

UK Government financial support

If you are employed....

...the following provides a summary of the UK Government financial support packages that may apply to you.

Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme

- Employers will be able to contact HMRC for a grant to cover most of the wages of their workforce who remain on payroll but are temporarily not working during the coronavirus outbreak.
- Grants will cover 80% of the usual monthly wage costs of furloughed employees (employees on a leave of absence), up to £2,500 a month, plus the associated Employer National Insurance contributions and minimum automatic enrolment employer pension contributions on that wage.
- Grants are backdated to 1 March 2020 and the scheme launched on 20 April 2020.
- Further details included in the separate Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme document.

Universal Credit

- You may be able to get Universal Credit if:
 - you're on a low income or out of work
 - you're 18 or over (there are some exceptions if you're 16 to 17)
 - you're under State Pension age (or your partner is)
 - you and your partner have £16,000 or less in savings between you
 - you live in the UK
- You can apply for Universal Credit online. If you are eligible you will need to make an appointment for your new claim interview. This interview will take place by telephone with a work coach. You will be given the number to call to book this appointment when you have submitted your claim.
- The Universal Credit standard allowance and Working Tax Credit basic element will be increased for the next 12 months by £1,000 a year.
- This means that for a single Universal Credit claimant (aged 25 or over), the standard allowance will increase from £323.22 to about £406 per month.

Statutory Sick Pay (SSP)

- You can get £94.25 per week Statutory Sick Pay (SSP) if you're too ill to work. It's paid by your employer for up to 28 weeks.
- If you are staying at home because of COVID-19 you can now claim SSP. This includes individuals who are caring for people in the same household and therefore have been advised to do a household quarantine.
- To check your sick pay entitlement, you should talk to your employer
- The Government is legislating for SSP to be paid from day 1, rather than day 4, of your absence from work if you are absent from work due to sickness or need to stay at home due to COVID-19. Once the legislation has been passed, this will apply retrospectively from 13 March.
- If you have COVID-19 or are advised to stay at home, you can get an "isolation note" by visiting NHS 111 online, rather than visiting a doctor.
- For COVID-19 cases this replaces the usual need to provide a "fit note" (sometimes called a "sick note") after 7 days of sickness absence.

Job Retention Bonus

- Launched 8 July 2020
- UK Employers will receive a one-off bonus of £1,000 for each furloughed employee who is still employed as of 31 January 2021. Eligible for UK based SMEs established by 1 March 2020 and been impacted by the coronavirus pandemic.
- Employees must earn above the Lower Earnings Limit (£520 per month) on average between the end of the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme and the end of January 2021.
- Payments will be made from February 2021. Further detail about the scheme will be announced by the end of July 2020.

Kickstart Scheme

- Launched 8 July 2020
- This is a £2 billion fund to create hundreds of thousands of high quality 6-month work placements aimed at those aged 16-24 who are on Universal Credit and are deemed to be at risk of long-term unemployment.
- Funding available for each job will cover 100% of the relevant National Minimum Wage for 25 hours a week, plus the associated employer National Insurance contributions and employer minimum automatic enrolment contributions.

High quality traineeships for young people

- The government will provide an additional £111 million this year for traineeships in England, to fund high quality work placements and training for 16-24 year olds.
- For the first time ever, the government will fund employers who provide trainees with work experience, at a rate of £1,000 per trainee.
- The government will improve provision and expand eligibility for traineeships to those with Level 3 qualifications and below, to ensure that more young people have access to high quality training.

Payments for employers who hire new apprentices

- The government will introduce a new payment of £2,000 to employers in England for each new apprentice they hire aged under 25, and a £1,500 payment for each new apprentice they hire aged 25 and over, from 1st August 2020 to 31st January 2021.
- These payments will be in addition to the existing £1,000 payment the government already provides for new 16-18 year-old apprentices, and those aged under 25 with an Education, Health and Care Plan – where that applies.

Landlords and renters

- From 26 March 2020, landlords will have to give all renters 3 months' notice if they intend to seek possession (i.e. serve notice that they want to end the tenancy) – this means the landlord can't apply to start the court process until after this period.
- This extended buffer period will apply in law until 30 September 2020 and both the end point, and the 3-month notice period can be extended if needed.
- This protection covers most tenants in the private and social rented sectors in England and Wales, and all grounds of evictions. This includes possession of tenancies in the Rent Act 1977, the Housing Act 1985, the Housing Act 1996 and the Housing Act 1988. After 3 months if the tenant has not moved a landlord needs to apply to court in order to proceed.
- Tenants are still liable for their rent and should pay this as usual.
- Landlords will be protected by a 3-month mortgage payment holiday where they have a Buy to Let mortgage.
- Landlords remain legally obligated to ensure properties meet the required standard – urgent, essential health and safety repairs should be made.

Personal credit

- If you need additional financial support because of coronavirus with an existing arranged overdraft, you will be able to request from your provider that up to £500, on your main personal current account, is provided at 0% for up to three months.
- You can ask for a three-month payment freeze or to pay a nominal payment on credit cards, store cards and catalogue credit.
- If you have a personal loan, you can ask for a three-month freeze if needed.
- *On Friday 22 May, the FCA confirmed that it has proposed for these time periods to be extended for a further 3 months. Comments on this proposal have been requested by close of play on Tuesday 26 May.*
- Further details included in the separate Regulatory support for individuals with consumer credit document.