

Written 9 April 2020

This is essentially taken from: <https://dbe.gov.ie/en/What-We-Do/Supports-for-SMEs/COVID-19-supports/Government-supports-to-COVID-19-impacted-businesses.html#>

You may choose to dissect and use piecemeal or on your website or a newsletter to clients.

The guidance is current as at 9 April 2020.

Also: distribute this document to all members of the team who handle client queries – they can use this to find information from the DBEI and related government web sites.

## **SUMMARY OF CURRENT ADVICE AND GOVERNMENT SUPPORTS**

The Department for Business Enterprise and Innovation (DBEI) has outlined their supports for business.

Business Support Call Centre:



They outline some practical steps supports and guidance to help:

### **Talk to your bank**

All the banks have announced that they will offer flexibility to their customers, and they may be able to provide payment holidays or emergency working capital facilities.

### **Take immediate steps to manage your cashflows**

Look for scope to:

- Lower variable costs
- Delay discretionary spend
- Extend your payables
- Expedite your receivables
- Explore supply chain financing options

## Talk to us about preparing a cash flow forecast – we have manual and Excel based models.

### The next thing is to understand the Supports available and use available government supports for working capital

1. The Credit Guarantee Scheme supports loans up to €1 million for periods of up to 7 years. Applications can be made to AIB, Bank of Ireland and Ulster Bank. Eligibility criteria apply.

See: <https://dbe.gov.ie/en/What-We-Do/Supports-for-SMEs/COVID-19-supports/Credit-Guarantee-Scheme-COVID-19-FAQ.html>

2. Microenterprises can access COVID-19 Business Loans of up to €50,000 from Microfinance Ireland. The terms include a six months interest free and repayment free moratorium, with the loan to then be repaid over the remaining 30 months of the 36-month loan period. Loans are available at an interest rate of between 4.5% and 5.5%. Businesses can apply through their Local Enterprise Office or directly at [microfinanceireland.ie](http://microfinanceireland.ie). Eligibility criteria apply.

See: <https://dbe.gov.ie/en/What-We-Do/Supports-for-SMEs/COVID-19-supports/Microfinance-Ireland-COVID-19-Business-Loan.html>

3. The €450m SBCI COVID-19 Working Capital Scheme for eligible businesses supports loans from €25,000 up to €1.5 million (first €500,000 unsecured) with a maximum interest rate of 4%. Applications can be made through the SBCI website at [sbci.gov.ie](http://sbci.gov.ie). Eligibility criteria apply.

See: <https://dbe.gov.ie/en/What-We-Do/Supports-for-SMEs/COVID-19-supports/SBCI-Covid19-Working-Capital-Scheme-FAQ.html>

4. An additional €200 million in COVID-19 funding for the Future Growth Loan Scheme, which will be released in tranches, will provide longer-term loans to COVID-19 impacted businesses.

5. The new Sustaining Enterprise Fund of up to €180 million is specifically aimed at firms with 10 or more employees impacted by COVID-19 that are vulnerable but viable. The fund is operated by Enterprise Ireland, providing repayable advances of up to €800,000 as agreed with the EU under new State Aid rules.

See: <https://globalambition.ie/supports/innovation-support/sustaining-enterprise-fund/>

6. Get advice – we can help with Government supports and talking to you about all options during the Pandemic.

7. Check your insurance cover - Check if your insurance policy covers you for an interruption in your business, or a temporary business closure, caused by COVID-19.

8. Engage with Revenue - they have provided COVID-19 information and advice for taxpayers and agents experiencing difficulties caused by the impacts of COVID-19. Revenue has also issued updated advice to SMEs experiencing cashflow difficulties arising from COVID-19. This includes information on tax returns, late payment interest, debt enforcement and tax clearance. [If you want us to talk to Revenue on your behalf, please contact us sooner rather than later.](#)
9. Be aware of other government supports:
- The government has announced a [National COVID-19 Income Support Scheme](#). This provides financial support to Irish workers and businesses affected by the crisis. See: <https://www.gov.ie/en/press-release/a6d8fa-government-announced-new-covid-19-income-support-scheme/>
  - [COVID-19 Wage Subsidy Scheme](#): The COVID-19 Wage Subsidy Scheme enables employees, whose employers are affected by the pandemic, to receive significant supports directly from their employer through the payroll system. The scheme is operated by Revenue and is expected to last 12 weeks from 26 March 2020. See: <https://www.revenue.ie/en/corporate/communications/covid19/temporary-covid-19-wage-subsidy-scheme.aspx>
  - [Pandemic Unemployment Payment](#): The COVID-19 Pandemic Unemployment Payment is a payment of €350 per week. It is available to all employees and the self-employed who have lost their job due to the COVID-19 pandemic. MyWelfare.ie is the quickest and easiest way to apply for payments - all you need is your email address, PPSN and bank account details. See: <https://www.gov.ie/en/service/be74d3-covid-19-pandemic-unemployment-payment>
  - [On MyWelfare.ie](#) all customers can:
    - apply for the Covid-19 Pandemic Unemployment Payment
    - apply for Enhanced Illness Benefit for COVID-19 including for self-isolation cases
    - apply for a jobseeker's payment
    - request to close their Covid-19 Pandemic Unemployment Payment.
    - See: <https://services.mywelfare.ie/>
  - [Short-time Work Support](#): Employees of businesses that need to reduce hours or days worked can avail of the Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection Short-time Work Support. See: <https://www.gov.ie/en/service/c20e1b-short-time-work-support/>
  - [Grant supports](#): The full range of Enterprise Ireland, IDA Ireland, Local Enterprise Office and Údarás na Gaeltachta grant supports continue to be available to eligible firms to help with strategies to access finance, commence or ramp-up

online trading activity, reconfigure business models, cut costs, innovate, diversify markets and supply chains and to improve competitiveness. See:

- <https://enterprise-ireland.com/en/>
- <https://www.idaireland.com/>
- <https://www.localenterprise.ie/response/>
- [www.udaras.ie/en/](http://www.udaras.ie/en/)

- Business Continuity Voucher: The Local Enterprise Office Business Continuity Voucher is designed for businesses across every sector that employ up to 50 people. The voucher is worth up to €2,500 in third party consultancy costs and can be used by companies and sole traders to develop short-term and long-term strategies to respond to the Covid-19 pandemic. See: <https://www.localenterprise.ie/Portal/response/Business-Continuity-Voucher/Business-Continuity-Voucher.html>
- Trading Online Voucher: The Local Enterprise Office Trading Online Voucher is a government grant scheme, designed to assist small businesses with up to 10 employees. It offers financial assistance of up to €2,500 along with training and advice to help your business trade online. Businesses that have already received a Trading Online Voucher can now apply for a second voucher, where upgrades are required. See: <https://www.localenterprise.ie/Portal/response/Other-LEO-Supports/Other-LEO-Supports.html#TOVs>
- COVID-19 Online Retail Scheme: A new COVID-19 Online Retail Scheme will be administered by Enterprise Ireland and will be open to retailers employing over 10 people. The total fund size will be up to €2 million under this competitive call. The objective of the Scheme is to support companies in the indigenous retail sector with a pre-existing online presence to respond to both the domestic and international consumer demand for a competitive online offer. Grants ranging from €10,000 to €40,000 will be awarded under the competitive scheme. See: <https://www.enterprise-ireland.com/en/funding-supports/online-retail/online-retail-scheme/online-retail-scheme.html>
- COVID-19 Business Financial Planning Grant: The COVID-19 Business Financial Planning Grant, worth up to €5,000, is designed to help companies to develop a robust financial plan, including the preparation of documentation required to support applications for external finance from banks and/or other finance providers. The grant is a new support for Enterprise Ireland clients and those manufacturing or internationally traded services companies that employ 10 or more full time employees. See: <https://globalambition.ie/supports/innovation-support/covid-19-business-planning-grant/>
- Lean Business Improvement Voucher: The Lean Business Continuity Voucher is available to eligible companies to access up to €2,500 in training or advisory services support related to the continued operation of their businesses during the

current pandemic. It is open to small, medium or large client companies of Enterprise Ireland or Údarás na Gaeltachta (including High Potential Start-ups). The voucher may be used to obtain services from approved providers. See: <https://enterprise-ireland.com/en/Productivity/Lean-Business-Offer/Lean-Business-Continuity-Voucher.html>

- Bord Bia marketing grants schemes: Bord Bia is widening its marketing grants schemes in response to difficulties companies are facing as a result of the COVID-19 crisis with the introduction of its COVID Response Marketing Support Package. See: <https://www.bordbia.ie/industry/small-business/resources/map-grants/>
- Supply chain workers: The Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport and the Department of Health have prepared COVID-19 guidance for supply chain workers. The guidance provides these essential workers with information as regards their continued work, the importance of access to sanitary facilities and the importance of maintaining all elements of the supply chain. See: <https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/ed29dc-irelands-response-to-covid-19-transport-measures/#guidance-for-supply-chain-workers>
- Workplace Protection and Improvement: The National Standards Authority of Ireland (NSAI) has published a COVID-19 Workplace Protection and Improvement Guide outlining preventative measures businesses can take to prevent the spread of COVID-19. See: <https://www.nsai.ie/covid-19workplaceprotection/>
- Retail Protection and Improvement: The NSAI has published a COVID-19 Retail Protection and Improvement Guide to help retailers manage business continuity during the COVID-19 emergency. See: <https://www.nsai.ie/covid-19retailprotection/>
- Standards for medical supplies made freely available: NSAI and SAI Global have developed the COVID-19 Response Package which will provide free access to Standards for medical devices and personal protective equipment. See: <https://www.nsai.ie/about/news/eu-standards-for-medical-supplies-made-freely-available/>
- Commercial rates deferral: The government has agreed support for businesses impacted by COVID-19 through commercial rates deferral. See: <https://www.housing.gov.ie/local-government/covid-19-coronavirus/support-businesses-impacted-covid-19-through-commercial-rates>
- Restaurants to operate as takeaways: Amendments to Planning and Development Regulations temporarily allow restaurants to operate as takeaways - whereby members of the public can order food for collection for consumption off-premises or have food delivered for consumption off-premises - without being

required to obtain change of use planning permission to operate as takeaways. See: <https://www.housing.gov.ie/planning/covid-19-coronavirus/clarification-operation-planning-system-during-current-covid-19>

- Fáilte Ireland supports: In response to the COVID-19 crisis and the impact on the tourism sector, the Fáilte Ireland COVID-19 Business Support Hub is targeting its supports to respond to the most urgent challenges and threats tourism businesses are now facing. See: <https://covid19.failteireland.ie/>
- Training and Mentoring: The Local Enterprise Offices have moved training programmes, workshops and networking meetups online, covering areas such as cash management in a crisis, leading your business through COVID-19 and advice for employers impacted by the crisis. To find out more telephone or email your Local Enterprise Office. See: <https://www.localenterprise.ie/Find-Your-Local-Enterprise-Office/>
- Filing of annual returns: The Companies Registration Office has introduced changes to annual filing obligations for companies to assist companies during the COVID-19 crisis. See: <https://dbei.gov.ie/en/News-And-Events/Department-News/2020/March/19032020.html>
- Employment Permits System Contingency Arrangements: The Department of Business, Enterprise and Innovation has implemented a contingency plan to ensure that the Employment Permits system will continue to operate in all scenarios during the COVID-19 crisis: COVID-19 Employment Permits System Contingency Arrangements. See: <https://dbei.gov.ie/en/Publications/COVID-19-Employment-Permits-System-Contingency-Arrangements.html>
- First Responder support service: The Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection and the Department of Business, Enterprise and Innovation will provide a joint First Responder support service through the Intreo Offices and development agencies, Enterprise Ireland and IDA Ireland in each region to provide tailored supports for impacted firms.
  - See: <https://www.gov.ie/en/directory/category/e1f4b5-intreo-offices/?referrer=/en/service/40cf48-find-your-local-intreo-office/>
  - <https://www.enterprise-ireland.com/en/>
  - <https://www.idaireland.com/>
- Respond: Business Continuity Planning COVID-19 Checklist - The Department of Business, Enterprise and Innovation has updated its checklist on Business Continuity Planning which provides a checklist for businesses in responding to COVID-19. See: <https://dbei.gov.ie/en/Publications/Business-Continuity-Planning-A-checklist-of-Preparatory-Actions-in-Responding-to-the-COVID-19-Outbreak.html>

- Essential Service Providers -A list of essential service providers under new public health guidelines was published on 28 March 2020. See: <https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/dfefb8f-list-of-essential-service-providers-under-new-public-health-guidelin/>
- Essential Retail Outlets - The National Public Health Emergency Team (NPHE) has recommended that all non-essential retail outlets close to members of the public. All other retail outlets are to implement social distancing. See: <https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/625292-updated-list-of-essential-retail-outlets-27th-march-2020/>
- Posters and signs for your premises - The Department of Health has developed public health information posters and social distancing graphics to display on premises. See: <https://www.gov.ie/en/collection/ee0781-covid-19-posters-for-public-use/> and <https://www.gov.ie/en/collection/428743-covid-19-coronavirus-physical-distancing-graphics/>
- Innovate: COVID-19 Rapid Response Funding Call - A Rapid Response Research and Innovation programme to help respond to the COVID-19 pandemic has been developed by the government's research and innovation agencies. See: <https://www.sfi.ie/funding/funding-calls/covid19-rapid-response/>
- Help: How business can help with supplies and services to respond to COVID-19 See: <https://www.gov.ie/en/service/e15fbc-how-business-can-help-with-supplies-and-services-to-respond-to-covid/?referrer=/covidsupplies/>

Ends.