
Conor Murphy MLA
Minister of Finance
Clare House, 303 Airport Road West
Belfast BT3 9ED

Claire Sugden MLA
Northern Ireland Assembly
Parliament Buildings
Ballymiscaw
Stormont

AQW 13809/17-22

Claire Sugden has asked:

To ask the Minister of Finance to detail each disclaimer for every grant or application process related to COVID-19 in the event the grant was paid incorrectly.

ANSWER

LPS has been responsible for two COVID 19 grant schemes – the £10,000 Small Business Support Grant Scheme and the Localised Restrictions Support Scheme.

LPS is also responsible for an application based COVID 19 rate relief scheme known as the 12 month rates holiday. Copies of the declarations applicants must agree to for each scheme have been placed in the Assembly library.

Signed:



Conor Murphy MLA

Date:

04/08/2021

£10,000 SMALL BUSINESS SUPPORT GRANT SCHEME



COVID-19 Small Business Grant Scheme

Small Business Grant Scheme

The NI Executive is providing one-off grants to small businesses to help them to meet their ongoing business costs.

A grant of £10,000 will be paid to small businesses that already pay reduced business rates because of Small Business Rate Relief (SBRR). SBRR is automatically applied to business properties with a Net Annual Value below £15,000, though some exclusions apply.

- Find out more about [Small Business Rate Relief](#)
- Search the [Valuation List](#) to find the Net Annual Value of a business property

Payments of the grant are being made on the basis of the European Commission's Temporary Framework for State aid. This can be accessed at [COVID-19 Temporary Framework](#). These grants constitute State Aid. You will be asked to confirm that you agree to the State Aid Requirements when completing this form.

You can use this online form to provide your bank details for payment if you have been advised that you are eligible for one of these grants.

Businesses should be aware that:

- If any information provided with your registration form is later found to be false, repayment of funding may be required.
- Any payment must be declared to HMRC as appropriate as part of the tax return for the business.
- The grants constitute State Aid. You will be asked to confirm that you agree to the State Aid Requirements when completing the online form.

What you will need

You will be asked to confirm:

- Your Ratepayer ID (shown on your rate bill)
- Your Occupancy ID (shown on your rate bill)
- Your sort code
- Your bank or building society account number
- Your e-mail address

If you need any assistance in completing this form contact NI Direct on [0300 200 7809](tel:03002007809)

[Start Now](#)

State Aid Requirements



Although the UK has left the European Union, the European State Aid rules still apply during the Transition Period.

This grant is covered by the European Commission's Temporary Framework for State aid measures to support the economy in the current COVID-19 outbreak. A condition of this Framework is that the aid can only be granted to undertakings that were not in difficulty (within the meaning of the General Block Exemption Regulation) on 31 December 2019. Aid can also be granted to undertakings that are not in difficulty and/or to undertakings that were not in difficulty on 31 December 2019, but that faced difficulties or entered in difficulty thereafter as a result of the COVID-19 outbreak;

In the General Block Exemption Regulation, an 'undertaking in difficulty' is an undertaking in respect of which at least one of the following circumstances occurs:

- a. In the case of a limited liability company (other than an SME that has been in existence for less than three years or, for the purposes of eligibility for risk finance aid, an SME within 7 years from its first commercial sale that qualifies for risk finance investments following due diligence by the selected financial intermediary), where more than half of its subscribed share capital has disappeared as a result of accumulated losses. This is the case when deduction of accumulated losses from reserves (and all other elements generally considered as part of the own funds of the company) leads to a negative cumulative amount that exceeds half of the subscribed share capital. For the purposes of this provision, 'limited liability company' refers in particular to the types of company mentioned in Annex I of Directive 2013/34/EU and 'share capital' includes, where relevant, any share premium.
- b. In the case of a company where at least some members have unlimited liability for the debt of the company (other than an SME that has been in existence for less than three years or, for the purposes of eligibility for risk finance aid, an SME within 7 years from its first commercial sale that qualifies for risk finance investments following due diligence by the selected financial intermediary), where more than half of its capital as shown in the company accounts has disappeared as a result of accumulated losses. For the purposes of this provision, 'a company where at least some members have unlimited liability for the debt of the company' refers in particular to the types of company mentioned in Annex II of Directive 2013/34/EU.
- c. Where the undertaking is subject to collective insolvency proceedings or fulfills the criteria under its domestic law for being placed in collective insolvency proceedings at the request of its creditors.
- d. Where the undertaking has received rescue aid and has not yet reimbursed the loan or terminated the guarantee, or has received restructuring aid and is still subject to a restructuring plan.
- e. In the case of an undertaking that is not an SME, where, for the past two years:
 1. the undertaking's book debt to equity ratio has been greater than 7,5 and
 2. the undertaking's EBITDA interest coverage ratio has been below 1,0.

Close

LOCALISED RESTRICTION SUPPORT SCHEME DECLARATION

1. I confirm that I am an authorised representative for the business identified in this application.
2. I confirm that the information I have provided in this form is accurate and complete.
3. I understand that if any of the information provided on this application is found to be fraudulent or false, repayment of funding will be required. Fraudulent claims may be subject to legal action.
4. I understand that I must notify Land & Property Services if there is any change in circumstances that may affect eligibility for this scheme.
5. I understand that Land & Property Services may seek more information from other sources to verify this application. This may include checking that the business has complied with Covid-19 prohibition notices issued by the PSNI.
6. I confirm that I am aware that Land & Property Services or an agent acting on behalf of Land & Property Services may carry out an inspection of the business premises to substantiate this application. If the property is found not to be as described in the application, the application will be rejected and repayment of funding will be required.
7. I understand that if Land & Property Services is no longer satisfied that an award made is payable, further payments will be suspended pending investigation and will be discontinued unless Land & Property Services becomes satisfied that the occupier is eligible for assistance. Any payment made which is found to have been paid contrary to Regulations shall be recoverable by Land & Property Services. If payments made contrary to the Regulations are not recovered, information about these payments may be published in the public interest.
8. I understand that the information I provide will be processed by Land & Property Services for the purposes of assessing this application and to update rate account details if circumstances have changed. I also understand that information held by Land & Property Services for rating or valuation purposes, or held in respect of the business or property to which an application relates by district councils, may be obtained and processed in respect of the assessment of an application. Land & Property Services may share information in relation to eligibility for this scheme with another Northern Ireland government department. Occasionally this information may be passed to other organisations but only when we are required by law to do so or when the disclosure complies with the General Data Protection Regulation 2016 and/or the Data Protection Act 2018. More information is available at: <https://www.finance-ni.gov.uk/publications/lps-privacy-notice>
9. I understand that the information provided on this form may be used for the purpose of the prevention and detection of crime.
10. I understand that any payment is considered income which must be declared to HMRC as part of the tax return for the business.
11. I understand that if the support payment constitutes State Aid, I will comply with State Aid requirements.
12. I confirm that the applicant business was open to the public and trading immediately before they were forced to close or severely restrict operations at their premises due to the restrictions imposed by the Health Protection Regulations. (This declaration does not apply to 'wet pubs' which had been prevented from opening until 21 September 2020).
13. I confirm that if the applicant business was issued with a COVID-19 prohibition notice by the PSNI, the business complied with all requirements set out in the prohibition notice.
14. I confirm that the property associated with this application is not occupied by a public sector body, NIHE or Housing Association.
15. I confirm that the applicant business has been required to close or severely limit their operations due to Health Protection Regulations that have been put in place by the NI Executive; and that the applicant business is not an off-licence or supermarket selling alcohol solely restricted by closure times or a premises solely restricted by latest ordering time of 11pm on takeaway orders.

I confirm I agree to this declaration

12 MONTH RATES HOLIDAY DECLARATION

1. I confirm that I am the named ratepayer or authorised party acting on behalf of the ratepayer responsible for the payment of rates on the property identified in this application.
2. I confirm that the information I have provided in this form is accurate and complete.
3. If the content of this application is found to be fraudulent or the property is found not to be as described by Schedule 2 Rates (Coronavirus) (Emergency Relief) (No. 2) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2020 the 12 Month Rate Holiday for the 2020/21 rating year will be withdrawn and the balance will become due. Fraudulent claims may be subject to legal action.
4. I understand that I must notify Land & Property Services if there is any change in circumstances that may affect entitlement to the rates holiday.
5. I understand that if rates are payable by the owner (i.e. landlord) rather than the occupier of a business property, the reduction in rates must be passed on for the benefit of the occupier.
6. I understand that Land & Property Services may seek further information from other sources to verify this application.
7. I confirm that I am aware that Land & Property Services or an agent acting on behalf of Land & Property Services may carry out an inspection of the property to substantiate the application for the rates holiday. If the property is found not to be as described in the application, the rates holiday for the 2020/21 rating year will be withdrawn and the balance will become due.

I confirm I agree to this declaration