

Tánaiste opens applications for Phase 1 of €8,000 grant under new Small Business Assistance Scheme for COVID (SBASC)

From [Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment](#)

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Applications open today for businesses ineligible for CRSS and other sector specific grants

Businesses down 75% or more in turnover among those expected to benefit

The Tánaiste and Minister for Enterprise, Trade and Employment Leo Varadkar TD today (Thursday, 11 March) opened applications for the €60m Small Business Assistance Scheme for COVID (SBASC).

This scheme is in addition to the comprehensive package the government has put in place to help businesses and workers during the pandemic, including the Employment Wage Subsidy Scheme (EWSS), the Pandemic Unemployment Payment (PUP), the Covid Restrictions Support Scheme (CRSS), low-cost loans, the deferral and warehousing of tax liabilities and the waiver of commercial rates.

The Tánaiste Leo Varadkar TD said:

"As the pandemic goes on, more and more businesses are struggling to keep up with payroll and fixed costs. My objective is to ensure that as many businesses as possible get through this period and are able to reopen successfully. This new payment will help businesses with fixed costs like rent, insurance, utilities and security. SBASC should help around 7,500 mainly small businesses and although the grant is modest, it will go a long way for the smallest businesses.

"While things remain very challenging for businesses, there is reason to hope. The latest public health numbers are going in the right direction, the vaccines work and there is light at the end of the tunnel."

Eligible businesses will receive a payment of €4,000 for Quarter 1 of 2021. There will be a second payment of €4,000 for businesses continuing to meet the criteria.

In February, the government agreed a €60m allocation for the SBASC scheme. It is available to companies, self-employed, sole traders or partnerships with a minimum turnover of €50,000 not eligible for the Revenue scheme CRSS, Fáilte Ireland Business Continuity

Scheme or the Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media's Live Performance Support. In order to be eligible the business must pay rates to a public authority.

The 31 Local Authorities in every county are taking applications today with a closing date of 21 April 2021 for the first round of the scheme. Interested businesses should contact their local authority.

The Minister of State for Business, Employment and Retail, Damien English TD said:

"The government wants to help as many small businesses as possible to survive this difficult time. It is important that they do so for the future jobs-led recovery that the country needs post COVID-19.

"The new SBASC builds on the broad range of financial supports in place to help businesses stay afloat so that they can safely reopen once again. For qualifying businesses there will be two payments of €4,000 which can be used towards meeting their fixed costs. I urge qualifying businesses to reach out and ensure they get what they are eligible for.

"Small enterprises are the backbone of the Irish economy and engagements will continue with those sectors of the business community most in need of financial assistance during these tough trading times."

The Minister of State for Trade Promotion Robert Troy TD said:

"All government supports are under review and we are engaging with industry right across the country and listening to feedback. This scheme is another example of funding the government has put in place for businesses that need it, businesses that were not eligible for other schemes.

"I would encourage small businesses to ensure they are aware of the supports available to them. The Irish economy right across the country needs small businesses to survive and thrive once our economy is opened again."

Notes

Small business assistance scheme SBASC was previously announced as COVID-19 Business Aid Scheme (CBAS).

The scheme is open for applications from today (11 March 2021). Applications should be made to the Local Authority. Closing date for receipt of applications is 21 April 2021.

The details of the SBASC include:

- the scheme is available to companies, self-employed, sole traders or partnerships, with a minimum turnover of €50,000 and are not owned and operated by a public body. The Scheme is open to firms that currently employ less than 250 and with current turnover of less than €25m

- the business is not eligible for CRSS, the Fáilte Ireland Business Continuity Scheme, or the Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media's Live Performance Support
- the business operates from a building, or similar fixed physical structure on which business rates are payable (mobile premises, or premises which are not permanently fixed in place, do not meet the definition of business premises nor do premises on which no rates are payable)
- the business must have a current eTax Clearance Certificate from the Revenue Commissioners
- the turnover of the business over the claim period is estimated to be no more than 25% of the average weekly turnover of the business in 2019; or the projected average weekly turnover of the business for 1 January to 31 March 2021, and 30 June 2021 where applicable, for businesses that commenced after 1 November 2019, and the financial plans as of end of 2019 should be uploaded with the application
- the business intends to resume trading in full once government restrictions are eased
- all eligible applications receive a first payment of €4,000
- payments will be dispersed in the same format as rates refunds via bank transfer