

COVID-19: BUSINESS RATES RELIEFS & APPEALS

The Chancellor has set out a package of temporary business rates reliefs and grants in order to support businesses through the period of disruption caused by COVID-19. In addition, there are existing reliefs in place and an appeals process that can be utilised to minimise your liability during this difficult period:

Expanded Retail Discount: All occupied* retail, hospitality and leisure properties will be eligible for the 'expanded retail discount'. This will ensure these sectors pay no Business Rates for 12 months (2020/21). There is no Rateable Value threshold for the relief. This relief would normally be subject to EU state aid rules with a maximum amount of 200,000 euros per business (£185,000) for any 3 year period. The Government has however notified the EU of its intention to bring forward an immediate change to the UK's tax treatment of non-domestic property. Local Authorities are preparing to award the discount, subject to EU notification.

* Properties that are closed temporarily due to the government's advice on Covid-19 should be treated as occupied for the purposes of this relief.

Grants: Businesses in England who qualify for small business rates relief will be eligible for a grant of £10,000. Retail, Hospitality and Leisure businesses with a rateable value between £ 15,000 and below £ 51,000 will be eligible for grants of £ 25,000.

Empty Rates Relief: If your property becomes vacant (staff, files, goods removed) and it is not already benefitting from the 'expanded retail discount', we will look to apply for three months Empty Rates Relief on your behalf. Please notify us of the date the property became vacant and we will make the application with the Billing Authority.

Partial Empty Rates Relief: If your property becomes partially vacant (due to staff sickness or working from home), we will look to apply for partial Empty Rates Relief on your behalf. This relief is applied at the discretion of the Local Authority, with a maximum three month relief on the vacant area. Please provide details of the vacant area along with the dates.

Material Change Appeals: We believe the impact of Covid-19 on businesses, such as the reduction in footfall and the increase in vacant properties has resulted in a Material Change. This constitutes grounds to appeal your Rateable Value and we will be making representations on your behalf with the Valuation Office Agency. A successful appeal will result in a temporary reduction in your Rateable Value for the period of the pandemic.

The Knight Frank Business Rates Team is here to assist you with these matters during this difficult period. If you require further information, please do not hesitate to contact us: -

National Enquiry Desk:

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