

Tánaiste extends eligibility of Small Business Assistance Scheme for COVID (SBASC)

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

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- **businesses operating from a non-rateable premises such as a home office or hot-desk now eligible for help with fixed costs**
- **self-employed working from home, wedding planners, on-course bookmakers, travel counsellors and photographers among those expected to benefit**
- **Micro Enterprise Assistance Scheme also reopened to help smallest businesses**

The Tánaiste and Minister for Enterprise, Trade and Employment Leo Varadkar TD today extended eligibility for the €60m Small Business Assistance Scheme for COVID (SBASC) to include businesses operating from a non-rateable premise like a home business or yard. The Tánaiste is also relaunching the Micro Enterprise Assistance Scheme so that our smallest businesses, those with a turnover of less than €50,000 can apply for a grant of €1000 to help with fixed costs.

The Tánaiste said:

"We have tried through various government schemes to help as many businesses as possible with their fixed costs. By extending eligibility for the SBASC, we hope to catch those who have not qualified under our existing schemes, mainly because they don't operate from a rateable premises.

"Those who are self-employed and working from a non-rateable premises, such as their own home for example, can apply for a €4,000 payment to help with fixed costs.

"While the grant is modest, it will make a big difference to those businesses. It is designed to help with energy bills, security, IT systems fees, legal and accounting fees or any other fixed costs that may incur as part of running a business.

"We are also relaunching the Micro Enterprise Assistance Scheme so that our smallest businesses, those with a turnover of less than €50,000 can apply for a grant of €1000.

"It has been a really tough few months for anyone brave enough to run their own business. Things are looking up now."

The Small Business Assistance Scheme for COVID (SBASC) is for businesses which are not eligible for CRSS or other sector specific grants, that are down 75% or more of turnover.

Further details, including the go-live date for Q2, will be announced shortly. Those who applied under Phase 1 are still eligible to apply for a second payment of €4,000 if they continue to meet the criteria. Interested businesses should contact their local authority. Closing date for Phase 2 applications will be 21 July.

The Micro Enterprise Assistance Scheme is for companies facing particular hardship and that do not qualify for other government schemes. It will provide a grant of up to €1,000 to businesses with previous turnover of less than €50,000 that meet the other criteria for 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 Minister of State for Business, Employment and Retail, Damien English TD said:

"At the heart of Ireland's jobs-led revival will be the small business community who made major sacrifices during the pandemic to sustain their operations. For many negatively impacted upon by COVID-19, their efforts are firmly fixed on trading successfully once again as the economy continues to reopen and the remaining public health restrictions are eased.

"This second round of SBASC will reach a further cohort of businesses and will contribute towards some of the ongoing fixed costs associated with maintaining operations. I am optimistic that small firms can return to viability and contribute positively to the economic recovery."

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

"The outlook is hopeful as we now enter the early stages of recovery but central to our economic recovery is the small and micro business community. We know businesses across the country continue to feel the impact COVID-19 has had on their normal operations. The expansion of the eligibility criteria of the SBASC to those working in non-rateable premises and the re-launch of support available to our micro enterprises through the Micro Enterprise Assistance Scheme is welcome, both of which I had been pushing for with my colleagues. While modest, both schemes will assist in addressing some of their ongoing fixed costs.

"I will continue to work with my colleagues across Government to ensure we address the needs of our smallest businesses and the update to the schemes announced today will give some level of help to those who need it most. Along with the other government schemes and regulatory responses currently underway, I want small and micro businesses to know that we are committed to supporting their long-term viability."

Notes

The Small Business Assistance Scheme for COVID (SBASC) is for businesses that are down 75% or more of turnover and are not eligible for CRSS or other sector specific grants.

The extension of eligibility for the SBASC to businesses operating from non-rateable premises will assist in defraying ongoing fixed costs. Such costs can include utilities, maintenance of equipment and mobile business, security, IT systems fees, storage, legal and accountancy and costs required to provide a safe working environment.

Business will be asked to declare that they intend to resume trading in full once government COVID-19 restrictions are eased.

Further details, including the go-live date for Phase 2, will be announced shortly. Those who applied under Phase 1 are still eligible to apply for a second payment of €4,000 if they continue to meet the criteria. Interested businesses should contact their Local Authority.

Closing date for Phase 2 applications will be 21 July.

Additionally, the Micro Enterprise Assistance Scheme will be relaunched through the Local Enterprise Offices (LEOs) to help businesses, whose turnover is below €50,000, with fixed costs. The Scheme will provide assistance of up to €1,000 to businesses who meet the criteria and will be funded by up to €5m as part of the SBASC allocation.