

FCA finalises new guidance on payment deferrals

The Financial Conduct Authority has published [finalised guidance](#) on motor finance payment deferrals which comes into force on 25 November.

There are now two pieces of concurrent guidance that firms offering motor finance must follow: Tailored Support Guidance and Payment Deferral Guidance. These new measures place an additional burden on members and we encourage you to share your views with the policy team via policy@bvrla.co.uk, who engages regularly with the regulator.

To support members with understanding and complying with the new guidance, the BVRLA will be hosting a free 30-minute webinar at 2.00pm on Wednesday 25 November. All regulated members providing motor finance are encouraged to login to the BVRLA website and [register to attend](#).

Updated guidance for claiming wages for furloughed employees

[Guidance on claiming wages](#) through the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme has been updated to include more detail about what HMRC may deem to be a reasonable excuse for missing a claim deadline and it also makes clear that if a claim deadline falls on the weekend or a bank holiday then claims should be submitted on the next working day.

Guidance has also been updated for [calculating how much](#) you can claim, clarify how to work out 80% of your employee's average earnings between the date their employment started and the day before they are furloughed.

Guidance for furloughed staff who become sick

Guidance relating to [if your employee becomes sick](#) while furloughed has been amended to remove outdated information.

New VAT deferment scheme for 2021

Guidance on the [deferment of VAT payments](#) due to coronavirus has been updated to include details of a new payment scheme that will enable participants to make up to 11 smaller monthly instalments, interest free by the end of March 2022, rather than having to make payments by the end of March 2021.

The online service enabling you to opt into the scheme will be available in early 2021.

ONS publishes latest business insights

The Office for National Statistics has published its [latest business insights](#), showing that Covid has hit small businesses the hardest with 81% of micro businesses currently trading, compared with 93% of businesses with 250 or more employees.

50% of businesses reported a decrease in turnover compared with what is normally expected for this time of year whilst 9% reported an increase. The wholesale and retail industry had the highest percentage of businesses reporting an increase in turnover, at 15%.

[Latest indicators for the UK economy](#) report that 14% of businesses said they had low or no confidence that their business would survive the next three months, whereas 79% remained confident and half of those were 'highly confident' that their business would survive.

Suspension of driving theory tests

The Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency has [updated its guidance](#) to reflect that driving theory tests have been suspended in Scotland in Covid level 4 areas. They are already suspended in England until after the national lockdown ends on 2 December. They are currently taking place in Wales.

Health bodies' recommendations for workplaces

A [consensus statement](#) emphasising the importance of Covid-19 secure workplaces has been published by Public Health England, the Health and Safety Executive and Faculty of Occupational Medicine.

The statement recommends that individual discussions, where appropriate, should take place as part of a wider workplace risk management strategy as some staff may be at greater risk of infection or more severe illness from COVID-19 due to factors such as age, sex, deprivation, obesity or diabetes.

Latest R rate for the UK

The [R number in the UK](#) is today reported to be between 1.0 and 1.1, meaning that on average every 10 people infected will infect between 10 and 11 other people. The growth rate is between 0% and +2% meaning that the number of new infections is growing by 0% to 2% every day.

The lowest R rate in England is reported in the North West (0.8-1.0) whilst the highest is in the South East (1.1-1.3). [Northern Ireland](#), [Scotland](#) and [Wales](#) publish figures on their respective websites.

Reducing the risk of viral spread

The Government has published a 2-minute video promoting the importance of ventilation, as research shows that being in a room with fresh air can reduce your risk of infection from particles by over 70%, as fresh air dilutes the particles.

As we spend more time indoors, [experts are recommending](#) that people either open windows for short, sharp bursts of 10 to 15 minutes regularly throughout the day or leave windows open a small amount continuously.

Testing and vaccine update

[Guidance on coronavirus testing](#), outlining who is eligible for a test and how to get tested has been updated.

More rapid Covid-19 tests continue to be rolled out across England and a [full list](#) of local authorities receiving these lateral flow tests is published Gov.UK.

The [Government has announced](#) that the UK has secured 5 million doses of the new Moderna vaccine which could be rolled out in Spring 2021. The Health Secretary [made a statement](#) earlier this week providing further details relating to the different vaccines on order.