

Coronavirus UK Government Financial Assistance Guide



MESSAGE FROM THE BRITISH VIRGIN ISLANDS LONDON OFFICE (BVILO)

We understand that many of you might be encountering difficulties during these uncertain times caused by the coronavirus pandemic.

The coronavirus crisis has forced us to change how we live, work and interact with each other.

As a means of support, we have created this brief “Coronavirus UK Government Financial Assistance Guide.” The purpose of this guide is to provide Virgin Islanders in the United Kingdom with a concise summary on the available schemes and programs created by the UK Government to support employers, employees, and businesses during the coronavirus pandemic.

This guide is divided into four main categories:

- 1.) **Income-Living Support**
- 2.) **Self-Employed Support**
- 3.) **Business Support**
- 4.) **Employer - Employee Support**

Disclaimer:

Please be aware that information in this guide is subject to change at any time at the discretion of the UK Government. All information enclosed is accurate as of 11 May 2020.



UNEMPLOYMENT

Income-Living Support

Universal Credit

Universal Credit is a payment to help with your living cost. It's paid monthly or bi-monthly for some people in Scotland.

You may be eligible if you're on low income or unemployed.

Universal Credit replaces the following benefits: **Child Tax Credit, Housing Benefit, Income Support, Income-Based Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA), Income-Related Employment and Support Allowance (ESA), and Working Tax Credit.**

If you currently get any of the benefits highlighted above in red, you do not need to do anything unless:

- You have a change of circumstance you need to report.
- The Department for Work and Pension (DWP) contacts you about moving to Universal Credit.

For more information and to check if you're eligible for this scheme, visit the following link- <https://www.gov.uk/universal-credit>

Employment and Support Allowance

This scheme is designed for those who have a disability or health condition that affects how much you can work and for those who are self-isolating because of coronavirus.

For more information and to check if you're eligible for this scheme, visit the following link- <https://www.gov.uk/employment-support-allowance>

Statutory Sick Pay

This program is designed for individuals who are too ill to work.

The amount paid per week is £95.85 and is paid by your employer for up to 28 weeks.

You cannot get less than the statutory amount.

If you cannot work because of coronavirus and you are:

- Self-isolating
- Staying at home because you're at high risk of severe illness from coronavirus- this is called 'shielding'

If your illness is not related to coronavirus, you can claim statutory sick pay from the fourth day you are off work sick.

For more information and to check if you're eligible for this scheme, visit the following link- <https://www.gov.uk/statutory-sick-pay>

Self-Employed Support

Self-Employment Income Support Scheme (SEISS)

This scheme is for those who are self-employed or a member of a business partnership and have been adversely affected by coronavirus.

This scheme will allow you to claim a taxable grant of 80% of your average monthly trading profits, paid out in a single instalment covering 3 months, capped at £7,500 altogether.

If you receive the grant you can continue to work, start a new trade or take on other employment including voluntary work, or duties as an armed forces reservist.

This is a temporary scheme and will be available from 13 May 2020. If you're eligible, HM Revenue & Customs will tell you the date you can make your claim. If your claim is approved, you'll receive payment within 6 working days.

The grant will be subjected to income tax and self-employed national insurance deductions.

For more information and to check if you're eligible for this scheme visit the following link- <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/claim-a-grant-through-the-coronavirus-covid-19-self-employment-income-support-scheme>

You can make a claim for **Universal Credit** while you wait for the SEISS grant. This grant may affect the amount of Universal Credit you get but will not affect claims for earlier periods.

Other Financial Support for the Self-Employed

Deferral of Self-Assessment Income Tax and VAT Payments-

The deadlines for paying your tax bill are usually:

- 31 January- for any tax you owe for the previous tax year (known as a balancing payment) and your first payment on account.
- 31 July- for your second payment on account
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Because of coronavirus, you can delay making your second payment on account. If you choose to delay, you'll have until 31 January 2021 to pay it.

For more information and/or to pay, visit the following link: <https://www.gov.uk/pay-self-assessment-tax-bill>

Grants for businesses that pay little or no business rate

Guidance sets out details and eligibility criteria for:

- the Small Business Grants Fund (SBGF)
- the Retail, Hospitality, and Leisure Grant Fund (RHLGF).

It informs businesses about the operation and delivery of the 2 funding schemes.

The guidance applies to England only.

For more information and guidance on this scheme, visit the following link- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-business-support-grant-funding-guidance-for-businesses>

Business Support

Bounce Back Loan

This scheme helps small and medium-sized businesses to borrow between £2,000 and up to 25% of their turnover. The maximum loan available is £50,000.

The Government guarantees 100% of the loan. There won't be any fees or interest to pay for the first 12 months.

After 12 months the interest rate will be 2.5% a year.

For more information and to check if you're eligible for this scheme and to find lenders, visit the following link- <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/apply-for-a-coronavirus-bounce-back-loan>

Business Interruption Loan Scheme

This scheme provides financial support to small and medium-sized businesses affected by coronavirus.

Businesses must be based in the UK with an annual turnover less than £45 million. Small and medium-sized businesses can access loans and other kinds of finance up to £5 million.

The Government guarantees 80% of the finance to the lender and pays interest and any fees for the first 12 months.

For more information and to check if your business is eligible for this scheme and to find lenders, visit the following link: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/apply-for-the-coronavirus-business-interruption-loan-scheme>

Coronavirus Large Business Interruption Loan Scheme (CLBILS)

This scheme supports large businesses affected by coronavirus.

All viable businesses with turnover of more than £45 million per year can apply for up to £25 million of finance.

Firms with a turnover of more than £250 million can apply for up to £50 million of finance. The scheme is available through a series of accredited lenders, which are listed on the British Business Bank website.

Click on the following link for more information: <https://www.british-business-bank.co.uk/ourpartners/coronavirus-business-interruption-loan-scheme-cbils-2/>

The Government provides lenders with an 80% guarantee on individual loans.

For more information and to check if you're eligible for this scheme and how to apply, visit the following link: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/apply-for-the-coronavirus-large-business-interruption-loan-scheme>

Employer - Employee Support

Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme

The scheme is designed to help employers whose operations have been severely affected by coronavirus, to retain their employees and protect the UK economy. An employer has the right to place employees on temporary leave, commonly referred to as being 'furloughed'.

An employer can apply for a grant from the Government that covers 80% of employees' usual monthly wages, up to £2,500 a month, plus the associated employer national insurance and pension contributions.

This is a temporary scheme in place for 4 months which started on 1 March 2020 and is expected to end on 30 June 2020. However, the Government may extend the scheme if necessary.

This scheme will only cover you if your employer has applied for the Government grant. For more information this scheme, visit the following link- <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/claim-for-wage-costs-through-the-coronavirus-job-retention-scheme>



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