



With the end of the 'lockdown' as a result of COVID 19 in sight, and the plan for the gradual re opening of commercial activity progressing, the Government has announced the creation of a new grant to provide support to businesses as part of the re opening process.

The €250 million Restart Grant has been created to provide direct grant aid to small businesses that are reopening, and is meant to be a contribution towards the cost of re-opening or keeping a business operational, as well as re-connecting with employees and customers following the COVID-19 closures.

BACKGROUND

The Restart grant will provide a minimum of €2,000 and maximum grant of €10,000 to successful businesses, and applies to businesses that, subject to the specific qualifying criteria, have a commercially rateable premises.

Also where a business is in a position where rates are paid on their behalf, but are attributable to the business premises being occupied, they will also be eligible to apply, however it should be noted that all applications under the scheme will be based on the commercial rate bill for 2019.

In order to ensure that eligible companies with the most immediate need to get back up-and-running receive the grant support as quickly as possible, the awarding of any grant funds will be aligned to the **Government's Roadmap for Reopening** e.g. initially for those businesses re opening under **Phase 1** and **Phase 2**, as well as to those that have been in a position to stay open since the start of the crisis.

Businesses opening under later phases will also be applicable under the terms of this scheme, however with demand expected to be high, the Government are keen to 'stagger' applications as the Reopening phases progress.

All applications for the Restart grant will be routed through local authorities rather than via the Revenue etc.

APPLICATION PROCESS

- Applications for the Restart Grant are to be made via the appropriate local authority and **NOT** via the Revenue or other central bodies.
- The application process is via the online application form which is available on the relevant local authority's website
- The expectation is that, on average, successful applications will be approved with one week, with payment being made directly into the bank account specified on the application.
- The closing date for receipt of applications under the Restart grant scheme is 31st August 2020
- The grant will be equivalent to the rates bill of the business in 2019, or a minimum payment of €2,000, whichever is the higher, and will be subject to a maximum payment of €10,000.



ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

1. The business must have suffered a projected 25%+ loss in revenue from 1st April 2020 to 30th June 2020
 - have an annual turnover of less than €5m and employ between 1 to 50 people
 - commit to remain open or to reopen if it was closed
 - declare the intention to retain employees that are on the Temporary Wage Subsidy Scheme (TWSS), as well as to re-employ staff on the Pandemic Unemployment Payment as and when possible (as the business recovers)
2. If a company is currently in a rateable premise but was not rate-assessed in 2019 it is still eligible to apply. The local authority can pay the grant based on an estimate of what the rates demand for 2019 would have been.
3. Subject to the qualifying criteria below, any business that has a commercially rateable premises, or where rates are paid on their behalf and are attributable to the business premises occupied, can apply.
4. Multiple chain stores, i.e. a business that is a non-financially independent branch of a group of chain stores which is owned and managed by a single entity, are not eligible. Non-commercial organisations such as community and sporting premises (including charity shops and community and sporting premises with a bar) are not eligible
5. Businesses that do not operate from commercially rateable premises (tradesmen, service providers, etc) are not eligible
6. Premises that were vacant prior to the Covid-19 emergency are not eligible for the grant
7. Where the commercial rates demand for 2019 was less than €2,000, then the de minimis payment of €2,000 will apply
8. The grant could be used to defray ongoing fixed costs, e.g. utilities, insurance, refurbishment or for measures to ensure employee and customer safety.
9. Businesses should retain supporting documentation as spot-checks may be carried out to verify a declaration to this effect.
10. Applications in the Dublin area should be made via the following:

Dublin City Council	dublincity.ie > restart grant
Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council	dlrcoco.ie > restart grant
Fingal County Council	fingal.ie > restart grant