
Written 19 June 2020

C19 BUSINESS NEWS UPDATE

The Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme changes from the 1 July. Flexible Furlough starts on that date and it is important you discuss changes and agree in writing any new flexible working arrangements. In the CJRS section of the website you will see an example Board Minute and example letter confirming flexible working arrangements between the employer and employee. Please talk to us if you have any queries.

The Government has published studies about the effect of Coronavirus on the UK economy and our emotional wellbeing. They make interesting reading.

Below is another reminder from HMRC to reinstate your direct debit if you cancelled it and that the scheme ends 30 June 2020.

HMRC have published the June employer bulletin, giving employers and agents the latest information on topics and issues that may affect them about payroll matters.

LATEST INDICATORS FOR THE UK ECONOMY AND SOCIETY

According to the latest Business Impact of Coronavirus (COVID-19) Survey (BICS), 30% of the workforce were on furlough, and 42% of businesses were topping up workers' pay.

According to the latest Opinions and Lifestyle Survey (OPN), nearly half of all working adults (49%) had worked from home between 11 and 14 June 2020, an increase from 41% the previous week; this supplemented results from BICS, which showed that 5% of the workforce had returned from furlough leave between 18 May and 14 June 2020.

Between 5 June and 12 June 2020, the volume of online job adverts in wholesale and retail increased from 24.1% to 35.1% of their 2019 average, in anticipation of non-essential retailers reopening.

Overall, prices of items in the high-demand products (HDPs) basket remained stable between the week ending 7 June 2020 and the week ending 14 June 2020.

During the period 8 June to 14 June 2020, there was a moderate rise in the number of daily ship visits compared with the previous week.

From 16 March to 9 June 2020, the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) has received 3.1 million individual declarations and 1 million new claim advances to Universal Credit.

For more information see: https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/coronavirus-and-the-latest-indicators-for-the-uk-economy-and-society-18-june-2020?utm_source=ce09c6c3-6b2a-4d26-

[9fbc-d4225f6bad34&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm_content=immediate](https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/personal-and-economic-well-being-in-great-britain-april-to-may-2020?utm_source=165d8b81-3754-4df3-8b04-8164d366107c&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm_content=immediate)

PERSONAL AND ECONOMIC WELL-BEING IN GREAT BRITAIN: JUNE 2020

While our day-to-day emotions like happiness and anxiety have improved since the beginning of lockdown, our assessment of life overall, such as our life satisfaction and feeling that the things we do are worthwhile, have remained subdued since 20 March 2020.

As average anxiety has fallen, the time we think it will take for things to return to normal has increased, with one in four of us expecting it will take over a year or will never go back to normal.

An estimated 12.5 million people say their households have been affected financially by the impacts of the coronavirus (COVID-19), a similar share to the beginning of lockdown. The share of employees and self-employed actively working fell in the first two weeks of lockdown and remained comparable up to 7 June 2020, at 67.0% and 79.9% respectively.

There are some signs of increasing economic inequality, with more people on lower personal incomes reporting reduced income in the household because of the coronavirus as lockdown has continued, working fewer hours, and being less able to save for the future, while fewer people with higher incomes have been impacted financially.

Parents and those who do not feel safe at home or people who are lonely were amongst the groups most likely to be impacted financially and to feel more anxious, with all less likely to be able to save in the year ahead.

Parents were more than twice as likely to report reduced income, less than half were able to cover a large necessary expense, and they were more likely to have been furloughed than adults without children in the house, with over 20% finding childcare impacting their work.

Since the easing of some restrictions, average life satisfaction worsened for those with a health condition before bouncing back to the level comparable with those without a health condition in the latest period up to 7 June.

For more information see: https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/personal-and-economic-well-being-in-great-britain-april-to-may-2020?utm_source=165d8b81-3754-4df3-8b04-8164d366107c&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm_content=immediate

DEFERRAL OF VAT PAYMENTS

If you are a UK VAT registered business and have a VAT payment due between 20 March 2020 and 30 June 2020, you have the option to:

- defer the payment until a later date
- pay the VAT due as normal

HMRC will not charge interest or penalties on any amount deferred as a result of the Chancellor's announcement.

The VAT payment deferral period ends on 30 June 2020. This means you will need to:

- set-up cancelled direct debits in enough time for HMRC to take payment
- submit VAT returns as normal, and on time
- pay the VAT in full on payments due after 30 June

Any VAT payments you have deferred between 20 March and 30 June should be paid in full on or before 31 March 2021. You can make additional payments with subsequent returns.

Contact HMRC:

- if you are unable to pay the VAT due and may need time to pay as soon as possible and before the payment is due
- for advice and information on other support available

See: https://www.gov.uk/guidance/deferral-of-vat-payments-due-to-coronavirus-covid-19?utm_source=eef7ab69-ec97-491f-8487-4e3eef504130&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm_content=immediate

GETTING TESTED – UPDATED GUIDANCE

The following groups of people can ask for a test through the NHS website:

- anyone in England and Wales who has symptoms of coronavirus, whatever their age
- anyone in Scotland and Northern Ireland aged 5 and over who has symptoms of coronavirus

The following groups of people can access priority testing through GOV.UK:

- essential workers in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland
- anyone in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland over 5 years old who has symptoms of coronavirus and lives with an essential worker
- children under 5 years old in England and Wales who have symptoms of coronavirus and live with an essential worker (this test must be performed by a parent or guardian)

See: https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-getting-tested?utm_source=b5dece07-1415-4303-9503-0f3655803660&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm_content=immediate

APPLY FOR THE FOOD CHARITIES GRANT FUND

Apply for a grant of up to £100,000 for your charity helping people affected by coronavirus (COVID-19).

If you run a front-line food aid charity in England, you can apply for a grant of up to £100,000 to help you continue to provide food to the vulnerable. You can apply for funding as a group of charities to meet the criteria for applications.

The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) will assess applications to the fund in the order they are submitted.

See: https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-apply-for-the-food-charities-grant-fund?utm_source=f1e9a5e3-dc25-49bc-96ee-e903d92642af&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm_content=immediate

REOPENING HIGH STREETS SAFELY FUND GUIDANCE

Guidance to help local authorities and partners to deliver activities supported through the Reopening High Streets Safely Fund.

The Reopening High Streets Safely Fund is providing £50 million from the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) to councils across England to support the safe reopening of high streets and other commercial areas. This guidance provides details of the activities that can be supported through the Fund and an overview of how it will be administered, as well as key ERDF contractual requirements.

See: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/reopening-high-streets-safely-fund-guidance?utm_source=3288b8f7-39a5-4732-8ed1-c165ccb20ac2&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm_content=immediate

ENGLAND - EMPLOYER BULLETIN: JUNE 2020

A bi-monthly magazine for employers and agents giving up-to-date information on payroll topics. HMRC publishes the employer bulletin 6 times a year, giving employers and agents the latest information on topics and issues that may affect them.

The employer bulletin is only available online. You can register for HMRC's employer email alert service to receive emails from HMRC which tell you when the latest issue is available.

Welcome

Hello and welcome to the June edition of the Employer Bulletin

This edition brings you all of the latest HMRC updates to support employers and payroll agents through the Coronavirus pandemic. There's the very latest information on the Job Retention Scheme and Statutory Sick Pay Rebate Scheme.

There's guidance on how best to support your employees through this challenging period covering the impacts of COVID-19. This includes late filing and payment penalties, treatment of certain expenses and benefits provided to employees, new changes for maternity and parental pay regarding the calculation of Average Weekly Earnings for furloughed employees, and more.

The Bulletin also contains other key messages which may be of interest to you, including an update on claiming Employment Allowance, withdrawal of P45 and P60 stationery, and a reminder for reporting Expenses and Benefits in Kind, where we advise avoiding delay by using our online services to contact or send us information.

HMRC's COVID-19 YouTube playlist is where you'll find details of all our live and recorded webinars in relation to COVID-19 announcements, and make sure you are kept up to date with changes by signing up to receive our email alerts. You can also follow us on twitter @HMRC.gov.uk.

Another useful source of information is the Agent Update, the latest edition has just been released and provides updates for tax agents and advisers.

HMRC is committed to helping businesses in these challenging times. Now more than ever, our aim is to deliver clear, consistent and timely information which is appropriate for employers and helps you to meet your payroll obligations to HMRC. So, if you have any comments or suggestions about any of the content of the Employer Bulletin or would like to see a specific topic covered, please drop me a line at scott.milne@hmrc.gov.uk. Your feedback as always is most welcome.

Many thanks

Scott

Scott Milne
Editor

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If you administer your own payroll this is an essential read where HMRC keep you up to date on recent changes and practices. The June publication clearly covers Government supports but also maternity and paternity pay matters.

See:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/893007/English-Employer-Bulletin-84_v9_Accessible_1_.pdf