



READY FOR CUSTOMS GRANT – NOW EXTENDED TO AUGUST 2021 !

BACKGROUND

The '**Ready for Customs**' grant was originally made available to Irish businesses in light of the additional costs likely to be necessary, as a result for of the UK's exit from the EU Customs Union !

As we are now all too familiar with, BREXIT has indeed generated additional compliance and other administrative costs for Irish businesses, whether trading directly with the UK and/or those businesses using the UK '**landbridge**' to access EU markets.

As we head into the Summer of 2021 - **and almost 6 months on from 1st January 2021**- circa €12m of the original €20m made available under the '**Ready for Customs**' grant has now been spent, resulting in over 1,800 new customs roles for Irish businesses.

The '**Ready for Customs**' grant provides **up to €9,000** for each new employee hired into a customs role. The terms of the grant are flexible and allow businesses to claim for both redeployed and part-time staff, and also enables '**overhead**' costs – such as training associated with hiring a new employee to be included in a claim.

Now with the further expansion of UK checks from October onwards (impacting mainly on the food sector), the deadline for obtaining funding under the grant has been **extended through to 31 August 2021 !**

KEY INFORMATION

The grant is administered by **Enterprise Ireland**, and is focused on assisting Irish businesses to meet the challenge(s) of managing the new customs process(es) post BREXIT - **through providing financial assistance to cover the costs of taking on additional customs clearance staff.**

The key aspects of the '**Ready for Customs**' grant include:

- up to €9,000 available for each new **full-time employee** engaged in customs work
- up to €4,500 available for each new **part time employee** engaged in customs work
- the grant can be used towards recruitment costs, employee costs and provision of IT infrastructure, where necessary

Additionally, where an existing employee has been redeployed within the business to manage the customs work, then '**back filling**' the position vacated, is to be expected and can be claimed under the terms of the grant.

The **Ready for Customs**' grant scheme opened on 9th Sept. 2020 and will now remain open to applications until such time as the fund is exhausted, or the **31st August 2021.**



ELIGIBILITY

1. Business

The '**Ready for Customs**' grant is open to businesses that are directly engaged in business activities to, from, or through the UK, **AND which will require new or increased customs clearance capacity.**

This generally will apply to businesses that:

- Are providing **freight, haulage, logistics services** to, from or through the UK **OR**
- Are providing **customs intermediary services OR**
- Are **directly engaged in business activities** with or through the UK

These businesses must also:

- have a CRO number (and **NOT** just a business name)
- be incorporated in the Republic of Ireland
- have an EORI number which has been issued from the Revenue Commissioners
- have a supporting business plan, where they are providing **customs intermediary services** for a period of less than 12 months since establishment

There are a number of businesses that are specifically **NOT ELIGIBLE** for the grant which include:

- those that are not financially viable at the date of application
- where the employee is contracted to work for the enterprise for less than **14 hours/week (on average)**
- those operating in sectors such as coal, steel or tobacco, financial institutions as well as gambling, adult entertainment etc
- those already approved for any other State or EU funding for the same activity/subject to a recovery order for illegal aid/reached their DeMinimis aid limit etc

2. Employee

An eligible employee within the business applying for the '**Ready for Customs**' grant, is one that is:

- based in Ireland
- is or will be engaged primarily in customs clearance activities e.g. a role such as **Customs Clearance Clerk/Administrator, Customs Clearance Operator, Customs Supervisor, Import/Export Freight Operator/Administrator** etc.
- a new hire to the organisation, or has been re-deployed within the business to a dedicated customs role - from date of application.



OTHER ISSUES

All applications by Irish businesses for the '**Ready for Customs**' grant, **MUST** be submitted to Enterprise Ireland through the EI on-line portal.

Enterprise Ireland will assess each application under specific eligibility criteria, namely :

1. Company eligibility
2. Financial viability
3. Current and future customs capacity requirements.

In addition to meeting the Business **AND** Employee eligibility criteria, the business will also be required to provide additional information including the following:

- an outline of any existing and projected business activities to, from, or through the UK
- an outline of proposed (new/additional) customs clearance activities that will be undertaken e.g. expected volume of UK customs declarations, number of eligible employees/employment status (full-time/part-time)/additional IT infrastructural costs (hardware/software) etc.
- **new hire** - copy of an Employment contract of eligible employee for a new hire
- **redeployment** – copy of an Employment contract and/or job description
- confirmation that employee(s) has undertaken or will be undertaking the Skillnet customs clearance training programme (or similar)
- a valid tax clearance certificate/tax clearance access number (TCAN).
- a Directors statement, including confirmation that the employee(s) is/are engaged in dedicated customs clearance activity
- a copy of most recent signed unabridged Audited Accounts for 2019 year-end

The claim will be assessed by way of desk inspection by **Enterprise Ireland** with successful applications receiving payment of the grant in **one instalment**.