

East Cambridgeshire District Council Additional Restrictions Grant Scheme Round 8

An 8th round of the Additional Restrictions Grant (ARG) scheme has been launched to support businesses severely impacted by coronavirus restrictions and the rise of the Omicron variant.

The ARG is a discretionary funding scheme for local authorities to support businesses in their local economies during periods of lockdown relating to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Eligible businesses

This grant scheme is for businesses in the following sectors with fixed business costs who experienced a significant loss of income (over 30%) directly related to/as a result of coronavirus restrictions and the rise of the Omicron variant for the four-week period from 13th December 2021 – 9th January 2022.

Businesses who are eligible for or have received the new government Omicron Hospitality and Leisure grant are NOT eligible to apply for this one-off discretionary grant

Hospitality (non-business rate payers only)	a business whose main function is to provide a venue for the consumption and sale of food and drink.
Leisure (non-business rate payers only)	a business that provides opportunities, experiences and facilities, in particular for culture, recreation, entertainment, celebratory events and days and nights out.
Accommodation (non-business rate payers only)	a business whose main lodging provision is used for holiday, travel or other purposes.
Travel and tourism sector (business rate payers and non-business rate payers)	including group travel, travel agents and tour operators, coach operators, English language schools
Personal Care (business rate payers and non-business rate payers)	a business which provides a service, treatment or activity for the purposes of personal beauty, hair, grooming, body care and aesthetics, and wellbeing, gyms and other sports related activities not eligible for the Omicron Hospitality and Leisure grant
Supply chain (business rate payers and non-business rate payers)	Wedding industries, events industries, wholesalers, breweries, freelance and mobile businesses (including caterers, events, hair, beauty and wedding related businesses), non-essential retail, essential retail, taxi drivers, catteries and kennels, accommodation support services, food kiosks and businesses whose main service is a takeaway

In order to be eligible for a grant under this scheme, businesses must also:

- (For businesses with fixed premises) be operating from premises located within East Cambridgeshire or (for mobile businesses), be based at a home address within East Cambridgeshire and operate within the district.
- Have experienced a significant loss of income (over 30%) directly related to/as a result of coronavirus restrictions and the rise of the Omicron variant for the four-week period from 13th December 2021 – 9th January 2022.
- Be able to demonstrate that they have had ongoing fixed business costs, for example, rent or other costs that they have had to meet for the four-week period from 13th December 2021 – 9th January 2022.
- Have been open and providing services to customers during the four-week period from 13th December 2021 – 9th January 2022.

Applicants must be able to demonstrate one or more of the following:

- The public are required to enter the business premises to purchase goods/services.
- They are able to demonstrate that trade has dropped due to an inability to deliver consumer services (that cannot be delivered online) to customers due to coronavirus restrictions and the rise of the Omicron variant.
- They supply/trade with businesses that have been impacted by coronavirus restrictions and the rise of the Omicron variant.
- Their supplier/s were impacted by coronavirus restrictions and the rise of the Omicron variant
- Businesses in the events sector who can demonstrate that they have lost income due to not being able to attend events due to be held during the four-week period from 13th December 2021 – 9th January 2022.

Businesses will be required to provide evidence of their fixed property costs, business related costs and loss of income.

Ineligible businesses

- Businesses that are able to continue to trade because they do not depend on providing direct in-person services from premises and can operate their services effectively remotely.
- Financial Services (e.g. bank), Medical Services (e.g. vets, dentist), Professional Services (e.g. solicitor), Estate & Letting Agents and Post Office sorting offices are not eligible for grants.
- Businesses whose primary function is not to provide goods/services to members of the public within their premises (e.g. office and manufacturing businesses).
- Businesses that have not been able to demonstrate a significant loss of income (at least 30%) due to coronavirus restrictions and the rise of the Omicron variant
- Land/premises used for storage or for personal use.
- Empty premises.
- Businesses that have exceeded the permitted Subsidy Allowance.
- Companies that are in administration, are insolvent or where a striking-off notice has been made.
- Businesses and individuals eligible to receive the eligible for or have received the new government Omicron Hospitality and Leisure grant are NOT eligible to apply for this one-off discretionary grant

Applications are restricted to one application per person per premises.

Applicants/businesses who have received the Omicron Hospitality and Leisure grant for a different business cannot claim under this scheme.

Subsidy Allowance

There are three subsidy allowances for the COVID-19 Business Grant Schemes:

- Small Amounts of Financial Assistance Allowance – you're allowed up to £335,000 (subject to exchange rates) over any period of 3 years
- COVID-19 Business Grant Allowance – you're allowed up to £1,900,000
- COVID-19 Business Grant Special Allowance - if you have reached your limits under the Small Amounts of Financial Assistance Allowance and COVID-19 Business Grant Allowance, you may be able to access a further allowance of funding under these scheme rules of up to £10,000,000, provided certain conditions are met.

For more information about COVID-19 Business Grant Subsidy Allowances, please visit

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1044354/omicron-hospitality-and-leisure-grant-guidance.pdf

How much funding will be provided to businesses?

This is a one-off grant.

Grant awards are discretionary and will be calculated on an individual basis, based on the amount of funding available, with payment amounts to be between £250 and £6,000.

The amount awarded will be determined by the nature of the premises from which the business operates and the level of loss of income experienced directly related to/as a result of coronavirus restrictions and the rise of the Omicron variant for the four-week period from 13th December 2021 – 9th January 2022.

Nature of business – grant amounts:

- Lower amount: For eligible businesses run from domestic premises in East Cambridgeshire and community facilities.
- Medium amount: For eligible businesses in commercial premises but who are not the business rate payer.
- Higher amount: For eligible businesses in commercial premises who are the business rate payer.

Loss of income - grant amounts:

- Lower amount: For businesses that experienced a loss of income of 30-50%
- Medium amount: For businesses that experienced a loss of income of 51 – 70%
- Higher amount: For businesses that experienced a loss of income of 71+%

Applications will be assessed on a first come first served basis. Incorrect applications and those with incomplete evidence will only be accepted when all the information required has been received by the Council.

Tax implications

Grant income received by a business is taxable. The Omicron Hospitality and Leisure Grant will need to be included as income in the tax return of the business. Only businesses that make an overall profit once grant income is included will be subject to tax.

Payments made to businesses before 5 April 2022 will fall into the 2021/22 tax year. Unincorporated businesses will be taxed when they receive the grant income.

Managing the risk of fraud and payments in error

The Government will not accept deliberate manipulation and fraud. Any business caught falsifying their records to gain additional grant money will face prosecution and any funding issued will be recovered, as may any grants paid in error. All information is subject to internal and external audit checks.

Data protection/sharing

The Council is required by law to protect the public funds we administer. We may share information provided to us with other bodies responsible for auditing or administering public funds, or where undertaking a public function, in order to prevent and detect fraud. Further information can be found at: <https://www.eastcambs.gov.uk/content/data-protection-policy-and-guidance>

Data may be shared with the department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS). The BEIS privacy notice, setting out how BEIS will handle personal data across all COVID-19 business grant schemes, can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-grant-schemes-privacy-notice/covid-19-grant-schemes-privacy-notice>

The closing date for applications is 5pm on Friday 11 February 2022 or earlier if all funding is awarded before this date.