses on a Subcontract Basis (Does not include the Construction Industry)

IR35 Off Payroll Working Regulations were due to come into force on 6 April 2020. This has now been postponed until 6 April 2021.