

## **Update from Ayrshire Chamber - COVID-19 Restrictions Fund**

New and temporary business support funds have been unveiled by the Scottish Government today, providing one-off grants to businesses directly impacted by the restrictions implemented on 9 October 2020.

These will be administered by Local Authorities. Business can apply through their local council website from Tuesday the 20th of October at 9am, with funding closing on Tuesday the 3rd of November at 5pm.

Further details of this funding can be found below:

- A **COVID-19 Restrictions Fund** will be available to hospitality and other businesses required to close (except for takeaway) by these new restrictions regulations. It operates as a two-tiered scheme, with a smaller grant of £2,000 for businesses with a Rateable Value (RV) of under £51,000 and a larger grant of £3,000 for those businesses with a RV over £51,000. An upper limit of £15,000 in total will apply to any eligible business operating multiple premises.
- At the same time, Local Authorities will invite applications for a **business hardship fund** - with payments of £1,000 or £1500, dependent on Rateable Value - to support some businesses that remain open but are still significantly impacted by the restrictions, including those in the direct supply chains of firms that must close. An upper limit of £10,000 will apply in total to any eligible business operating multiple premises.

**The first round of applications are targeted on:**

- Hospitality businesses and some gyms, required by these new regulations to close or operate in a restricted way and able to evidence a minimum 25% reduction in turnover during the brake period;
- Producers/wholesale businesses based in Scotland supplying primarily short-life goods or produce to hospitality businesses required by the regulations to close or operate in a restricted way and able to evidence a minimum 25% reduction in turnover during the brake period

\*For clarity, retail and businesses that provide takeaway food as the core and established basis of their operations are not eligible for these closure or hardship funds.

### **Eligibility**

For the business closure fund, the business must be a hospitality or other business required by law to close under these new [restrictions](#).

For the discretionary business hardship fund, the business must be:

- a hospitality business and some gyms, required by the regulations to operate in a restricted way;
- a producer/wholesale business based in Scotland supplying primarily short-life goods or produce to hospitality businesses required by the regulations to close or operate in a restricted way and able to evidence a 25% reduction in turnover during the brake period.

If the business operates multiple premises they can apply for grants for each premise, applying only once to the local authority in they are headquartered.

The maximum any one business can receive will be restricted, regardless of the number of premises: the upper limit for the business closure fund is £15,000; the upper limit for business hardship fund is £10,000.

The business must have been open and trading before 9 October.

The business must have a business bank account. This is the account the grant will be paid into if the application is successful.

The business premises must be registered for Non-Domestic rates. Businesses that pay rates through their landlords rather than directly to a Council are eligible to apply (evidence to be provided through copy of lease agreement).

### **How to apply**

Local authority websites will be updated at 9am on Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> October, allowing business to complete applications. At this point in time, the Scottish Government advise businesses not to contact their Local Authority until Tuesday.

**Applications will close on Tuesday 3rd November at 5pm.**

Local Authorities will prioritise processing of applications with a view to making as many decisions as possible within the brake period while restrictions are in place. Local authorities will ensure any payment is made within 3 working days of notifying businesses of their decision.

### **Contact Ayrshire Chamber**

If you have any issues accessing this support, or have any feedback / questions as you engage with the application process, please contact us:

**[enquiries@ayrshire-chamber.org](mailto:enquiries@ayrshire-chamber.org)**