

6 April 2020

Briefing Note

CECA Scotland Member Briefing:

COVID-19 - CECA SCOTLAND UPDATE

Introduction

CECA Scotland will be producing regular updates to keep member companies updated on new developments relating to the Covid-19 coronavirus and its impact on the Scottish civils sector. This briefing will be delivered daily by CECA Scotland over the weeks ahead. If you would like further information or to share your experiences about how COVID-19 is impacting on your business, contact Chief Executive Grahame Barn: 07976 199615 or grahame@cecascotland.co.uk.

Updated Scottish Government Guidance for Business on Social Distancing

On 4th April, the Scottish Government updated its guidance for businesses on social distancing to help provide clarity on protecting employees in the fight against coronavirus. The revised guidance asks all business workplaces not specifically required to close to consider **two key questions** and at all times work on a precautionary basis:

- Is what you do essential or material to the effort against the virus or to the well-being of society?
- Are you able to demonstrate and give confidence to your workforce that you can consistently practice safe social distancing and comply with ALL other standard health and safety requirements?

If the answer to either of the above questions is no, the advice is to close. The Scottish Government make clear also that [updated guidance](#) published today (6th April) by the UK Government "does not apply in Scotland". Until such time as further guidance is issued making clear what work activity can be undertaken safely, in a way that is fully compliant with social distancing, the Scottish Government have again repeated their guidance that "*non-essential workplaces, including construction sites, should close.*"

You can read the Cabinet Secretary's statement [here](#) and the **full updated Social Distancing guidance for business in Scotland** [here](#)

Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme

Over the weekend, the UK Government published an update to its [employer guidance](#) and [guidance for employees](#) on the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme. The updates provide more detailed

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information on scheme eligibility, further details of how to calculate a claim and clarification on what constitutes wages.

MacRoberts LLP have provided a useful briefing which you can read [here](#). In summary, it confirms:

- Apprentices can be furloughed along with other employees.
- Employees who stopped working for an employer on or after 28 February 2020 can be re-employed by them and put on Furlough Leave.
- Employees who are unable to work because they have caring responsibilities as a result of COVID-19 can be furloughed.
- Office Holders and Company Directors can be furloughed.

Business Loan Interruption Scheme

Following the changes to the scheme highlighted in our Daily Update on 3rd April, CECA Scotland Auditors Johnson Carmichael, have produced a [short blog](#) on what the changes will mean.

Easter Public Holidays: ACAS Guidance

As we approach the Easter Public holidays, ACAS have issued the following guidance in relation to employees who have been furloughed: <https://www.acas.org.uk/coronavirus/using-holiday>

Rules and regulations relaxed to support businesses

The UK Government has relaxed some rules and regulations to help businesses handle any Coronavirus disruption. You can read more details about business support measures [here](#).

CITB Update

CITB has approved SMSTS and SSSTS refresher courses through remote learning for Site Safety Plus training centres. You can find more out about this from your local centre through the [SSP course locator](#).

Pinsent Masons Webinars

CECA Scotland, in conjunction with Pinsent Masons, would like to offer our members access to the following webinars which look specifically at the issue's businesses face and practical steps that they can take. You can sign up via the following [sign up link](#).

- 8 April, 15:15-16:15: Covid-19 - what's going on around Europe?
- 16 April, 10:45-11:45: State aid in the time of Covid-19 and Brexit
- 17 April, 14:15-15:15: Resilience and mental health in the context of Covid-19
- 22 April, 14:45-15:45: Financial Distress and Covid-19

For more information please contact Grahame Barn on grahame@cecascotland.co.uk

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ACE Covid-19 Webinars

ACE has announced a new online webinar series to help its members and the wider industry through the coronavirus crisis. The webinars are open to anyone. Previous sessions can be viewed [here](#).

People in a Pandemic (07.04.20, 12.00pm)

Exploring the HR and people issues raised by the crisis such as remote working and staff morale.

Communicating in a Crisis (09.04.20, 1.30pm)

With special guest **Andy Walker**, editor of *Infrastructure Intelligence*, we will explore the steps you need to take to communicate effectively externally, internally and with stakeholders and clients. **Stuart Young**, BEIS joins us to help answer any questions.

Business Gateway Support

Weekly Webinars

Business Gateway are currently offer an extensive [weekly webinar programme](#) for businesses based in Scotland. Some courses of potential interest to CECA Scotland members are:

- 7 April - Accessing Finance (including Business Interruption Loan) Seminar: Sign up [here](#).
- 7 April - Keeping Your Business Safe Online: Sign up [here](#).
- 9 April - COVID-19: Why your Mindset will help you: Sign up [here](#).
- 10 April - Managing your Business Reputation: Sign up [here](#)

Useful Resources

Business Gateway have compiled details of all business support available in Scotland, including links to online guides and webinars on a range of issues including [Managing your Business Reputation](#), [Managing a Team Remotely](#), [Digital Boost Podcasts](#) and [Guidance for Business Owners](#). Full details can be accessed [here](#).

Scottish Government Advice

The Scottish Government's latest COVID-19 advice for businesses can be read here:

<https://findbusinesssupport.gov.scot/coronavirus-advice>.

For issues not dealt with on the website, call the Scottish Government [Helpline](#) on 0300 303 0660.

HMRC Tax Helpline: 0800 024 1222, open 8am-4pm, Monday to Friday.

UK Government Advice

UK wide guidance, detailing all Scottish and UK Government support for businesses operating here in Scotland can be read [here](#).

For more information please contact Grahame Barn on grahame@cecascotland.co.uk

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