

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

Automatic Vending Association

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

the-ava.com

Tel: +44 (0) 3300 883 267

Hints & Tips from AVA members – these are just some of the suggestions & ideas which have been implemented by some of our members recently:

1. Been asked to stop visiting machines on site for 8 weeks? Of course: we will extend your current contract by 2 months to cover the gap
2. Fit as many cashless payment devices as you can. At least that way you will still have money coming in.
3. We can offer out of hours machine filling and service for those still on site.
4. Often team members can't be released for training. This may be an ideal opportunity.
5. In times of reduced cashflow it may be necessary to lay off staff but do try to hold on to as many as you can afford. When times change, taking on completely new staff can be costly in terms of recruiting & training.
6. Ensure that vending operator contracts specify their current role as 'Food Delivery Drivers'.

Have you got any advice you can pass on? Remember – our interest is in keeping the UK vending industry viable and ongoing.

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>

16th March 2020