

## AVA BUSINESS GUIDANCE ON CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19) – Issue 3

The AVA is continuously in touch with legislators, government officials and politicians either directly or via our links through Partner Trade Associations. Whilst some of you will already be making your own representations – and it is always sensible to ensure your constituency MP(s) are aware of your specific issues/concerns – we are keen to ensure central messages about the business impacts of the COVID-19 outbreak for vending and the wider food, drink and hospitality sectors are also logged with Government. We would therefore welcome feedback on issues which relate to product & materials availability, staffing issues, cash flow and forward projections and even to the extent of business viability.

Whilst many of the issues may be common across a range of other sectors, it is important that Government understands the full scale of the impact on our vending businesses. This is not only in relation to the UK impact – but also equipment, parts and product availability across Europe. So please – get in touch and provide us with details of any specific barriers, client requests/demands or business consequences of the current situation.

***The Government has today defined the list of “key workers”. Crucially Vending Operators should sit under the heading: Food and other necessary goods - Those involved in the production, processing, distribution, sale and delivery of food.***

### AVA Business Support Service

Don't forget – as an AVA member you have access to this AVA / Quest service:

- Advice Line – unlimited access to experienced advisors offering practical advice on HR, employment law, health & safety, legal issues plus tax and VAT matters,
- Website – access to over 700 template documents covering HR, employment law, health and safety and legal matters. The website also includes an HR and H&S Health Check.
- They currently also have a COVID-19 business advice line

### How Do I Access the Service?

- Advice Line – call 0116 243 7589. You will be asked for your name and company name.
- Website:
  - Log in to the AVA Members' Area of the AVA website
  - Go to the Membership Benefits / AVA Business Support Service page
  - Click on the website link in **orange** within the text
  - Log in to the Business Support Service page. For ease, use the same login details you used to access the AVA Members' Area in the first instance.

This offers:

- The Tax Service:
  - Advice line to Tax & VAT advisors

#### Automatic Vending Association

Concept House, Cromwell Office Park, York Road, Wetherby, LEEDS LS22 7SU

the-ava.com

Tel: +44 (0) 3300 883 267

- HR Service:
  - Unlimited advice line
- The Health & Safety Service:
  - Advice line H&S specialists
  - Over 100 free, downloadable documents
  - 400 free, downloadable employment documents
- The Legal Service:
  - Unlimited advice line to legal advisors
  - 200 free, downloadable documents

### **Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy: COVID-19 Support for Business**

The Chancellor has set out a package of temporary, timely and targeted measures to support public services, people and businesses through this period of disruption caused by COVID-19.

This includes a package of measures to support businesses including:

- a statutory sick pay relief package for SMEs
- a 12-month business rates holiday for all retail, hospitality and leisure businesses in England
- small business grant funding of £10,000 for all business in receipt of small business rate relief or rural rate relief
- grant funding of £25,000 for retail, hospitality and leisure businesses with property with a rateable value between £15,000 and £51,000
- the Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme offering loans of up to £5 million for SMEs through the British Business Bank
- a new lending facility from the Bank of England to help support liquidity among larger firms, helping them bridge coronavirus disruption to their cash flows through loans
- the HMRC Time To Pay Scheme
- More detail can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-to-employers-and-businesses-about-covid-19/covid-19-support-for-businesses>

Specific advice on these can be found by calling:

- **Business Support Helpline (England):** Telephone: 0300 456 3565
- **Find Business Support Scotland:** Telephone: 0300 303 0660; Textphone: 0800 023 2071
- **Business Wales Helpline:** Telephone: 0300 060 3000
- **Invest Northern Ireland:** Telephone: 0800 181 4422

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## Support for businesses through the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme

Under the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme, all UK employers will be able to access support to continue paying part of their employees' salary for those employees that would otherwise have been laid off during this crisis.

Eligibility: All UK businesses are eligible.

How to access the scheme

You will need to:

- designate affected employees as 'furloughed workers,' and notify your employees of this change - changing the status of employees remains subject to existing employment law and, depending on the employment contract, may be subject to negotiation
- submit information to HMRC about the employees that have been furloughed and their earnings through a new online portal (HMRC will set out further details on the information required)

HMRC will reimburse 80% of furloughed workers wage costs, up to a cap of £2,500 per month. HMRC are working urgently to set up a system for reimbursement. Existing systems are not set up to facilitate payments to employers.

### Best practice from the Government offices and other organisations:

The Foreign and Commonwealth Office has provided guidance for British people travelling and living overseas here: <https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice>

The official guidance from the Department of Health and Social Care, and Public Health England, is here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/topical-events/coronavirus-covid-19-uk-government-response>

ACAS Employers guidance here: <https://www.acas.org.uk/coronavirus>

25<sup>th</sup> March 2020