Covid Pandemic:

Covid Financial Support Guide

for fishing and seafood businesses

Updated 22/02/21

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Marine Management Organisation …ambitious for our seas and coasts

As England’s marine manager, our vision is for a prosperous future for our seas, coasts and communities.

MMO is here to help and provide support for our marine development and fishing industries and protect our precious marine environment. To support our industries, we have collated this guide to the advice and support available to businesses at this time.

We continue to provide all our services in a Covid-safe manner, including inspections at sea or on shore at licensed sites. You can contact us by phone or email in our coastal offices around the country at https://www.gov.uk/contact-local-marine-management-organisation.

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Covid finance support

Government has announced enhanced financial support for the seafood industry with cash grants for seafood and aquaculture businesses across the UK.

Defra has expanded the eligibility criteria to the £23 million Seafood Disruption Support Scheme (SDSS) for seafood exporters that suffered a financial loss because of delays related to the export of fresh or live fish and shellfish to the EU during January 2021.

This Seafood Response Fund (SRF) will target catching and shellfish aquaculture businesses which have been affected by a reduction in demand from the hospitality sector in the UK and abroad, as well as disruption of exports to the EU. The MMO will be administering both schemes and will contact eligible businesses in phases with payments made in March.

Safe working practices

The Government has published guidance on the national restrictions applying from 5 January 2021 including safe working practices for employers, employees and self-employed people on working safely during the pandemic.

The Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA) has published guidance to minimise the risk to ship’s crew and steps to be taken by vessel owners and at ports.

Public Health England, the Department for Transport and MCA provide guidance for shipping and sea ports on steps to be taken by vessel owners and at ports.

The National Federation of Fishermen’s Organisations (NFFO) has created a check-list risk assessment for fishing vessel owners and skippers.

Further UK Government guides also contain information relevant to fishing vessel operators to help ensure crew are as safe as possible. They are Construction and other outdoor work; Vehicles. There is also information for businesses involved in food processing, packaging, storage and transport on this link.

Self-employment Income Support

To make a claim for the third grant your business must have had a new or continuing impact from coronavirus between 1 November 2020 and 29 January 2021, which you reasonably believe will have a significant reduction in your profits.

The third taxable grant is worth 80% of your average monthly trading profits, paid out in a single installment covering 3 months’ worth of profits, and capped at £7,500 in total.

For eligibility criteria and guidance, please click here
Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme

Find out if you’re eligible and how much you can claim to cover wages for employees on temporary leave (‘furlough’) due to coronavirus. The Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme has been extended until 30 April 2021. Claims for furlough days in December 2020 must be made by 14 January 2021. You can no longer submit claims for claim periods ending on or before 31 October 2020.

For more guidance, please [click here](#) or call 0300 456 3556

Universal Credit

Universal Credit has removed the Minimum Income Floor which makes it easier for self-employed people to access this benefit. Self-employed earners may be eligible for either new style Job Seekers Allowance (JSA) or Universal Credit or both. People can apply for either or both benefits online at GOV.UK

For more guidance on universal credit, please [click here](#) or you can call 0800 328 5644

Statutory Sick Pay Rebate

Small and medium-sized businesses will be able to reclaim Statutory Sick Pay (SSP) paid for staff sickness absence due to coronavirus.

For more guidance, please [click here](#)

Income Tax

The deadlines for paying your tax bills are usually January and July. Due to the Coronavirus, you can delay making your second payment until January 2021.

For guidance on time to pay, please [click here](#) or call 0300 456 3565

Small business Rate Relief

Business Rates Relief for small businesses, applicable if the business operates from a property.

For guidance on time to pay, please [click here](#)

Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme

This scheme will help businesses who have immediate cash-flow issues. The scheme will be delivered through commercial lenders, backed by the Government-owned British Business Bank. Please note that as of 17 December, the Government has announced that the Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme (CBILS) will be extended until 31 March 2021.

For guidance, please [click here](#) or you can call 0300 456 3565
Support for UK businesses trading internationally

If your supply chain has been affected by coronavirus DIT may be able to help you to find alternative suppliers.

For more guidance on international supply chains, please click here.

Support to continue trading with EU

The Fish Export Service provides catch certificates, storage and processing documents enabling export of fish. The new digital service is supported by a dedicated exports helpline, 0330 159 1989, which is available 24/7 with a team of expert advisers on hand to provide technical guidance and answer questions on the export process.

We have also produced a easy-to-follow guidance for exporting processes and signposted to a single reference point for all currently available guidance to continue trading with the EU.

How to sell your catch direct

If you wish to sell privately, private buyers can purchase up to 30 kg of fish caught from a licensed fishing vessel for private consumption. Restaurants and commercial buyers are required to be registered.

For more guidance on marketing initiatives please see the government website by clicking here.

Marine licensing services

We continue to provide a full service, accepting and making decisions on applications for marine licences and monitoring compliance with consents. If you have a marine licence that is due to expire before 31 March 2021 and have been impacted by Covid restrictions, we will discuss the possibility of extending your licence to enable the completion of works.

We will continue to work with licence holders, completing ‘desktop’ inspections, or undertaking site visits where it is safe to do so.

Any businesses facing difficulties with licence payments should contact us direct to discuss the options.
## Welfare support available to fishers

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<th>ORGANISATION</th>
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| Fishermen's Mission                              | Offering emergency financial support for the maintenance of the basics of life, and providing pastoral care  
For further information, please [click here](#).                                                                                                                                                  |
| Seafarers' Advice and Information Line (SAIL)    | Part of Citizen Advice Bureau (CAB) offering specialised advice for fishers, including independent, financial advice on benefit entitlement, HMRC issues, debt, charity grants and housing.  
For further information, please [click here](#) or you can email advice@sailine.org.uk |
| Seafarers' Hospital Society                      | Offering health, welfare and advice to merchant seafarers and fishers' families.  
For further information, please [click here](#) or you can email admin@seahospital.org.uk                                                                                                           |
| Togetherall (formerly Big White Wall)            | A confidential 24/7 online mental health and wellbeing advice and support service provided by the Seafarers Hospital Society  
For further information, please [click here](#) or you can ring 0208 856 3696                                                                                                             |
| Seafarer Support                                 | Guides serving and former UK seafarers and their families towards relevant help in times of need.  
For further information, please [click here](#) or you can ring 0800 121 4765                                                                                                               |
MMO Contacts

General: info@marinemanagement.org.uk // Helpline: 0300 123 1032

Fisheries Management & Control: fishingvessellicensing@marinemanagement.org.uk

Catch Recording Helpline: 0300 0203 788

Fish Export Service: 0330 159 1989

Marine Planning: planning@marinemanagement.org.uk // Helpline: 0208 0265 325

Marine Licensing: marine.consents@marinemanagement.org.uk // Tel: 0191 376 2791

MMO Local Offices: Please visit our website.