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| **Advice and guidance– latest update** |
| The current regulations are in place until **1 April**, but will be reviewed on **18 March 2021**. From March 8 – there is a limited contactless click and collect service at baby equipment shops, clothing shops, footwear shops and electrical goods shops but the **revised guidelines must be adhered to:**  Three Step Arrangement for contactless click and collect:   * 1. Step 1 – Customer contacts retailer by online communication, telephone, text message or post to place and pay for order – payment must be completed at time of order as no payment on collection of goods is permitted;   2. Step 2 – Retailer confirms order and the allocated collection time by on-line communication, telephone, text message or post.  If either party needs to reschedule the collection time it must be done by telephone call. Impromptu arrival to collect item is not permitted thereby reducing volume of travel.   3. Step 3 – Customer collects item ensuring both they and the retailer have complied with social distancing and wider public health guidance.  1. The full details on the guidance for businesses and consumers will be available on [https://www.nibusinessinfo.co.uk/clickandcollect](https://eur01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.nibusinessinfo.co.uk%2Fclickandcollect&data=04%7C01%7CVivienne.Walsh%40midandeastantrim.gov.uk%7C6ca57781a37246cfcde408d8d42db35c%7C54a722d029fa45c7b8d0b56f419033cd%7C0%7C0%7C637492640047410766%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C1000&sdata=p%2F79oTEy4Rjhxm%2B2abBn80vTZLHx5oMMfddcFk4vQL4%3D&reserved=0)   A revised roadmap to recovery is planned to be announced on 1 March.  A full list of circumstances is included in the link <https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/publications/health-protection-coronavirus-restrictions-no2-regulations-northern-ireland-2020>.  Full guidance details are available at <https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/coronavirus-covid-19-regulations-guidance-what-restrictions-mean-you> |

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| **Government Support for your Business** | | **Keep up to date with the latest information at:** [**https://www.nibusinessinfo.co.uk/campaign/coronavirus-updates-support-your-business**](https://www.nibusinessinfo.co.uk/campaign/coronavirus-updates-support-your-business)  **Guidance for NI companies** [**https://www.gov.uk/government/news/covid-19-guidance-information-for-ni-businesses-employers?utm\_source=e7492372-e10b-4879-93a6-9a71f788f1f8&utm\_medium=email&utm\_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm\_content=immediate**](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/covid-19-guidance-information-for-ni-businesses-employers?utm_source=e7492372-e10b-4879-93a6-9a71f788f1f8&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm_content=immediate)  **Working Safely Guidance for different business settings -** [**https://www.nibusinessinfo.co.uk/node/23544**](https://www.nibusinessinfo.co.uk/node/23544) | |
| **Northern Ireland is to get a further £300m from the UK government to tackle the Covid-19 pandemic.** | | The money can be spent now or carried into the new financial year in April, which the Treasury says shows "unprecedented flexibility". Stormont ministers have been concerned that extra funding they received in December will not all be spent and [some may have to be handed back](https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-northern-ireland-55800229).  Funding allocations have become more complicated during the pandemic.  Normally Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland get a population-based proportion of new spending for England. In July 2020, the government decided to give the devolved institutions money up front without having to wait for it to be spent in England first.  The UK government initially announced a guarantee of an additional £12.7bn on 24 July which has now been uplifted four times. Northern Ireland has now been allocated a total of £3.3bn in that way. The further funding was welcomed by Finance Minister Conor Murphy.  He said he and his counterparts in Scotland and Wales had pushed the Treasury [to allow money to be carried into the new financial year](https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-northern-ireland-54434501).  "I'm pleased flexibility has been granted in relation to this funding which will ensure continued support for the health service, individuals and businesses in the tough months ahead," he added. | |
| **Employees** | | |
| **Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme** | The Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme (CJRS) - also known as the furlough scheme, is being **extended until 30 April 2021** with eligible employees receiving 80% of their current salary for hours not worked, up to a maximum of £2,500 per month.  Find out more here: <https://www.nibusinessinfo.co.uk/business-support/coronavirus-job-retention-scheme-uk-wide> | |
| **Free online training places** | For people whose employment has been disrupted by the pandemic. More details of the courses available and how to access them are available at <https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/free-short-term-courses-improve-skills> | |
| **Businesses** | | |
| **£3m fund to help retail micro-businesses move online** | The Covid-19 Micro-business E-commerce Grant has been developed by Invest Northern Ireland to help retail micro-businesses grow their business online. It follows on from the success of Invest NI’s Covid-19 Digital Selling Capability Grant.  Micro-sized retailers are those employing fewer than 10 people, with retail premises and which derive the majority of their turnover from retail customers.  Some of the eligible activities covered by the scheme include engaging the services of a supplier to review your current digital marketing capabilities and online sales channels, develop an e-commerce strategy, develop or enhance your e-commerce website or online presence to drive increased sales or to help improve the digital marketing and e-commerce capability of the employees in the business. Full details on criteria, eligibility and how to apply are available on nibusinessinfo.  The scheme will open to applications at 6pm tonight, Tuesday 2 February 2021.  Eligible businesses will be able to receive a maximum grant of £5,000 towards up to 80 per cent of eligible costs. The call for applications will close at 6pm on Friday 12 March 2021.  Full details on criteria, eligibility and how to apply are available at [https://www.nibusinessinfo.co.uk/mbeg](https://eur01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.nibusinessinfo.co.uk%2Fmbeg&data=04%7C01%7CVivienne.Walsh%40midandeastantrim.gov.uk%7Cf2ba3dd9153f4d64ee5a08d8c778189d%7C54a722d029fa45c7b8d0b56f419033cd%7C0%7C0%7C637478665910661816%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C1000&sdata=YCNGnCTBokEw7tkUK1jq6P6rQcR4o%2FZWGScjV8FT%2FlA%3D&reserved=0) | |
| **Invest NI has introduced a new response scheme to help companies recover from the business challenges caused by COVID-19.** | The Productive Investment Capital Grant (PICG) will support businesses to make productivity-focused capital investments to adapt to these challenges.  PICG is open to any businesses operating in manufacturing, construction, information and communication, or professional, scientific and technical activities. Existing Invest NI customers, or businesses that can become an Invest NI customer, can also apply for PICG.  The call for applications is open until 5pm on Thursday 25 February 2021. What is available? Businesses can access up to a maximum grant of up to £250,000 to improve productivity by investing in new technology and processes, software and knowledge acquisition, automation or the adoption of digital manufacturing technologies.  The proportion of costs supported will range from 20-50%, up to a maximum of £250,000 grant, depending on the size of company involved (i.e. micro/small, medium or large business).  For more information click <https://www.investni.com/covid-19-productive-investment-capital-grant> | |
| **Localised Restrictions Support Scheme** | The Localised Restrictions Support Scheme (LRSS) is for businesses that are forced to close because of government restrictions that have a premises or are a tenant in a premises. Payments range from £800-1,600 for each week a business is closed.  If a business has previously applied, it does not need to re-apply and will automatically get a top-up for the six weeks starting from 26 December in a lump sum payment of between £4,800-£9,600. Find out more here - <https://www.nibusinessinfo.co.uk/content/coronavirus-localised-restrictions-support-scheme> | |
| **Covid Restrictions Business Support Scheme** | Covid Restrictions Business Support Scheme was launched on 16 October 2020 to support those businesses directly impacted by the latest Health Protection Regulations. The Covid Restrictions Business Support Scheme is for some not eligible for the LRSS.  The scheme is divided in two; Part A and Part B.  Part A is for businesses forced to close that don't have a premises, for example, driving instructors or hairdressers that rent a chair. Eligible applicants are entitled to £600 per week they are closed in a payment that will be made in one lump sum. If a business has previously applied, it does not need to re-apply, payments will be made automatically. Part B is for businesses that are in the supply chain of those businesses forced to close because of restrictions and have seen a 40% reduction in turnover, for example, a food producer or a wedding photographer. Grants of between £2,400-4,800 are available depending on the size of the business. Those who don't pay rates can get a grant of £1,800.  Full details on both Part A and Part B of the CRBSS, including an eligibility checker, are available at:  Part A: [https://www.nibusinessinfo.co.uk/crbss-part-a](https://eur01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.nibusinessinfo.co.uk%2Fcrbss-part-a&data=04%7C01%7CVivienne.Walsh%40midandeastantrim.gov.uk%7Cac17bee05da54be6a3b908d892da5543%7C54a722d029fa45c7b8d0b56f419033cd%7C0%7C0%7C637420813717858951%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C1000&sdata=sYCp9LBWcT6GVwe3AgwuMvoSq2FQ0Ki3iSdu%2BouPqH4%3D&reserved=0)     Part B: <https://nibusinessinfo.co.uk/crbss-part-b>  **The scheme is now open for new applicants.** | |
| **Apprenticeship Recovery package plan – Return, Retain and Result** | Employers are offered £3,700 for every apprentice brought back from furlough - £500 return payment, £2,000 for the employer who retains the apprentice for 4 months following return from furlough and £1,200 when the apprentice completes their qualification. Also £3,000 will be available to employers for each new apprenticeship opportunity created 1 April 2020 - 31 March 2021.  The scheme commenced on 1 November 2020. For more information visit: <https://www.nibusinessinfo.co.uk/content/coronavirus-apprenticeship-return-retain-and-result-scheme> The application form is available at <https://www.nibusinessinfo.co.uk/sites/default/files/2020-11/Apprenticeship-Return-Retain-and-Result-Scheme-Application-Form.PDF>  Employers may also be interested in the new **Apprentice Recruitment Incentive** which offers up to £3,000 for each new apprenticeship opportunity created – information can be found below: [www.nibusinessinfo.co.uk/content/coronavirus-new-apprenticeship-incentive-scheme](https://eur01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.nibusinessinfo.co.uk%2Fcontent%2Fcoronavirus-new-apprenticeship-incentive-scheme&data=04%7C01%7CVivienne.Walsh%40midandeastantrim.gov.uk%7Cd5062a2802d84d85e68408d896a92276%7C54a722d029fa45c7b8d0b56f419033cd%7C0%7C0%7C637425000625604013%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C1000&sdata=CoJ4D0BtPxTxY5UR%2Bljhz76PckUxEuXSl6iWCT3izug%3D&reserved=0) | |
| **Minister announces PPE funding for non-statutory training providers** | £250,000 fund to help non-statutory training providers meet the additional costs resulting from ensuring compliance with public health regulations as a result of Covid-19.  Applications are open to all non-statutory Training for Success and ApprenticeshipsNI providers. Providers will be invited to submit a claim form to apply for funding and payments will be made by April 2021. £250,000 of funding will be available and the fund will open for applications until 26 February 2021.  The launch of the fund follows the implementation by the Department of a package of supplier relief measures to ensure the continued economic viability of non-statutory training providers and Disability Support Service contractors during the pandemic. The Department has also provided funding for a Digital Hardship Fund to purchase equipment and support connectivity for online learning for disadvantaged learners in the non-statutory sector. | |
| **Covid-19 Self-Isolation Grant** | The non-repayable Discretionary Support Self-Isolation Grant assists with short-term living expenses where a person on a low income or any member of their immediate family are diagnosed with Covid-19 or advised to self-isolate in accordance with guidance published by the Public Health Agency.  The financial support available will vary according to the period of financial need and individual circumstances.  To check out if you are eligible and apply for the Discretionary Support Self-Isolation grant go to [https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/extra-financial-support](https://eur01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.nidirect.gov.uk%2Farticles%2Fextra-financial-support&data=04%7C01%7CVivienne.Walsh%40midandeastantrim.gov.uk%7Cc202a00874a047c5c8d608d88a1cb463%7C54a722d029fa45c7b8d0b56f419033cd%7C0%7C1%7C637411203183620965%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C1000&sdata=5TcaFGUe0TeTHY%2FWs5TVYoDAgxCipaLG0w139KbLz8Q%3D&reserved=0) or telephone (Freephone 0800 587 2750). | |
| **SSP for Small & medium-sized UK based businesses and employers** | Covers up to 2 weeks’ SSP per eligible employee who has been off work because of COVID-19. Visit here for more information: <https://www.nibusinessinfo.co.uk/content/coronavirus-claim-back-statutory-sick-pay-paid-your-employees-due-coronavirus-covid-19> | |
| **Support scheme for large tourism and hospitality businesses** | The Large Tourism and Hospitality Business Support Scheme (LTHBSS) will provide support to large businesses in these sectors which have been significantly impacted by the Health Protection Regulations put in place by the Executive. The scheme will provide additional financial support to help these businesses meet fixed costs and overheads associated with the survival of their businesses and the protection of jobs.  LTHBSS will be open to businesses that have a total Net Annual Value of £51,001 and above which meet the following criteria:   1. The business is named within the Health Protection (Coronavirus, Restrictions) (No.2) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2020 AND The business is eligible for the Localised Restrictions Support Scheme (LRSS); 2. The business is operating in Northern Ireland and was trading immediately prior to 16 October 2020. 3. The grant payment paid to businesses should not exceed the maximum levels of State aid permitted under the Covid-19 Temporary State Aid Framework. 4. Businesses which have failed to comply with a prohibition notice under regulation 7 of The Health Protection (Coronavirus, Restrictions) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2020(b)) would not be eligible for support under the scheme.   The Department has identified over 250 eligible businesses in Northern Ireland with a total NAV of £51,001 or more. It will follow a tiered payment support structure ensuring that businesses with higher NAV’s receive a higher payment reflecting higher fixed costs The scheme will make a one-off payment based on weekly amounts of between £2,400 and £41,900 depending on an individual business’ NAV.  Eligible businesses will receive a single grant payment based on the relevant weekly amounts - eight weeks of support for the period of restrictions to 11 December 2020 (10 weeks in the case of businesses located in the Derry City and Strabane District Council Area) PLUS six weeks of support the period of restrictions from 26 December 2020 to 6 February 2021.  For example, businesses where the NAV is £51,001 to £60,000 will receive £2,400 per week. This will increase to £2,900 per week for businesses where the NAV £60,001 to £70,000 and £3,400 per week for businesses where the NAV is £70,001 to £80,000. This pattern continues up to a NAV of £600,000.  From £600,001 onwards the NAV bands are widened to £100,000 with increments of £2,500. For example, £31,900 per week for a business with a NAV of £600,001 to £700,000 and £34,400 per week for a business with a NAV of between £700,001 and £800,000. Finally business where the NAV is £1,000,001 or greater will receive a maximum of £41,900 per week.  The Department will contact eligible businesses to provide an application form (with a unique application number). Once the application form has been fully completed and returned with the required supporting evidence, it will be assessed and a grant payment will issue in March. | |
| **Second financial support scheme for taxi-drivers** | **The second taxi scheme will provide support to drivers covering the 12 month period from 22 March 2020 to 21 March 2021.**  **It aims to address two issues:  first, to provide further support to all eligible taxi drivers for this 12 month period, and second, to now provide financial assistance specifically for those drivers who have had partial insurance during this period.**  **The application process has also been simplified to address the concerns raised by the sector and this time round drivers will be able to directly contact the Department through a dedicated information line for the scheme. Drivers who were unable to work because they were shielding, but still incurred the overhead costs, will also be able to apply for this new scheme.**  **The maximum amount of support available will be £3,000, including any payment already made under the first scheme, and will be dependent on the number of days that taxi drivers had insurance in place over the period. It is in addition to support for self-employed taxi drivers from other schemes such as the Self Employment Income Support Scheme (SEISS).**  Full details about the scheme and how to apply is available at [https://www.infrastructure-ni.gov.uk/publications/taxi-drivers-financial-assistance-scheme-guidance](https://eur01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.infrastructure-ni.gov.uk%2Fpublications%2Ftaxi-drivers-financial-assistance-scheme-guidance&data=04%7C01%7CVivienne.Walsh%40midandeastantrim.gov.uk%7Ce61dccca6b514433a99408d8ceac83d1%7C54a722d029fa45c7b8d0b56f419033cd%7C0%7C0%7C637486587635740679%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C1000&sdata=p8NK6odXXczjs5dooHLFdF6azUGoRApiEiJjPrfvClw%3D&reserved=0).  The information line for applications is 028 9054 0605. This number is available Mon-Fri 9-00am-5.00pm. | |
| **£2m Covid-19 financial support for hatching egg sector** | Agriculture Minister Gordon Lyons MLA has announced a financial support package worth up to £2m for poultry farmers producing hatching eggs who were impacted last year by the Covid-19 pandemic.  The Minister outlined the £2m poultry support scheme, explaining that: **“Minister Poots met with representatives of poultry farmers producing parent stock and hatching eggs for Moy Park Ltd, and recognised the financial impact that falling demand for hatching eggs, particularly in international markets and interdependencies within the supply chain, had on the local industry. To offset the losses incurred by these farmers during the time it has taken for markets to recover, there is up to £2m of financial support from the Covid-19 fund.**  The Minister went on to say: **“This support will address the financial impact of depleting laying flocks earlier than normal, and cash flow consequences of longer intercrop periods for both rearing and laying farms.”**  When the scheme opens later this month, eligible farmers will be contacted and asked to complete a simple application form to claim their payments. Further details and explanatory information will be published on the DAERA website at that time.  Over 11,300 farmers and growers have already received almost £19m to offset the losses incurred as a result of the pandemic’s impact on the local agri-food sector in 2020. | |
| **The Childcare Temporary Closure Support Fund** | An extension to the Covid-19 Childcare Temporary Closure fund for the period January to March 2021 has been announced.  The Covid-19 Childcare Temporary Closure Support Fund will provide continued support for childcare providers who have been forced to close temporarily due to a Covid-related incident within their provision.  The Covid-19 Temporary Closure Fund is open from 24 February 2021 for applications from eligible daycare and school-aged childcare settings, childminders, crèches and playgroups.  A grant payment will be made according to the type and size of the provider. Eligible childcare providers will be able to apply for funding via Early Years – the Organisation for Young Children website.  [https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/publications/ministerial-announcement-next-phase-childcare-recovery-fund-17-february-2021](https://eur01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.education-ni.gov.uk%2Fpublications%2Fministerial-announcement-next-phase-childcare-recovery-fund-17-february-2021&data=04%7C01%7CVivienne.Walsh%40midandeastantrim.gov.uk%7C24ecbdd2a9cf455ee6c008d8d32b5d14%7C54a722d029fa45c7b8d0b56f419033cd%7C0%7C0%7C637491530488968939%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C1000&sdata=oqHi9lcArX9kC8NfQPuL%2B37b88mBsmf7gEtZ1L%2Bhkvk%3D&reserved=0) | |
| **Loans** | | |
| **Bounce Back Loan scheme** | The Bounce Back Loan scheme helps small and medium-sized businesses to borrow between £2,000 and up to 25% of their turnover. The maximum loan available is £50,000. The government guarantees 100% of the loan and there will not be any fees or interest to pay for the first 12 months. After 12 months, the interest rate will be 2.5% a year.  If you already have a Bounce Back Loan but borrowed less than you were entitled to, from 10 November you can top up your existing loan to your maximum amount.  Further information here: <https://www.nibusinessinfo.co.uk/content/coronavirus-apply-bounce-back-loan-scheme> | |
| **NI Small Business Loan** | Part of the Invest NI Access to Finance Strategy providing loans of £10-£15,000 to start-up businesses and £10-£100.000 for established businesses.  The NISBLF II funding can be used as well as the Bounce Back and CBILS loans.  To find out more visit [www.nisblf.com](http://www.nisblf.com/) or call: Michael Carlin T: 07545250658 or Donal Leahy T: 07999751095 | |
| **Coronavirus Small/Medium Business Interruption Loan Scheme (CBILS)** | **CBILS helps small and medium-sized businesses to access loans and other kinds of finance up to £5 million. The government guarantees 80 per cent of the finance to the lender and pays interest and any fees for the first 12 months.**  **For more information on:** <https://www.nibusinessinfo.co.uk/content/coronavirus-apply-coronavirus-business-interruption-loan-scheme-small-and-medium-sized>  **The scheme is open for applications until 31 January 2021.** | |
| **Coronavirus Large Business Interruption Loan Scheme** | **This loan will provide a government guarantee of 80% to enable banks to make loans of up to £25 million to firms with an annual turnover of over £45 million. There is also an option of a loan up to £200 million criteria apply. This scheme is open to applications until 31 January 2021. Find out more here:** <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/apply-for-the-coronavirus-large-business-interruption-loan-scheme> | |
| **Rates** | | |
| **Rate Relief** | For Full information on Rates relief: <https://www.nibusinessinfo.co.uk/content/coronavirus-ni-budget-2020-21-includes-further-rates-reduction>  Rates relief saw hospitality, retail, leisure, tourism, childcare businesses and airports in Northern Ireland given a 12 month rates holiday last year that takes them up until 31 March 2021.  **Note** A reduced VAT rate of 5% for hospitality and accommodation is in place until 31 March 2021. | |
| **Tax Liabilities** | | |
| **Tax Assistance** | Firms  and  individuals  who  are  in  temporary  financial  distress as a result of Covid-19 and have outstanding tax liabilities may apply to HMRC to defer tax payments:  [For more information on the Tax Helpline to support businesses affected by Covid-19 visit the Gov.UK website](https://eur01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.gov.uk%2Fgovernment%2Fnews%2Ftax-helpline-to-support-businesses-affected-by-coronavirus-covid-19&data=02%7C01%7CGary.Sullivan%40midandeastantrim.gov.uk%7Ca11b156f0c18466358fb08d7d19fbc73%7C54a722d029fa45c7b8d0b56f419033cd%7C0%7C0%7C637208356291991264&sdata=M865VoL0nx5swxChTkK%2FKLRLBD5aQVJVAYgsL%2FYNv9g%3D&reserved=0) on <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/tax-helpline-to-support-businesses-affected-by-coronavirus-covid-19>  **Assistance for the firms and individuals T: 0800 024 1222** | |
| **Self Employed** | | |  |
| **Universal Credit Allowance** | The UK Government recognises the continued impact that coronavirus (COVID-19) has had on the self-employed and has taken action to provide support. To access information visit <https://www.nibusinessinfo.co.uk/business-support/self-employment-income-support-scheme-seiss-uk-wide> | |
| **Limited Company Director's Support Scheme** | **Dodds announces £20m support scheme for company directors.** The Minister said £20million will be available for the Limited Company Directors Support Scheme (LCDSS).  Grants are NOW up to a maximum of £3,500 available.  The scheme will be delivered by Invest Northern Ireland on behalf of the Department for the Economy.  More information and eligibility criteria for the scheme are available at [www.nibusinessinfo.co.uk/lcdss](https://eur01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.nibusinessinfo.co.uk%2Flcdss&data=04%7C01%7CVivienne.Walsh%40midandeastantrim.gov.uk%7C2e68636d109b4e97bac508d8b88cb709%7C54a722d029fa45c7b8d0b56f419033cd%7C0%7C0%7C637462261796253246%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C1000&sdata=XR2WE0KWIMBG6dFl6ErPRa5EIbxWX8KrZzliGb6NYX0%3D&reserved=0) | |
| **Self-Employed** | The UK Government recognises the continued impact that coronavirus (COVID-19) has had on the self-employed and has taken action to provide support. To access information visit <https://www.nibusinessinfo.co.uk/business-support/self-employment-income-support-scheme-seiss-uk-wide>  The fourth payment is to cover February-April 2021. Details of the fourth grant have yet to be released. | |
| **Weir announces £1m for Residential Outdoor Education Centres** | The Education Minister has secured funding to provide much needed support to Outdoor Education Centres.  These are centres that provide curricular relevant, residential outdoor learning opportunities for children and young people.  These settings offer vital educational opportunities for children and young people throughout Northern Ireland**,** but have had to significantly reduce their services as a direct result of the restrictions imposed due to the pandemic.  The COVID-19 Residential Outdoor Education Centre Relief Fund will be administered by the Education Authority’s (EA) Youth Service and will be open for applications from 22 January 2021.  Funding has been provided as part of the Executive’s COVID-19 Relief Fund.  The fund is open to voluntary youth organisations that have routinely provided curricular relevant, residential outdoor learning opportunities for children and young people aged 4-24 years before April 2020, and that can demonstrate a negative financial impact as a result of a loss of residential activity since the emergence of the Covid-19 pandemic.  Further information on the scheme is available at the EA youth services website @ [https://www.eani.org.uk/news/ea-welcomes-1m-funding-for-residential-outdoor-education-centres](https://eur01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.eani.org.uk%2Fnews%2Fea-welcomes-1m-funding-for-residential-outdoor-education-centres&data=04%7C01%7CVivienne.Walsh%40midandeastantrim.gov.uk%7Ce8e92cebb5fa4131302508d8bed603ae%7C54a722d029fa45c7b8d0b56f419033cd%7C0%7C0%7C637469173684921385%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C1000&sdata=ODqUrsAR1NAmZhxSzjEq9fjxa5eOmmW1yZbZAMyns%2BM%3D&reserved=0) | |
| **Additional info** | Insurers must pay small firms for Covid lockdown losses - BBC News  <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-55661702> | |

**Coronavirus: Support for your Business through Mid and East Antrim Borough Council**

Should you have any questions or wish to discuss any of the support available, please contact Mid & East Antrim Borough Council’s Economic Development Team on:

Email: [amplify@midandeastantrim.gov.uk](mailto:amplify@midandeastantrim.gov.uk)

Keep up to date with the latest information at: <https://www.midandeastantrim.gov.uk/covid-19/supporting-ourmea-businesses/>

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| **In Place** | | **Details** |
| **Support for Small/Med sized businesses** | | **Amplify Business Escalator Programme**  Council is supporting our existing small and medium sized businesses to navigate through COVID-19 and prepare for the new economic landscape post lockdown to sustain jobs.  We can help businesses realise their potential, proactively plan for a new way of working, prepare robust financial plans and to ensure an effective and efficient way of working to service their existing customers and new markets.  We can provide you with 1-1 mentoring support in the following areas  **Finance Support**   * Detailed business plan and financials to access finance from lenders * Preparing accounts and Financial Projections * Financial management planning   **HR Support**   * Taking staff off Furlough and reviewing contracts of employees * HR policies after COVID-19 * Capacity Planning   **Diversification**   * How to generate new revenue streams for your business * New product/service ideas * Market Research   **Business Continuity**   * Supply chain management * Social distancing measures in a return to business post lockdown * Maintaining products and services * Streamlining systems and processes   **Strategic Business**   * Develop your business strategy * Monitoring and review pre and post Covid 19 * Goal Mapping   Please note the above supports can be tailored to your specific needs. If you want to access support contact and email   * E: [amplify@midandeastantrim.gov.uk](mailto:amplify@midandeastantrim.gov.uk?subject=Covid-19%20Business%20Support%20enquiry%20via%20MEA%20website) * T: 028 2563 5036   *Eligible businesses must be based in the Mid and East Antrim District Council areas and employ less than 50 people. This project is part-funded by Invest Northern Ireland and the European Regional Development Fund under the Investment for Growth & Jobs Northern Ireland (2014-2020) Programme* |
| **Advice and Guidance** | **Support for Small/Med sized businesses** | **Kickstart** continues to provide guidance (currently via virtual  mentoring) to support early stage businesses and social enterprises  and help prepare for the future  E: amplify@midandeastantrim.gov.uk  T: 028 2563 5036  **Go for it**  Are still here to help you start a business. Business advisors can now  provide virtual meetings to discuss as business idea.  Call 0800 027 0639 or visit goforitni.com |
| **Business Webinars**  **Mentoring Support** | Support for Small/ Medium sized businesses | Council are providing a blend of dedicated webinars (accessible at any time) which follow with provision to book one to one mentoring slots to support your business in key areas of Finance, Human Resources and Digital/Online business.     **Webinars & Support for 2021**  MEA’s Business Growth Team are here to help your business during this difficult time by enlisting support from a panel of highly qualified and experienced business mentors. These confidential 1 to 1 sessions will focus on different aspects of the challenges your business faces, and help you navigate your way through the coming weeks and beyond. Please contact the relevant Client manager to register for your business mentoring session.  **Business Finance queries:** Laura McCourt  [Laura.McCourt@midandeastantrim.gov.uk](mailto:Laura.McCourt@midandeastantrim.gov.uk)  **Digital/Remote Working queries**: Barbara Orr [Barbara.Orr@midandeastantrim.gov.uk](mailto:Barbara.Orr@midandeastantrim.gov.uk)  **Human Resources queries:** Allastar McGarry [Allastar.McGarry@midandeastantrim.gov.uk](mailto:Allastar.McGarry@midandeastantrim.gov.uk) Online webinars from 2020Digital/Online Business Live Webinar 1 - Working from Home Get assistance on how to work from home to (set up a remote office/stay connected with staff/ensure the security of your home office) with live Q&A session. Visit: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xameVK-_oeI&feature=youtu.be>  Live Webinar 2 - Delivering Services Online Deliver your services online Develop new ways of delivering your services online/quick e-Commerce /Facebook shops/accept payments) with live Q&A session. Visit: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SIeCvodROXc&feature=youtu.be>Live Webinar 3 - Connect with Customers Stay connected with your customers/get your social messaging right/use online tools such as Facebook Live, Zoom, Creating videos, setting up Facebook community groups with live Q&A session. Visit: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fG25J59dIkc&feature=youtu.be> **Eligibility Criteria** - businesses must be based in the Mid and East Antrim District Council area and employ less than 50 people.  ***This project is part-funded by Invest Northern Ireland and the European Regional Development Fund under the Investment for Growth & Jobs* Northern Ireland (2014-2020) Programme.** |
| **Business Support** | Masterclasses including: | * Digitisation and Digital Awareness * Health and Safety Environment * LEAN and Continuous Improvement * Capacity Planning and Forecasting * Purchasing and Procurement * Quality Assurance and Control |