

CARF (Covid-19 Additional Relief Fund) Guidelines

On December 15th 2021 the Government announced a new COVID-19 Additional Relief Fund (CARF).

The fund is available to support those businesses affected by the pandemic but that are ineligible for existing support linked to business rates.

The Governments published guidance on this scheme can be viewed at [CARF Guidance.docx \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#), as this is a local discretionary scheme each local authority will design their scheme based on their local area and requirements.

Eligibility

The CARF scheme is targeted at businesses that have had a negative financial impact due to Covid-19 over the 2019/20 and 2020/21 financial years.

The Council will not consider CARF relief if your business

- Has received rate relief for the same period or would have been eligible for the Extended Retail Discount (covering Retail, Hospitality and Leisure), the Nursery Discount or the Airport and Ground Operations Support Scheme (AGOSS),
- is unoccupied (other than hereditaments which have become closed temporarily due to the government's advice on COVID-19, which should be treated as occupied for the purposes of this relief)
- Is not trading
- Is insolvent, in administration or have a voluntary arrangement
- does not directly employ staff to deliver a service (individual car parking spaces, communication masts etc)
- Is a Public Body

How will CARF be provided?

All awards will be provided in the form of rates relief and will be provided for the 2021/22 financial year only.

The overall award cannot exceed 100% of the liability of business rates for this financial year, therefore where the property is currently in receipt of additional relief the award will be based against the remaining liability.

If payment has been made prior to the relief being provided then a refund will be processed once details have been obtained, if the local authority is unable to process a refund within 3 months the credit will be transferred to your liability for 2022/23.

The application process

An application window will be open until 18th March, further applications can be made upon contact until **30th June** or until the funding has been met.

Once the funding has been met this scheme will close, any future application will be refused.

Contact can be made to businessrates@southworcestershireveues.gov.uk with the title "CARF Relief Application"

Within this application process you will be asked to provide a percentage of income loss, the local authority may require an applicant to provide evidence of this loss.

How much funding will be provided?

As this is a discretionary fund the local authority retains the right to adjust the funding percentage provided dependant on the value remaining within the budget.

Standard cases will be reviewed using the table below

Losses Between	Minimum Award
5% - 30%	70%
30% - 50%	80%
50% - 70%	90%
70% +	100%

Applications that meet specific criteria will be reviewed on a case by case basis and may be eligible for up to 100% relief with a cap at £200,000.

This criteria will consider if the staff employed is above 10, rateable value of the property is above 51,000 and the whether they are a direct link of supply to hospitality, retail, tourism and events.

Recalculation of relief

Any subsequent change to your liability at the property that reduces your liability for 2021/22 may result in a repayment of relief provided. If a change in circumstances renders a property ineligible the relevant bill may be amended to reflect the loss of relief.

Subsidy Allowance

The CARF scheme is subject to the subsidies chapter within the UK-EU Trade and Cooperation Agreement (TCA).

Further details of subsidy control can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-additional-relief-fund-carf-local-authority-guidance>

Managing Fraud

The Government and Worcester City Council will not tolerate any business falsifying their records or providing false evidence to gain this discount, including claiming support above these thresholds. A ratepayer who falsely applies for any relief, or provides false information or makes false representation in order to gain relief may be guilty of fraud under the Fraud Act 2006.