

To: XXXXXXXXXXXX

Dear XXXXXXXX

I am writing to you in your position as XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX.

The Automatic Vending Association (AVA) is the trade association of the vending industry, representing machine and ingredient manufacturers and suppliers, cup manufacturers and vending machine operating companies throughout the United Kingdom.

The UK vending and unattended retail industry has an annual turnover of £1.6bn. It is an industry employing 24,500 people directly, which is supplemented by those employed within the wider vending channel supply chain. AVA members operate over 460,000 vending machines, vending food, soft drinks, water coolers, hot and cold beverages and snacks.

Vending operator companies, those who provide, fill and maintain vending machines, are, with one or two exceptions, small or medium sized enterprises, often family owned.

Most of our members provide their services in the Business & Industry sector, which has obviously been negatively impacted by the COVID-19 outbreak. But additionally, they have many clients in the NHS, Government offices, manufacturing, food production, the military and even prisons. These are clients who require their services to be maintained to keep their staff fed and watered 24/7. Requests which our members, as part of the 'food supply' chain are attempting to fulfil – whilst complying with the latest Government guidelines on working safely.

As you will be aware, significant restrictions on movement and travel have been introduced in the UK. We would like to ensure that our members' key workers are able to carry out their work unimpeded. An increasing number of member's staff are being asked to justify being out and about in works vans. In order to address this we are asking that provision of vending and support services is specifically included in the 'exceptions' listed in official documentation such as this:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/876905/300320_Revised_Guidance.pdf

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This will simplify the process and ensure that we can carry out this essential work whilst being classed as a 'key worker'.

I have no doubt you are currently exceptionally busy, but it would also help if, as XXXXXXXXXXXXX, you were able to provide an official letter supporting our automated retail workforce.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

David Llewellyn
Chief Executive