

Covid Restrictions Business Support Scheme Part B FAQs

THESE FAQs ARE RELEVANT TO THOSE APPLYING TO PART B OF THE COVID RESTRICTIONS BUSINESS SUPPORT SCHEME ONLY.

The FAQs should be read in conjunction with the [Guidance Notes](#).

The information and evidence required, as outlined in the Guidance Notes, is necessary to demonstrate the business meets the eligibility criteria and ensure public funds are managed properly. Please take time to read the Guidance Notes and FAQs carefully before applying.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

What businesses are eligible to apply for Part B of the Covid Restrictions Business Support Scheme?

Part B is for businesses which supply goods or services to a business named in the [Health Protection \(Coronavirus, Restrictions\) \(No.2\) Regulations \(Northern Ireland\) 2020](#).

The business must be a supplier of goods or services, to a business named in the [Health Protection Regulations](#) either directly or via an intermediary supplier or subcontractor;

or

The business is dependent on a business named in the [Health Protection \(Coronavirus, Restrictions\) \(No.2\) Regulations \(Northern Ireland\) 2020](#) being open and fully operational in order for it to operate. For example, businesses that supply services for weddings or events that have been cancelled/postponed due to a business named in the regulations having to close, cease or restrict trading.

What businesses are required to close as a result of the Regulations?

A list of the types of businesses required to close or cease trading can be found in the [Health Protection \(Coronavirus, Restrictions\) \(No.2\) Regulations \(Northern Ireland\) 2020](#).

I do not know whether I am eligible for Part A or Part B.

Part A – A business that is required to close/cease trading under the [Health Protection \(Coronavirus, Restrictions\) \(No.2\) Regulations \(Northern Ireland\) 2020](#) but is not eligible for the [Local Restrictions Support Scheme](#).

Part B – A business that is not named in the [Health Protection \(Coronavirus, Restrictions\) \(No.2\) Regulations \(Northern Ireland\) 2020](#), but which supplies goods or services to [a business that is](#) and as a result it has been severely impacted. Businesses which rely on a business named in the regulations being open and fully operational in order to trade are also eligible.

My business has been impacted by the Health Protection Regulations but I did not apply for the CRBSS grant before the scheme closed. Can I apply now?

If you missed applying before the Scheme previously closed you can apply now providing your business supplies goods or services to a business that is named in the [Health Protection \(Coronavirus, Restrictions\) \(No.2\) Regulations \(Northern Ireland\) 2020](#), and as a result it has been severely impacted. Businesses which rely on a business named in the regulations being open and fully operational in order to trade are also eligible.

If successful, any grant payment will be backdated to the date your business was impacted as a result of the Health Protection Regulations.

Please refer to the [Guidance Notes](#) and [Eligibility Checker](#) to confirm if you are eligible to apply for Part B.

What types of businesses can apply to the CRBSS? For example, can I apply if I am self-employed?

Applications are welcome from limited companies, sole traders, trusts and partnerships provided they meet the other criteria.

Please refer to the [Guidance Notes](#) and [Eligibility Checker](#) to confirm if you are eligible to apply for Part B.

My business has been severely impacted, but I am not a supplier to a business named in the Restrictions, can I still apply?

The scheme is primarily aimed at businesses which provide goods or services, directly or indirectly to a business which has been named in the [Health Protection Regulations](#). Businesses which rely upon a business named in the regulations being open and fully operational are also eligible. If your business does not fall into either of these categories you are not eligible for Part B.

You may be eligible for other forms of support, nibusinessinfo.co.uk has a full list of all COVID-19 support available.

What evidence do I need to provide to prove that I am a legitimate business?

You will be asked to provide a clear and legible scanned, photograph or screenshot copy of your HMRC SA302 or tax calculation document, or your SA250 document, which demonstrates that you are a business. This should show your [Unique Taxpayer Reference \(UTR\)](#), as well as your name and address.

Please also provide either of the following if applicable to your business:

- Your HMRC VAT Registration Number,
- Your Company Registration Number.

To strengthen your application, we strongly recommend that a registered accountant completes the template provided using their official letterhead. This will provide independent verification of the information you have provided in your application and although not mandatory, it will strengthen your application.

What evidence do I need to provide to prove my business provides goods or services directly or indirectly to a business named in the Health Protection Regulations?

The onus is on the applicant to provide sufficient evidence to demonstrate that it meets this criteria. Evidence might include, for example:

- copies of invoices or receipts for products or services provided either directly or indirectly to businesses named in the [Health Protection Regulations](#);

and/or

- evidence of cancelled orders/bookings relating to the period of the restrictions as a result of a business named in the [Health Protection Regulations](#) either closing or having to operate under restricted terms.

These can be scanned, photograph, or screenshot copies as long as they are clear and legible.

To strengthen your application, we strongly recommend that a registered accountant completes the [template provided](#) using their official letterhead. This will provide independent verification of the information you have provided in your application and although not mandatory, it will strengthen your application.

What is meant by 'a business that is dependent on a business named in the Health Protection Regulations being open and fully operational in order to operate'?

It is the intention of CRBSS to provide support to as many businesses affected by the [Health Protection Regulations](#) as possible.

To this end, in relation to Part B of CRBSS, eligible businesses will include those businesses that require a business named in the Regulations to be open or operating fully in order for it to operate.

For example, a provider of services in the wedding or events market that has been significantly impacted because weddings or events have been cancelled/postponed due to the Health Protection Regulations.

I am a taxi driver providing services to hotels and my business has declined as they are not operating fully. Can I apply for CRBSS?

No, the Department for Infrastructure has announced a Support Fund for Taxi Drivers and Private Coach and Bus Operators.

I run a wedding car business, can I apply for support under CRBSS Part B?

Wedding Car with more than two cars may be eligible for CRBSS Part B if it meets all the eligibility criteria. Please refer to the [Guidance Notes](#) and [Eligibility Checker](#) to confirm if you are eligible to apply for Part B.

If the business has only one car, it should consider the Department for Infrastructure Support Fund for Taxi Drivers and Private Coach and Bus Operators.

What evidence do I need to provide to prove that my business relies on one named in the restrictions being open and operating fully?

The onus will be on the applicant to provide sufficient evidence to demonstrate it meets this criteria.

Examples of possible evidence might include invoices/receipts and/or copies of booking confirmations/cancellations relating to the period of the restrictions for a business named in the [Health Protection Regulations](#).

To strengthen your application, we recommend that a registered accountant completes the [template provided](#) using their official letterhead. This will provide independent verification of the information you have provided in your application and although not mandatory, it will strengthen your application.

My business was set up in England and I then moved it to Northern Ireland. I am based and trade in Northern Ireland but all my business information is still registered to an English address. Can I still apply?

You must be able to prove you are based in and operating in Northern Ireland. You will be asked to provide a bank statement that as a minimum covers the month prior to the date your business was impacted as a result of the Health Protection Regulations, for an account used by the

business for trading purposes. This must be the same account to which the CRBSS grant payment will be made.

Please also refer to the [Guidance Notes](#) for full details of all evidence that is required when submitting an application. You should also complete the online [Eligibility Checker](#) as part of the pre-application process.

If a business is not based in, or trades primarily outside of Northern Ireland it is not eligible for support under Part B of the CRBSS.

What evidence do I need to provide to demonstrate the business accounts for more than 50% of my total income?

You will be asked to self-certify this information as part of the application process. This declaration along with the evidence that you have submitted as part of your application may be used to assess this criteria.

To strengthen your application, we recommend that a registered accountant completes the [template provided](#) using their official letterhead. This will provide independent verification of the information you have provided in your application and although not mandatory, it will strengthen your application.

What evidence do I need to provide to demonstrate my business has experienced a 40% reduction in turnover as a result of the restrictions being in place?

As part of the application form you will be asked to self-certify that your turnover has declined by at least 40% due to a business that you supply, or rely upon, having had to close or cease trading as a result of the [Health Protection Regulations](#). You will also be asked to explain how this has impacted on your business. This declaration along with the evidence that you have submitted as part of your application may be used to assess this criteria.

To strengthen your application, we recommend that a registered accountant completes the [template provided](#) using their official letterhead. This will provide independent verification of the information you have provided in your application and although not mandatory, it will strengthen your application.

How do I prove I pay Business Rates?

If you pay Business Rates directly to LPS (this means that the rates bill must be in the name of the entity that has submitted the application), for the non-domestic premises you operate from you will be asked to provide your non-domestic LPS Ratepayer ID(s) and Occupancy ID(s) (found on your Rates Bill) along with a scanned, photograph, or screenshot copy of your non-domestic Rates Bill(s).

If your business operates from your home, or another domestic property, you **should not** provide your domestic ratepayer ID or Occupancy ID – doing so may significantly delay processing of your application.

How do I know what the Net Annual Value (NAV) of my property is?

You can check the Net Annual Value of your business property [here](#).

If the landlord pays the rates (not the occupying business) does this mean the business will only be eligible for the lower £1,200 payment?

Yes. In order to be eligible for the higher grants the business must pay business rates direct to LPS.

I am behind in my rates payments. Will any outstanding rates be deducted from my grant?

No, outstanding business rates will not be deducted from the grant payment.

I do not pay business rates, can I still apply?

Yes. Eligible business not paying business rates can still apply providing they meet all the eligibility criteria. Please review the [Guidance Notes](#) and complete the [Eligibility Checker](#) to see if you are eligible to apply.

I pay business rates directly to LPS on multiple premises, can I apply for a grant for each premise?

Yes, as long as you can provide your LPS Non-Domestic Ratepayer ID and Occupancy ID and a scanned, photograph, or screenshot copy of your Non-Domestic Rates Bill for each of the premises. The rates bill must be in the name of the entity that has submitted the application.

If your business operates from your home, or another domestic property, you **should not** provide your domestic ratepayer ID or Occupancy ID – doing so may significantly delay processing of your application.

Do I have to be a VAT registered business to apply?

No, the business does not have to be VAT registered.

Can I apply for the fund if I am eligible for the Self-Employment Income Support Scheme (SEISS)?

Yes, eligibility for the SEISS does not preclude you from the Covid Restrictions Business Support Scheme assuming all other criteria are met.

Can I apply for the fund if I have accessed the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme/Job Support Scheme and furloughed my staff?

Yes, access to the Job Retention Scheme or Job Support Scheme does not preclude you from the Covid Restrictions Business Support Scheme assuming all other criteria are met.

How do I know if this grant will exceed the de minimis ceiling?

The CRBSS grant constitutes de minimis aid. The maximum amount of de minimis aid a company can receive in a three year period as indicated is €200,000. Please review the [EC's de Minimis Regulation](#).

If receipt of this grant results in a breach of the €200,000 ceiling you will have exceeded the de minimis threshold.

Please review the **Your Responsibilities** section of the [Guidance Notes](#) for more detail.

MAKING AN APPLICATION

Do I need to register and create an account to complete an application?

Yes, if you do not have an account on the application portal you will need to register using an email address and a password. You will then be able to complete the online application.

If you already have an account you will be able to use the same login details.

How long will it take to complete the form?

The online application process takes approximately one hour to complete.

Can I save my application and return to it at a later stage?

Yes, you can save a draft of your application and complete later, but saved applications must still be submitted before the scheme closes.

How do I submit my application?

You need to click on the **'Submit'** button when you have completed your application.

I am unable to complete the online application form. Can I submit my application in a different format?

Unfortunately we are only able to accept online applications. However, if you have a specific issue that means you are unable to complete the application form please contact the Covid Restrictions Business Support Scheme Helpline on **0800 952 4422**. Please be patient as a large number of calls are expected.

What details will I need to upload to the online application form?

The details you need to submit an application are outlined in the **How to Apply** section of the [Guidance Notes](#).

How do I upload the required documents such as proof of ID and bank statement?

To attach documents to your application, please click the '**Attach Documents**' button at the relevant section. You will need to provide a description of the document to identify the document provided.

Please note the maximum size of each attachment is 3MB. If you are using a camera or mobile phone, you may need to change the camera setting to reduce it to a lower resolution in order to meet the file size requirements.

If I think my business is eligible but it failed validation on the online eligibility checker, what should I do?

The eligibility checker is based on the criteria of the scheme. If your business has failed validation on the eligibility checker then your business is not eligible to apply but you may be eligible for other COVID-19 support. [View full list of support available](#).

I don't have an accountant so cannot provide an accountant's letter, can I still apply?

Yes you can still apply. We are recommending, where possible, applicants ask a registered accountant to complete the [template provided](#) using their official letterhead as this will provide independent verification of the information you have provided in your application. This is not mandatory, but it will strengthen your application and may enable us to process it more quickly.

I am self-employed and work under my own name, I do not have a business name. What do I enter on the application form for 'Business Name'?

If your business name is your own name then please enter this as the business name on the application form.

I work from my home, and do not have a business address. What do I enter on the application form?

If you work from home, or provide a 'mobile service', then your business address should be the address used for your business correspondence – i.e. the address you use for your tax return, and on the bank account you use for trading purposes.

If you fall into this category you **should not** submit your domestic LPS details – doing so may significantly delay processing of your application.

What is a Unique Taxpayer Reference number (UTR) and where do I find it?

This is the 10-digit Unique Taxpayer Reference number (UTR) issued by HMRC to individual taxpayers (self-employed) who need to complete a Self-Assessment tax return. It appears on your HMRC SA302 or tax calculation document, or your SA250 document and other documents from HMRC, for example, notices to file a tax return or payment reminders. You can access help on how to find it [here](#).

What are Schedule D earnings?

Income tax is levied under 6 schedules. Schedule D is tax on trading income, income from professions and vocations, interest, overseas income and casual income.

If you only pay tax on interest, overseas income and casual income you will not be eligible for CRBSS.

My business is a limited company and my Unique Taxpayer Reference number is more than 10 digits.

For limited companies, the UTR is the first 10 digits of the 17-character Corporation Tax Payment Reference. Please only enter the first 10 digits when completing the application form.

Where do I find my VAT number?

Your VAT registration number is a unique code issued to businesses which are registered to pay VAT. You will find your business' VAT number on the VAT registration certificate issued by HMRC.

I am not VAT registered, can I still apply?

Yes. The business does not have to be VAT registered to be eligible for a grant under CRBSS. However, you will need to provide your HMRC Unique Taxpayer Reference when applying.

Where do I find my LPS Ratepayer ID and Occupancy ID?

You will find this on your Non-Domestic Rates Bill.

It is important that these details relate only to non-domestic properties – you **should not** enter the LPS details for a domestic property. Doing so may significantly delay processing of your application.

I don't have a Passport or a Driving Licence, can I submit another form of ID?

If you do not have a valid Passport or Driving Licence ID card you can submit a scanned, photograph, or screenshot copy of your EU photo ID card, Adoption card or HM Forces ID card.

My business trading account is a Euro account, can I still apply?

No, you must have a UK Sterling business account to apply for the CRBSS scheme.

I made an error in entering my bank details when I submitted the online form. What should I do?

Contact the Covid Restrictions Business Support Scheme Helpline on **0800 952 4422** and your application will be returned for you to update your bank details. Please be patient as a large number of calls are expected.

You will need to click on the '**Submit**' button when you have completed the changes to your application.

I made an error on my application form. What should I do?

If your form is still saved as Draft, and has not been submitted, then you can go back to the relevant section and update with the correct information.

If you have submitted your application form please contact the Covid Restrictions Business Support Scheme Helpline on **0800 952 4422** and your application will be returned for you to update your details. Please be patient as a large number of calls are expected.

You will need to click on the '**Submit**' button when you have completed the changes to your application.

I don't have an email address, can I provide the email address of a family member, or my accountant?

Yes, as long as you have the account owner's permission to do so and the Contact Name entered on the application form is your own and matches the name on the proof of ID uploaded with your application.

I don't have all the evidence requested to demonstrate my business was still trading up to and including 16 October 2020. Can I still apply?

You must be able to provide all the evidence requested in order to apply.

This includes a clear and legible scanned, photography or screenshot of a bank statement that, as a minimum, covers the month prior to the date your business was impacted as a result of the Health Protection Regulations, for an account used by the business for trading purposes. This must be the same account to which the CRBSS grant payment will be made.

The statement must clearly show your business address; account name, number and sort code; date of issue of the statement; and business transaction information.

You will also be required to provide evidence of active trading, for example: invoices, receipts issued or received during September to December 2020, and/or evidence of cancelled orders/bookings relating to the period of the restrictions as a result of a business named in the [Health Protection Regulations](#) either closing or having to operate under restricted terms.

The onus is on the applicant to provide sufficient evidence to demonstrate that it meets this criteria. Please refer to the [Guidance Notes](#) for full details of what information you will need to provide, and complete the online [Eligibility Checker](#) as part of the pre-application process.

My driving licence has expired. Is it still acceptable as a form of photographic ID?

All driving licences with an expiry date between 1 February and 31 December 2020 will be treated as valid for a further eleven months.

How do I check on my application progress?

Customers will be able to check the status of their application online by logging into their portal account, going to 'Applications' and clicking on the 'Submitted' tab. This will show the progress of your application.

What if I need help with the application?

You can contact the Covid Restrictions Business Support Scheme Helpline on **0800 952 4422**, open Monday to Friday, 9:00am to 5:00pm.

PAYMENT

How much can I expect to receive?

Part B eligible businesses are subdivided between those paying business rates and those not paying business rates. **Grant payments will cover each week that your business is impacted by the Health Protection Regulations, up to Wednesday 31 March 2021.**

Eligible business paying business rates

For business paying business rates directly to LPS (this means that the rates bill must be in the name of the entity that has submitted the application), the grant payable will be based on the Net Annual Value of the property.

- If the NAV is less than £15,000, the grant will be **£400 per week**
- If NAV is greater than £15,000 but less than £51,000, the grant will be **£600 per week**
- If the NAV is greater than £51,000 the grant will be **£800 per week.**

Eligible businesses not paying business rates:

Business not paying business rates will receive a grant of **£300 per week.**

The Covid Restrictions Business Support Scheme will remain under review for as long as the NI restrictions are in place.

If I am only applying to the CRBSS scheme now, will my payment be backdated?

If you missed applying before CRBSS previously closed you can now apply. If successful, any grant payment will be backdated to the date your business was impacted as a result of the Health Protection Regulations.

When can I expect to receive the grant payment?

Payment will be made as soon as possible. The length of time it takes to process applications will depend on the number of applications received and the quality of the evidence provided by each applicant. Provision of a letter from a certified accountant will significantly strengthen your application and we would strongly urge you to seek and submit one where possible.

We ask for patience in processing applications. It is essential that we review each application and all the evidence provided to ensure public funds are managed properly.

The restrictions have been extended beyond the initial four weeks announced on 16 October, will I continue to receive payments?

The Minister for the Economy has confirmed that successful applicants to Part B of the CRBSS will automatically receive an additional payment, as appropriate to the business, to cover the extended period of restrictions up to Wednesday 31 March 2021. Any additional payments will be made automatically, you do not need to reapply.

The Covid Restrictions Business Support Scheme will remain under review for as long as the NI restrictions are in place.

How will I know if my application is successful?

Invest NI will process applications as quickly as possible and once an application is approved, applicants will be informed via email that their application has been successful. Payments will be made as soon as possible.

Applicants who are unsuccessful will also be informed via email.

I made an error in entering my bank details when I submitted the online form. What should I do?

Contact the Hardship Fund Helpline on **0800 952 4422** and your application will be returned for you to update your bank details. Please be patient as a large number of calls are expected.

You will need to click on the '**Submit**' button when you have completed the changes to your application.

Can I receive my payment by cheque?

Payment can only be made via bank account details where a BACS payment can be accepted.

I am unable to receive BACS payments to my bank account? Can I be paid another way?

Unfortunately payments can only be made via a UK Sterling bank account where a BACS payment can be accepted. Please contact your bank to see if this facility can be set up.

OTHER FAQs

Can a tax agent or advisor make an application on behalf of the business?

No, due to the number of self-certifications that are required as part of the application only the business owner can complete and submit the application.

What other support is available?

A range of business support measures have been made available to Northern Ireland businesses. You can find out how to access the support that has been made available, who is eligible and how to apply at: <https://www.nibusinessinfo.co.uk/business-support/coronavirus>

I am not an Invest NI customer, can I still apply?

Yes, CRBSS is open to all businesses able to demonstrate they meet the eligibility criteria. Please review the [Guidance Notes](#) and complete the [Eligibility Checker](#) to confirm you are eligible for apply.

If I am successful, do I have to declare this grant to HMRC?

Yes. Any payment must be declared to HMRC as appropriate as part of the tax return for the business.

Can I appeal?

Yes, further details on how to appeal are available [here](#).

What do you mean by de minimis aid?

De minimis aid describes small amounts of public funding to business that has a negligible impact on trade and competition. A single company can receive up to €200,000 de minimis aid over three consecutive fiscal years.

Further information on de minimis aid at can be found at: <https://www.economy-ni.gov.uk/articles/de-minimis-aid>