

Thanks to Lorna Forrester at the SMTO for this information

Dear members,

In the next few days, we expect Scot.Gov to open the funding for Mobile and Home-based Close-contact services. **Eligible applicants will receive a one-off payment of £4,000.** Today, the Scot.Gov website was updated with details, which suggests the fund will open soon.

If you are eligible to claim this funding then you need to get the required documents ready as the £15 million available will only cover 3750 claimants.

[Here is the link for the funding.](#)

What does this involve?

The fund is **not yet open** for applications. It will be opening soon. This information is to help you understand the eligibility criteria for the Scottish Government's Mobile and Home-Based Close Contact Services Fund. It gives you all the details that you will need to provide if you want to apply.

Eligible applicants will receive a one-off £4,000 payment (£2,000 for the period to end December 2020 and a further £2,000 to cover the period from January 2021 onwards). Once the fund opens, it will be **open to applications for a four-week period.**

To be eligible for this grant you must:

- have been operating your business **before 17 March 2020**
- have lost income as a result of Covid-19 restrictions
- meet all of the eligibility criteria.

This fund is for owners and operators of mobile and home-based close contact service businesses. It is not for employees of those businesses who can be furloughed through UK Government's Job Retention scheme.

Am I eligible?

To be eligible you must operate a business that meets the definition of a Close-Contact Service Provider.

- You must operate your business primarily on a mobile basis or from home. By "mobile" we mean that you routinely (more than 50% of the time) operate your business from multiple locations, and not exclusively from fixed premises used solely for business purposes.
- If you have already benefited from business grant support as a result of operating from fixed business premises, you are not eligible to apply for further support from this fund.
- To meet the close contact services eligibility criteria, you will need to be able to confirm that you operate a business providing any of the following services:
 - beauty and nail services

- hair services
- body modification services
- fashion services
- art and photography services
- massage therapies.

Individuals are only eligible for one grant under this scheme and you will not receive an additional payment if you provide more than one of the services above.

In addition, you must confirm that you:

- are ordinarily resident in Scotland
- are operating in Scotland with a Scottish trading address
- derive over 50% of your income from the defined business activities listed above
- were actively trading as a mobile or home-based close contact service provider before 17 March 2020 - a bank statement will show this.
- have not received financial support through any of the following schemes:
 - Strategic Framework Business Fund,
 - Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme,
 - COVID-19 Restrictions Fund Closure and Hardship Fund,
 - Hardship Fund for Creative Freelancers,
 - Local Authority Discretionary Fund
- trade as self-employed or as a limited company (registered with Companies House or HMRC as the owner and operator of the specified business)
- have not breached any COVID regulations/requirements for businesses

What does this cost?

It's **free** to apply and **the grant does not need to be repaid**.

However, if you provide incorrect information and are later found to be ineligible for the fund, you will be expected to return the grant money in full and immediately.

If you are in receipt of Universal Credit or some other Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) benefits, receiving this grant may affect your benefit entitlement. How this affects you will depend on your individual circumstances. You may wish to contact DWP to confirm how it could affect you before making an application. Any grant awarded may be taxable. Any payment must be declared to HMRC as part of your tax return.

What information do you need to provide?

You will need to provide the following information as part of the application process. The application process will be online. All supporting information must be in the right format to be submitted electronically (online). You cannot resubmit your application if you make an error, and there is no appeals process after the fund closes, so make sure you read this information carefully.

For registered companies:

- Your Companies House registration number. You'll find this on the Companies House website

For sole traders:

- Your Unique Taxpayer Reference (UTR), also referred to as a 'tax reference' number. It's a 10 digit number that should be on tax returns or other tax documents from HMRC or on your account page on the HMRC web portal
- A recent screenshot or photo of your business tax account page from the HMRC portal clearly showing your full name and Unique Taxpayer Reference number. Or another form of official communication from HMRC with your name and UTR shown

In addition, you will also need to provide:

- Your bank account details for this business, including the sort code, account number and branch location. If you're a sole trader, you may provide a personal account, as long as you can clearly show that it has been used for business purposes
- A bank statement clearly showing evidence of business transactions. One month's **bank statement from anytime within the period between 17 March 2019 and 17 March 2020** will be acceptable. You will need to make sure your uploaded document or screenshot clearly shows the account name, bank name, account number and sort code
- Your National Insurance Number
- Your business website address and/or social media web links such as Facebook or Instagram (if you have one)

Any information you give about your business (such as your registered name and address) **MUST** match the information held by official bodies such as HMRC. We'll be checking and verifying all of the information you provide that relates to your business. Please make sure the information you give is up to date before you apply.