

ACRE Briefing for village and community halls COVID-19 update January 2022

Omicron Hospitality and Leisure Grant

Details of the new grant scheme to support the hospitality and leisure sector in England were announced on 31st December 2021, called the Omicron Hospitality and Leisure Grant (OHLG). One-off grants are available to businesses and organisations on the rating valuation list (as with previous Hospitality and Leisure Grants). Village halls, scout halls and similar premises are included in the list of eligible leisure businesses/organisations at Annex A of the guidance to local authorities. Local authorities have discretion to make awards to other similar businesses/organisations not listed. Grants are based on rateable value:

- Businesses/organisations with a rateable value of £15,000 or under on 30 December 2021 will receive £2,667.
- Businesses with a rateable value over £15,000 and less than £51,000 on 30 December 2021 will receive £4,000.
- Businesses with a rateable value of £51,000 or over on 30 December 2021 will receive £6,000.

Sections 22 and 23 of the guidance to local authorities explains that where premises are not used wholly for an eligible purpose an award should be based on the “main service principle”, whichever use forms 50% or more of the overall income. This may affect awards to halls which host a service such as a community shop or Pre-School in a defined part of the premises. Those with a Social Club selling alcohol should be eligible as the Social Club would fall within the list of eligible hospitality businesses. Decisions will be at the discretion of local authorities, which are expected to exercise reasonable judgement. All businesses will be required to self-certify that they meet all eligibility criteria and local authorities must verify the evidence provided as part of prepayment checks. It is expected that Local Authorities will provide local businesses with grant funding as soon as possible.

The application closure date for this scheme is 28 February 2022.

Grants cannot be awarded or offers issued after this date.

For further information see:

COVID-19 business grant funding schemes: guidance for local authorities - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk).

Coronavirus Additional Restrictions Grant

The Additional Restrictions Grant scheme is again available to support businesses and organisations which do not qualify for other forms of support such as the Hospitality and Leisure Grant. Church halls, Sports and Social Clubs which do not have a rating valuation of their own may be eligible. Grants are at the discretion of the local authority, to whom any enquiries should be directed.

For more information see:

Check if you're eligible for the coronavirus Additional Restrictions Grant.

Face coverings and schoolchildren

Government guidance for Out of School settings has been amended as follows to cover the (hopefully short term) requirement that secondary school pupils wear face coverings. "From 4 January, we also recommend that face coverings should be worn in classrooms or during indoor activities by adults and children aged 11 and above. This does not apply in situations where wearing a face covering would impact on the ability to take part in exercise or strenuous activity, for example during sports." The general requirement to wear face coverings when moving around within a Village Hall or Community Centre also applies to those aged over 11.

For more information see:

Protective measures for holiday or after-school clubs and other out-of-school settings for children during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak

Self-isolation period and work at home guidance – updated Government guidance from 22 December

the 10-day self-isolation period for people who have tested positive for COVID-19 was reduced to 7 days where a negative lateral flow test is given on two

consecutive days, 24 hours apart. This change, together with the advice to work at home where possible and on mandatory face coverings, has been incorporated into new versions of Government guidance for those at work, for grassroots sports, weddings, wedding receptions and similar events.

Statutory Sick Pay Rebate Scheme

This Scheme is being re- introduced. For more information about how this affects employees affected by Covid-19 see: Claim back Statutory Sick Pay paid to your employees due to coronavirus (COVID-19) - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk).

Any advice or information provided here should not be taken as a substitute for professional legal or other advice.

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