

COVID-19 Employment/Self-Employment Support Scheme, Frequently Asked Questions - EMPLOYERS

This document is provided for information only and does not purport to set out the full terms and conditions of the Scheme. For these please refer to the “Guidance Notes and Application Form for Employers” or the “Guidance Notes and Application Form for Sole Traders, Partnerships, Casual Workers and other Self-Employed” as appropriate.

What is the Employment/Self-Employment Support Scheme?

The Coronavirus (otherwise known as Covid-19) (the **Virus**) has had, and continues to have, a major adverse impact on public health across the world. In line with many governments, the Falkland Islands Government (**FIG**) is taking various steps to prevent the Virus from taking hold in the Falkland Islands and to minimise its effects should it do so. These include requiring those with symptoms of the Virus to self-isolate for 14 days or more on a precautionary basis (or for three months or more where the person concerned is within one of the categories of vulnerable individuals), and those associated with people who have such symptoms to self-isolate for up to 14 days, or who are non-essential workers to remain at home for up to 28 days.

FIG recognises that adherence to this policy and the implementation of periods of self-isolation may adversely affect the employers of those affected, their continued employment, and the livelihoods of those who are self-employed. To alleviate these effects, FIG is making available support under the Employment/Self-Employment Support Scheme.

What can I expect?

If you are an eligible employer and have employees who meet the eligibility criteria, you are required to continue to pay their wages or salary, and to maintain their other employment benefits, for the period of self-isolation at a rate at least equivalent to the support you receive under the Employment/Self-Employment Support Scheme.

If your employees are capable (physically and by reason of the availability of suitable equipment and other resources) to work and discharge the substantial part of their duties at home, you shall not be entitled to make a claim under the Scheme. If they are capable to work at home on a reduced-hours basis only, you may be entitled to claim in part, at the Scheme Administrator’s discretion.

How do I know if I am eligible?

The following employers shall not be entitled to make claims in respect of their Employees under the Scheme:-

- i. statutory corporations and other bodies which are in receipt of regular and substantial subventions from FIG (such that the subvention forms part of FIG’s budget process and the recipient body is named in FIG’s approved estimates);
- ii. the Museum and National Trust (as established pursuant to the Museum and National Trust Ordinance 1991);

- iii. governments or public authorities of countries or territories other than the Falkland Islands;
- iv. employers whose activities are wholly or substantially conducted outside the Falkland Islands;
- v. employers engaged by the Ministry of Defence (MoD) and their sub-contractors (including, without limitation, those named in the Taxes and Duties (Defence Contractors' Employees Exemption) Order 2019), in each case to the extent engaged in MoD-related work and to the extent such employers, sub-contractors or their employees are receiving Virus-related support from the MoD or other UK government departments or offices in terms substantially similar (as determined by the Scheme Administrator) to the support available under the Scheme, provided that such employers or their sub-contractors shall be entitled to apply under the Scheme in respect of any Employees who are not eligible for any such support from the MoD or other UK government departments or offices.

To be eligible, any Employee must have been employed by you for not less than thirty days prior to the commencement of any relevant period of self-isolation. They must also be employed by you to work for at least seven hours per week. Employees on zero-hours contracts or casual contracts (as determined by the Scheme Administrator) shall be treated as self-employed. Each Employee must also have the right to live and work in the Falkland Islands, and be resident in the Falkland Islands throughout their period of self-isolation.

If you have an employee/employees who meets one of the following criteria AND they are unable to substantially fulfil their job from home, you may be eligible for support:

- Employees required by KEMH to self-isolate for 14 days or more because they have symptoms associated with the Virus.
- Employees required by KEMH to self-isolate for up to 14 days, because a member of their household has symptoms associated with the Virus and has been required to self-isolate.
- Employees required by FIG to stay at home on account of the Virus as a non-essential worker for up to 28 days.
- Vulnerable employees (i.e. 70 years of age or more, or have a specified pre-existing medical condition) required by KEMH to self-isolate for three months or more.
- Employees who are a Sole Carer (i.e. a person who has sole or principal responsibility for the care of a child under the age of 16 years and who does not receive regular support in discharging this responsibility from their spouse, other family members or other parties, or who shares responsibility for the care of such a child with one or more persons, each of whom is incapacitated or otherwise unable to provide support during the period of that child's self-isolation) of one or more children required by KEMH to self-isolate for 14 days or more.

Please see the relevant attached flowchart for more information.

What support am I entitled to?

You may be entitled to be reimbursed by FIG for the Employment Costs of each eligible employee. Employment Costs are the aggregate costs of an Employee's salary, wages and any other employment benefits payable to them under their employment contract or other terms of employment in force as at the start of this Scheme. Support varies depending on which eligible criteria your employees meet. Support is capped at either a maximum of £1,250 for a 14-day period of isolation, or a maximum of £2,500 per month of isolation.

How do I apply to the Employment/Self-Employed Support Scheme?

Employers are required to submit a single completed "Application Form for Employers". Alongside this, you must submit a "Employee's Declaration" completed and signed by each employee, along with a copy of their employment contract or terms of employment.

Casual employees and employees on zero-hours contracts should complete their own claim. See "COVID – 19: EMPLOYMENT/SELF-EMPLOYMENT SUPPORT SCHEME Guidance Notes and Application Form for Sole Traders, Partnerships, Casual Workers and other Self-Employed".

Payments will be made through the Treasury Accounts Payable system, therefore if you are not a current recipient of payments from FIG you will also need to complete a "New Creditor Form".

How long will my application take to process?

The Scheme Administrator will prioritize the claims of the self-employed and smaller businesses. In all cases the system administrator will try to turn around complete eligible applications in seven to ten days.

The Scheme Administrator will endeavour to decide an application and communicate that decision as soon as reasonably practicable (and in any event within twenty-one days) after receipt of an application.

Where can I get the application forms?

Application forms are included as Annexes to the "COVID – 19: EMPLOYMENT/SELF-EMPLOYMENT SUPPORT SCHEME Guidance Notes and Application Form for Employers".

These documents are available from:

FIG website: <https://www.fig.gov.fk/covid-19>

The FIDC website: <http://www.fidc.co.fk/library/covid-19>

Hardcopies are available from the Post Office.

If you need assistance filling out the forms please contact Sian Davies, Business Development Officer, FIDC Tel: 51211

What is the application process?

Completed application forms and required additional documentation should be submitted to the Scheme Administrator by e-mail to treasury.support@sec.gov.fk or by post to:

The Treasury, Secretariat, Thatcher Drive, Stanley.

Please call 28400 for enquires as to the status of a claim.

Applications may be submitted at any time until notice is given that no further funds are available under the Scheme.

Applications will be assessed by the Scheme Administrator who may request and receive further information or clarification from an applicant as they think fit.

Essential workers are those employed in Critical/Key services which include:

Health and social care - including:

- Doctors, nurses, midwives, paramedics, social workers, care workers and any other frontline health and social care staff who need to remain at work
- Support and specialist staff required to maintain the sector

Key public services - including:

- Those essential to the running of the justice system
- Those responsible for the management of the deceased
- Media and broadcasters who are providing public service broadcasting and the Government Communications team

Government - administrative occupations essential to delivering:

- The response to coronavirus
- Key regulatory services
- Essential public services, including the payment of benefits, and key treasury functions

Food and other necessary goods - including:

- Those involved in food production, processing, distribution, sale and delivery

Public safety and national security - including:

- Police and required support staff
- Fire and rescue service employees
- Those maintaining border security

- Prison and probation staff

Transport - including:

- Those who'll keep FIGAS and ferry passenger and freight and passenger transport supporting the response
- Shipping links including SAAS
Port operators

Utilities, communication and financial services - including:

- Staff needed for:
- Essential financial services provision
- Electricity and water sectors, including sewerage
- Fuel supply
- Information technology and data infrastructure sector

Key staff working in the following sectors:

- Telecommunications
- Emergency repair workers
- Accommodation providers
- Postal services
- Agricultural workers

Note. If you are unclear about where your function or activities sit please contact the Secretariat on 28450