

LAY OFFS AND SHORT-TERM WORKING

Statutory sick pay

Legislation is being brought in to allow small-and medium-sized businesses and employers to reclaim Statutory Sick Pay (SSP) paid for sickness absence due to COVID-19. The eligibility criteria for the scheme will be as follows:

- the refund will cover up to 2 weeks' SSP per eligible employee who has been off work because of COVID-19
- employers with fewer than 250 employees will be eligible - the size of an employer will be determined by the number of people they employed as of 28 February 2020
- employers will be able to reclaim expenditure for any employee who has claimed SSP (according to the new eligibility criteria) as a result of COVID-19
- employers should maintain records of staff absences and payments of SSP, but employees will not need to provide a GP fit note
- eligible period for the scheme will commence the day after the regulations on the extension of SSP to those staying at home comes into force
- the government will work with employers over the coming months to set up the repayment mechanism for employers as soon as possible

Eligibility

You are eligible for the scheme if:

1. Your business is UK based.
2. Your business is a small or medium-sized and employs fewer than 250 employees as of 28 February 2020.

How to access the scheme

A rebate scheme is being developed. Further details are at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-to-employers-and-businesses-about-covid-19/covid-19-support-for-businesses#support-for-businesses-who-are-paying-sick-pay-to-employees>

Statutory guarantee payments

Employees are entitled to these if you do not provide them with a full day's work during the time they'd normally be required to work.

The maximum payment is £29 a day for 5 days in any 3 months (ie £145). If employees usually earn less than £29 a day, they'll get their usual daily rate. For part-time workers, the rate is worked out proportionally. The rate is due to increase to £30 per day from 6 April 2020.

More information is available at <https://archive.acas.org.uk/index.aspx?articleid=1639>