

COVID-19 Protective Equipment Grant

Guidance



1. About this fund

To help local business open and operate safely and in compliance with government guidelines, Orkney Islands Council is providing a one-off grant of up to £500 to local businesses that serve the public and require additional protective equipment as a result of the Coronavirus. This grant is redeemable against evidence of expenditure on protective screens or other public safety equipment purchased since 23 March 2020 to individual properties (owners of multiple properties can apply for a grant of up to £500 per property)

2. Eligibility Criteria

This scheme is open to businesses who are not eligible for the 10% COVID-19 Business Support Top-up Grant (separate guidance on this is available at <https://www.orkney.gov.uk/Council/C/coronavirus-covid-19-information-for-businesses.htm>).

To be eligible for this grant the business or property must be in Orkney.

This grant is redeemable against evidence of expenditure on protective screens or other public safety equipment, such as:

- Purchase of protective screens
- Contractor fees associated with the erection of protective screens
- Sanitiser/soap dispensers
- Floor tape
- Safety signage
- Floor/window stickers
- Consumables such as soap/sanitising gel/paper towels

The following established business forms can apply:

- Sole trader;
- Partnership;
- Limited company;
- Social enterprise;
- Or any other legal business structure

3. Application Process

This fund will be open to applications until the **31 March 2021**.

Application is via an online form on the Council's website, and you will not be able to apply if you do not meet all of the eligibility criteria. You will then be sent an email instructing you to submit evidence/additional information in support of your application.

Once we receive your completed application form and supporting evidence, we will review your application as soon as possible and may contact you by email to request further information in order for a decision to be made.

Payment of successful applications, subject to supporting evidence, will be made directly to the nominated bank account.

If your application is rejected, you have a right to ask us to look at our decision again.

4. Supporting Evidence/Additional Information Required

After you have completed your online application, you will receive a follow up email requesting you to submit required supporting evidence/additional information – this is mandatory.

You can digitally copy the required evidence/information in different ways, but please remember, whatever way you copy them, be it a scan, photo or screenshot, we must be able to see all the information in the document.

The mandatory evidence/information required is:

- a) Proof of enterprise – one form of evidence e.g. bank statement in name of business, VAT registration number, company registration number, unique tax reference number, valid business insurance, marketing materials.
- b) Invoice or receipt for item of expenditure. Handwritten notes or receipts that do not detail what has been purchased are insufficient.
- c) Proof of payment such as bank or credit card statement - these must show account name, address, sort code and account number where appropriate. Transaction statements without this detail cannot be accepted.

5. Further Questions and Answers

- a) I have provided additional protective equipment for staff as a result of the Coronavirus. Is this eligible?**

This fund provides financial assistance for safety equipment for public-facing areas only to protect staff and customers.

- b) I don't have an invoice/receipt for all costs. Can I still include them?**

Payment can only be made against appropriate evidence of item of expenditure and proof of payment.

- c) I used items bought before the 23 March 2020. Can I still include them?**

This grant is only redeemable against expenditure on protective screens or other public safety equipment since 23 March 2020.

- d) I spent more than £500. Can I apply for more?**

A grant of up to a maximum of £500 per property is available.

e) I spent less than £500. Can I apply for more?

Only actual expenditure on eligible items can be reimbursed, therefore if you spend less than £500 your grant will be less.

f) Can I receive a grant upfront?

No, the grant can only be paid retrospectively.

g) I made an application for less than £500, but have now bought more. Can I apply again until I reach the £500 limit?

As this is a one-off grant, if you believe you may purchase more that you hold back applying. This fund is open until 31 March 2021

h) Do I have to repay the grant?

No, this is a grant and not a loan so does not need to be repaid. However, your application is subject to future audit and if any part is subsequently found to be incorrect you may be required to repay the grant. If you are found to have knowingly provided false information you could be subject to fraud referral.

i) Can I include the VAT?

You can include VAT if you are not VAT registered. VAT registered businesses should not include the VAT element of any costs.

j) Is the grant taxable?

Yes, you should declare any grant received as income for the tax year in which it was received.

k) I still have a question, what should I do?

Please email your question to economic.development@orkney.gov.uk.