

COVID-19 Employment/Self-Employment Support Scheme, Frequently Asked Questions – SOLE TRADERS, PARTNERSHIPS, CASUAL WORKERS and other SELF-EMPLOYED

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 the 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 a sole trader, a full equity partner (i.e. not a salaried partner) in a partnership business, casual or zero-hours contract worker, a sole proprietor of a company without any other staff or otherwise self-employed and meet the eligibility criteria, you may be entitled to financial support under the Employment/Self-Employment Support Scheme.

If you are capable (physically and by reason of the availability of suitable equipment and other resources) to work and discharge the substantial part of your duties at home, you shall not be entitled to make a claim under the Scheme. If you 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?

You must have been engaged in the same self-employed business for not less than three months prior to the commencement of any relevant period of self-isolation (or, in the case of seasonal businesses, at least in the same three-month period during the previous tax year), must continue to trade (subject to any disability from doing so on account of the Virus) and intend, to the satisfaction of the Scheme Administrator, to continue to trade in that business during the 2020 tax year.

You must also be engaged in your self-employed business for at least seven hours per week, have the right to live and work in the Falkland Islands, and be resident in the Falkland Islands throughout your period of self-isolation.

Casual and zero hour contract workers must have worked an average of at least seven hours per week over the last three months (or, in the case of seasonal businesses, at least in the same three-month period during the previous tax year), have the right to live and work in the Falkland Islands and be resident in the Falkland Islands throughout the period of self-isolation.

You must also meet one of the following criteria:

- You are required by KEMH to self-isolate for 14 days or more because they have symptoms associated with the Virus.
- You are required by KEMH to self-isolate for up to 14 days, because a member of your household has symptoms associated with the Virus and has been required to self-isolate.
- You are required by FIG to stay at home on account of the Virus as a non-essential worker for up to 28 days.
- You are vulnerable (i.e. 70 years of age or more, or have a specified pre-existing medical condition) and are required by KEMH to self-isolate for three months or more.
- You 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.

To see if you might be eligible, please see the relevant attached flowchart for more information.

What support am I entitled to?

Support varies depending on which eligible criteria you meet; however, support is capped at either a maximum of £1,250 for a 14-day period, or a maximum of £2,500 per month.

How do I apply to the Employment Support Scheme?

If you are self-employed you are required to submit a completed "*Application Form for Sole Traders, Partnerships, Casual Workers and other Self-Employed.*" along with any applicable additional documentation specified in the form.

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”.

When can I expect my application to be approved?

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.

Applications will be assessed by the Scheme Administrator who may request and receive further information or clarification from an applicant as they think fit. 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 Sole Traders, Partnerships, Casual Workers and other Self-Employed.” document.

This document is 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.

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

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