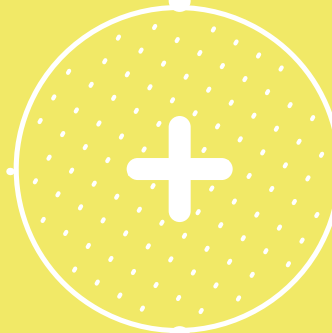


COVID-19 (Coronavirus) Business Response Plan

Enterprise Ireland supports for business



*This document is intended to provide best
practice guidelines rather than specific client advice*

Foreword

Enterprise Ireland has a number of supports available to help businesses mitigate the impact of Covid-19 (Coronavirus).

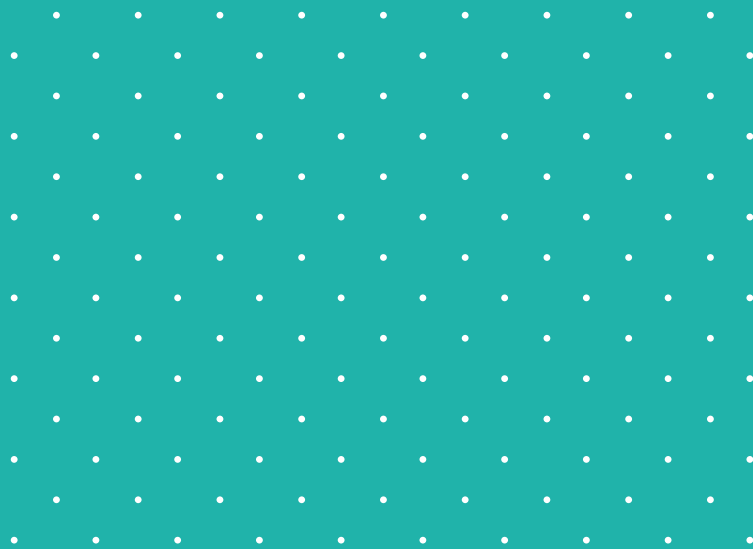
Enterprise Ireland is working with Local Enterprise Offices and all government stakeholders to ensure that businesses are prepared and informed on the most up-to-date advice and supports available.

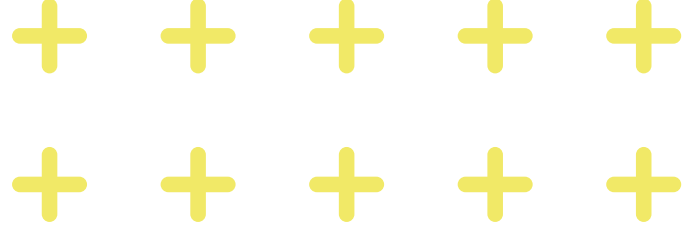
Our over-riding advice for Irish businesses is to review the travel risk advice by the Department of Foreign Affairs www.dfat.ie, the health advice from the Department of Health www.hse.ie/eng/ and global advice from the World Health Organisation www.who.int

Enterprise Ireland will update this document to reflect new developments as they arise and current information is also available on our website www.enterprise-ireland.com. We would also advise companies to visit the [Department of Business, Enterprise and Innovation website](#) - and review the business continuity checklist guide available [here](#).

On all issues relating to this and for clients who have queries email clientresponse@enterprise-ireland.com or speak to your development advisor.

March 12th 2020





Introduction

Following the statement by an Taoiseach on 12th March in relation to the Irish Government's response to Covid-19 and the announcement by Government of a series of supports in response to Covid-19, Enterprise Ireland has published this guide to assist affected companies in transitioning through the immediate and critical challenges that Covid-19 presents and to outline the relevant supports available to business.

Specific supports include;

- A €200m Package for Enterprise Supports including a Rescue and Restructuring Scheme available through Enterprise Ireland for viable but vulnerable firms that need to restructure or transform their businesses, details of these supports are being finalised
- A €200m Strategic Banking Corporation of Ireland (SBCI) Working Capital scheme for eligible businesses impacted by COVID-19, further information can be found [here](#)
- A Short Time Work Support is available from the Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection and is an income support payment for employees who have been temporarily placed on a shorter working week and is intended to help employers during periods of temporary difficulty. Further details at www.gov.ie/stws
- The COVID-19 Pandemic Unemployment Payment is available from the Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection and will be available to all employees and the self-employed who have lost employment due to a downturn in economic activity caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. The payment has a one-page application form and will be paid for a period of 6 weeks at a flat rate payment of €203 per week for jobseekers. More information can be found [here](#)
- “Finance in focus” grant of up to €7,200 available to Enterprise Ireland and Údarás na Gaeltachta clients to support financial planning

Other Enterprise Ireland/Local Enterprise Office supports including:

- Strategic Consultancy Grant for SMEs to assist the company development of a strategic response plan
- Act On Initiative, providing access to two days consultancy engagement at no extra cost to assess Financial Management, Strategic sourcing and transport and logistics advice
- Key Manager Support to provide partial funding towards the recruiting of a Full or Part time Manager with critical skills for future growth
- Agile Innovation Fund and Operational Excellence Offer
- Be Prepared Grant for contingency planning
- The Business Process Improvement Grant is used to support short to medium term company projects that improve efficiencies and business process improvements. Specific E-marketing support is available through this grant to develop and enhance your company's capability to use the internet as an effective channel for business development. Further information can be found [here](#) or by contacting ebusiness@enterprise-ireland.com
- Vouchers for business continuity preparedness, innovation and productivity will be available through Local Enterprise Offices in every local authority area (www.localenterprise.ie)
- The Credit Guarantee Scheme is a government supported product from the banks for small and medium businesses who have difficulty borrowing from their bank. Businesses can apply for loans of up to €1 million at AIB, Bank of Ireland or Ulster Bank. Loans can be for terms of up to seven years. The scheme provides an 80% guarantee to participating banks which are AIB, Bank of Ireland and Ulster Bank.
- Enterprise Ireland Market Research Centre offers client companies access to market intelligence in the form of company, sector, market and country information. The Market Research Centre can also offer assistance in scoping out information needs and highlighting resources and many resources can be sent to clients under legal agreements with providers.
You can access the resources available at the Market Research Centre [here](#) and identify report titles online [here](#)
Clients are invited to contact the Enterprise Ireland Market Research Centre via the dedicated MRC email: market.research@enterprise-ireland.com
- Additional financial supports are available locally through the 31 Local Enterprise Offices (www.localenterprise.ie) and Microfinance Ireland (www.microfinanceireland.ie). The maximum loan available from Microfinance Ireland will be increased from €25,000 to €50,000 as an immediate measure to specifically deal with exceptional circumstances that micro-enterprises are facing.
- Visit www.enterprise-ireland.com/businessresponse for further details on the above supports.

Enterprise Ireland is here to assist Irish businesses to deal with this significant challenge, now and in the longer term.

For further information on the supports outlined in this guide, contact the Business Response Unit at clientresponse@enterprise-ireland.com or speak to your Development Advisor.



The health and safety of our staff, clients and buyers around the world is paramount. Therefore, Enterprise Ireland has put together this document to provide some potential steps companies can take to prepare and help mitigate the impact of COVID-19.

What is Covid-19?

COVID-19 belongs to a family of viruses known as the Coronaviruses, which can cause illnesses ranging from the common cold to more severe diseases, such as the Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) and Middle East Respiratory Syndrome.

What are the typical symptoms of Covid-19?

The symptoms of COVID-19 are similar to that of regular pneumonia. Typical symptoms include fever, runny nose, sore throat, cough and shortness of breath.

If you have these symptoms and have been in an affected area or in contact with a confirmed case, read this advice from the Health Service Executive (HSE)

How is COVID-19 spread?

Coronavirus is spread in sneeze or cough droplets.

You could get the virus if you:



- **come into close contact with someone who has the virus and is coughing or sneezing**
- **touch surfaces that someone who has the virus has coughed or sneezed on**

The virus may only survive a few hours if someone who has it coughs or sneezes on a surface. Simple household disinfectants can kill the virus on surfaces. Clean the surface first and then use a disinfectant.

The HSE Coronavirus fact sheet can be referenced at the back of this document and printed off for your premises.

Protect yourself from Covid-19



Wash your hands regularly



Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or your sleeve when you cough and sneeze



Put used tissues into a bin and wash your hands



Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces



Follow the travel advice from the Department of Foreign Affairs

DON'T



Do not touch your eyes nose or mouth if your hands are not clean

What should I do if I think my staff or I have been in contact with a person who has Covid-19?

Anyone who may have been in contact with a person who has COVID-19, or who has been to an affected area in the last 14 days, is advised to contact HSE Live (1850 24 1850, <https://www.hse.ie/eng/hselive/>). If you are unwell with a cough, especially with respiratory symptoms (e.g. cough, high temperature, shortness of breath, difficulty breathing, fever) you should isolate yourself immediately and phone your GP.



Key Business Responses

Enterprise Ireland is advising companies to be prepared and avail of supports for their business in the following areas which may be impacted by Covid-19.

1. People management
2. Business processes and operations management
3. Supply Chain management
4. Communications - internal and external management

Covid-19 will have short and long term business impacts. Planning for operational resilience is key to alleviating any effects on your business, workforce, supply chain and customers.

BENEFITS OF BEING PREPARED:

- Minimises impact upon staff
- Minimises impact on organisational supply chain
- Minimises impact on service
- Minimises impact on IT infrastructure
- Reduces financial impact
- Protects reputation



1. People Management

An individual should be appointed to ensure that employees are familiar with the business continuity plans and comply with them during this period. The roles and responsibilities of the person acting as Business Continuity Manager could include some, or all, of the following:

- Actively monitor development of the virus outbreak and liaise with Management to disseminate information as it becomes available
- Monitor all relevant websites including www.hse.ie, www.dfat.ie and www.who.int
- Inform employees on the business continuity plans and safety measures being put in place
- Ensure there is an up-to-date list of all employees contact details and emergency numbers and a way to communicate quickly with staff (sms etc)
- Put in place quarantine procedure for employees traveling or who have traveled to affected areas (14 days) and put in place flexible working arrangements
- Ensure all employees follow travel advice from the Department of Foreign Affairs
- Ensure that the workplace has adequate supplies of tissue paper/hand towels and disinfectants
- Ensure common areas e.g. pantries, washrooms, meeting rooms, are disinfected regularly
- Put in place a plan in the scenario of key staff being affected
- Avail of relevant HR supports if you are a member of any industry representative bodies

KEY SUPPORT

Short time work support

Short time work support is available from the Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection and is an income support payment for employees who have been temporarily placed on a shorter working week, due to business challenges affecting their employment. It is intended to help employers during periods of temporary difficulty, without resorting to permanent layoffs. Employer and employee application forms and more detail can be found at www.gov.ie/stws

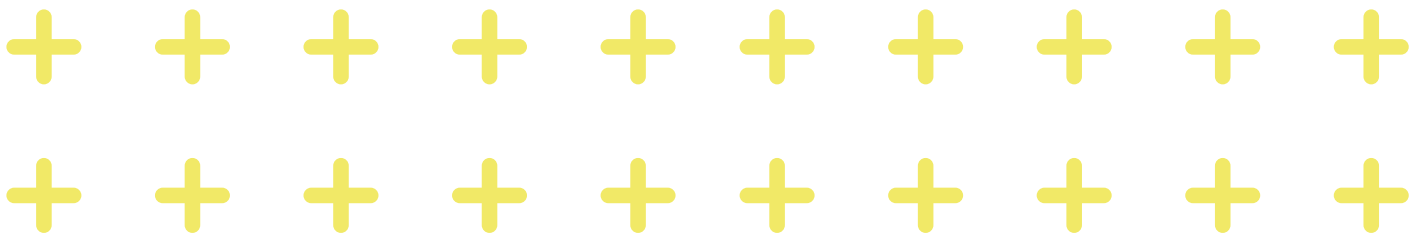
The COVID-19 Pandemic Unemployment Payment

The COVID-19 Pandemic Unemployment Payment is available from the Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection and will be available to all employees and the self-employed who have lost employment due to a downturn in economic activity caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. The payment has a one-page application form and will be paid for a period of 6 weeks at a flat rate payment of €203 per week for jobseekers. More information can be found [here](#)

Employees can also apply for Short-time Work Support at their local Intreo Centre or Branch Office – local Intreo Centre can be found at www.gov.ie/deasp

Enterprise Ireland Key Manager / Part Time Key Manager Support

The aim of this initiative is to provide partial funding towards the cost of recruiting a Full Time or Part Time Key Manager with skills that are critical to the future growth of the client. The Part Time Key Manager grant has been introduced in order to support companies to attract senior leadership talent by offering more flexible working arrangements. For further details visit [here](#)



2. Business Process and operations Management

Identify critical business functions (prioritised activities) and essential employees needed to carry out essential operations of the business and take steps including:

- Consider the operations that could be at risk due to COVID-19
- Identify the employees / teams required to implement essential operations
- Set up a register of essential functions and designate an 'alternate employee' who could implement essential operations if required and train the 'alternate employee' to undertake the operations by shadowing the employee who is responsible for the areas
- Examine the extent to which others will be dependent on your business due to COVID-19
- Provide ICT infrastructure to facilitate remote working
- Consider the possible impact of employee absences
- Consider the financial management implications due to COVID-19
- Review all business travel and ensure travel policy is adhered to. Put in place remote meeting technology to conduct meetings online, where possible
- Establish authorities, triggers and procedures for implementation of business continuity plan

KEY SUPPORT

€200m Strategic Banking Corporation of Ireland (SBCI) Working Capital scheme

For eligible businesses impacted by COVID-19, further information can be found [here](#)

Finance in Focus Support

The Finance in Focus grant offers Enterprise Ireland and Údarás na Gaeltachta clients funding of up to €7,200 to cover third party consultant's fees. These consultants will work with the clients to develop a detailed financial and business plan that identifies funding needs and potential sources of funding.

Strategic Consultancy Grant

The grant supports the hiring of a strategic consultant for SME's typically over a longer period to assist the company in the development and/or the implementation of strategic initiatives. It is designed to facilitate business growth as the consultants can act as coach, mentor, facilitator, analyst for the company.

Be Prepared Grant for Contingency Planning

The Be Prepared Grant is designed for Enterprise Ireland clients who would benefit from further research and external expertise in examining their exposure to Covid-19 and exploring ways of addressing this. The grant offers up to €5,000 or 50% of the total cost in financial support.

3. Supplier and Customer Management

Ensure that measures are taken to ensure continuity of supply chain and customers including, proactively tracking additional costs resulting from business continuity activities related to the virus, preparing for budget impacts and margin pressures.

Companies who do not have a well-defined plan in place are at an elevated risk of delayed response and recovery and supply chains that operate just in time (JIT) or hold limited inventory are likely to be disproportionately impacted.

- Build up inventory where possible to mitigate any shortages
- Keep an active management focus on inventory levels
- Prioritise high-revenue or high-profit margin products whilst mapping the geographical spread of the virus to locations of critical suppliers
- Identify key customers and ensure that plans are put in place to continue to meet customer needs and delivery mechanisms
- Consider the possibility of changes to your product, your service, or your interaction with customers, and plan for any changes you consider appropriate
- Identify key suppliers on whom you depend for essential operations and engage with them to discuss their own business continuity plans and investigate alternative suppliers
- Assess how the supply chain and wider organisation can balance health, safety, and legal duties to ensure that workers are protected
- Identify production gaps and assess if alternative suppliers have capability and capacity in the interim. Review timelines and costs associated with temporarily switching suppliers if required
- Raise a separate cost centre for additional expenditure associated with the impacts of Covid-19.

KEY SUPPORT

Act On Initiative

An Act On initiative to support impacted exporting businesses will be available to Enterprise Ireland supported companies. The initiative provides access to two days company consultancy engagement at no extra cost to help companies strengthen their capabilities in three key business areas; financial management, strategic sourcing and transport and logistics.



4. Communications - internal and external management

It is important to develop a communications plan for all stakeholders including employees, suppliers, customers and external stakeholders. This will include:

- Documenting the key elements, policies and procedures so that all employees have a clear understanding of their role and responsibilities and safety measures to avoid Covid-19 and the procedures that will be put in place should an outbreak occur in the business
- Setting up a communications channel from employees to the business continuity manager to report any risks or concerns
- Prepare a stakeholder list to include suppliers and customers with a set of messages for each
- Ensure there is awareness among all stakeholders of the business's preparatory plans and ensure that they are kept informed of new developments
- Update customers on service levels and alternative delivery locations if required
- Review attendance by colleagues at all large-scale events on a regular basis and cancel attendance where there is a Covid-19 risk
- Provide clear communication on interim working arrangements including remote working, video conferencing and travel.

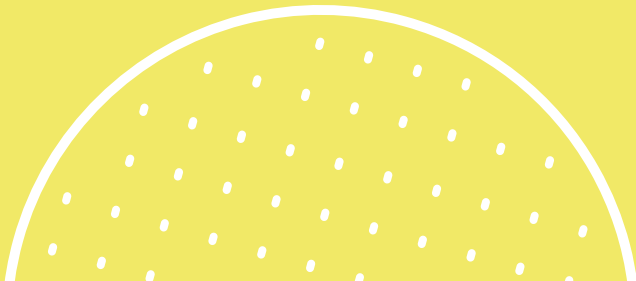
KEY SUPPORT

Information, advice and webinars

Enterprise Ireland will engage directly with businesses to provide information and practical support. Over the coming weeks, Enterprise Ireland will be developing an online portal of relevant advice, articles and webinars which will be accessible [here](#).

Development Advisor

Speak to your Development Advisor who can direct you to the relevant supports specific for your organisation and/or your industry.



Covid-19 Business Risk Assessment in 4 steps:

1

Risk Audit

Assess your current areas of exposure such as key import / export markets, supply chains or operations that may be affected.



2

Scenario testing

Run through potential scenarios and simulations in the event of a business continuity interruption such as a supplier being unable to deliver materials for manufacture of product which could impact delivery deadlines for your customer.



3

Clear Plan with Roles & Responsibilities

Appoint key business leads to areas of responsibility around the Covid-19 outbreak so should a contingency plan need to be implemented with immediate effect, all personnel are aware of the role they will play in executing the plan.



4

Iterate and Update

The Covid-19 global situation is changing on a daily and hourly basis. To keep up to date with the evolving situation, it is vital to ensure your business continuity response is agile and responsive to any developments domestically or globally.



Business Response Planning Supports

The following Enterprise Ireland/Local Enterprise Office supports may be of assistance to companies:

€200m Package for Enterprise Supports including a Rescue and Restructuring Scheme

Available through Enterprise Ireland for viable but vulnerable firms that need to restructure or transform their businesses, details of these supports are being finalised.

€200m Strategic Banking Corporation of Ireland (SBCI) Working Capital scheme

For eligible businesses impacted by COVID-19, further information can be found [here](#)

Short time work support

Short time work support is available from the Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection and is an income support payment for employees who have been temporarily placed on a shorter working week, due to business challenges affecting their employment. It is intended to help employers during periods of temporary difficulty, without resorting to permanent layoffs. Employer and employee application forms and more detail can be found at www.gov.ie/stws

The COVID-19 Pandemic Unemployment Payment

This new payment will be available to all employees and the self-employed who have lost employment due to a downturn in economic activity caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. The payment has a simple one-page application form and will be paid for a period of 6 weeks at a flat rate payment of €203 per week for jobseekers. It is designed to quickly deliver a social welfare payment to the unemployed and provide income security during this 6-week period.

Individuals applying for the payment will be required to apply for the normal jobseeker's payments within this 6-week period. Once this normal jobseeker claim is subsequently received, the department will process these claims and accommodate payments at that time. This will involve backdating increased payments for certain customers.

Employees can also apply for Short-time Work Support at their local Intreo Centre or Branch Office – local Intreo Centre can be found at www.gov.ie/deasp

Finance in Focus

The Finance in Focus grant offers Enterprise Ireland and Údarás na Gaeltachta clients funding of up to €7,200 to cover third party consultant's fees. The grant supports the development of a financial and business plan that identifies funding needs and potential sources of funding.

Strategic Consultancy Grant

The grant supports the hiring of a strategic consultant typically over a longer period to assist the company in the development and/or the implementation of strategic initiatives. It is designed to facilitate business growth as the consultants can act as coach, mentor, facilitator, analyst for the company.

Eligible projects must be new assignments of strategic significance to the company such as a specific strategic review of one or more business functions e.g. review of the company's treasury policy and/or implementation of a new strategic initiative e.g. preparation and implementation of new multi-currency forecasting tools and procedures.

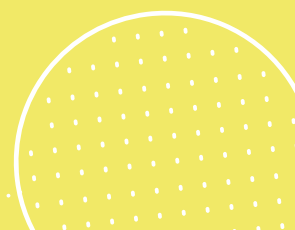
Act On Initiative

The Act On Initiative has been developed to focus on three main areas of capability (1) Financial Management (2) Strategic Sourcing and (3) Transport and Logistics. The initiative helps companies decide on specific actions over a short period to address some of the risks and opportunities from Covid-19.

This initiative for Enterprise Ireland clients is delivered at no cost to the company.

Enterprise Ireland Key Manager / Part Time Key Manager Support

The aim of this initiative is to provide partial funding towards the cost of recruiting a Full Time or Part Time Key Manager with skills that are critical to the future growth of the client. This individual must contribute to significant and measurable improvements in company productivity and/or changes in its output to meet defined market requirements. The Part Time Key Manager grant has been introduced in order to support companies to attract senior leadership talent by offering more flexible working arrangements.



Business Response Planning Supports

Agile Innovation Fund

The Agile Innovation Fund has been developed to support product, service and process innovation to build competitive advantage.

The new Agile Innovation Fund allows companies to access up to 50% in support towards innovation projects with a total cost of up to €300,000, and can also be availed of by Local Enterprise Office clients.

Be Prepared Grant

The Be Prepared Grant is designed for Enterprise Ireland clients who would benefit from further research and external expertise in examining their exposure to Covid-19 and exploring ways of addressing this.

The grant, which offers up to €5,000 or 50% of the total cost in financial support, can be used to help cover consultancy, travel and expenses for both domestic and international employee travel. The grant is intended to provide strategic support to clients to use internal resources or a third-party consultant to undertake a short project to determine how the company could respond to Covid-19.

Business Process Improvement Grant

The Business Process Improvement Grant is used to support short to medium term company projects that improve efficiencies and business process improvements. Specific E-marketing support is available through this grant to develop and enhance your company's capability to use the internet as an effective channel for business development. Further information can be found [here](#) or by contacting ebusiness@enterprise-ireland.com

Operational Excellence Offer

The new Operational Excellence Offer enables Irish companies trading internationally to develop or transform their wider business in order to compete more effectively.

Revenue Cashflow Supports for SMEs

Revenue have outlined key advice and actions taken to assist small and medium enterprise businesses experiencing cashflow and trading difficulties arising from the impacts of Covid-19 including information on tax returns, application of interest, debt enforcement and tax clearance. Further details can be found at www.revenue.ie

The offer allows eligible companies to access financial support for business or operational change projects. The goal is to incentivise and support the key elements of a larger transformation project leading to significantly increased competitiveness.

Local Enterprise Support

Vouchers for business continuity preparedness, innovation and productivity will be available through Local Enterprise Offices in every local authority area (www.localenterprise.ie)

Additional financial supports are available locally through the 31 Local Enterprise Offices (www.localenterprise.ie) and Microfinance Ireland (www.microfinanceireland.ie)

Credit Guarantee Scheme

The Credit Guarantee Scheme is a government supported product from the banks for small and medium businesses who have difficulty borrowing from their bank. Businesses can apply for loans of up to €1 million at AIB, Bank of Ireland or Ulster Bank. Loans can be for terms of up to seven years. The scheme provides an 80% guarantee to participating banks which are AIB, Bank of Ireland and Ulster Bank.

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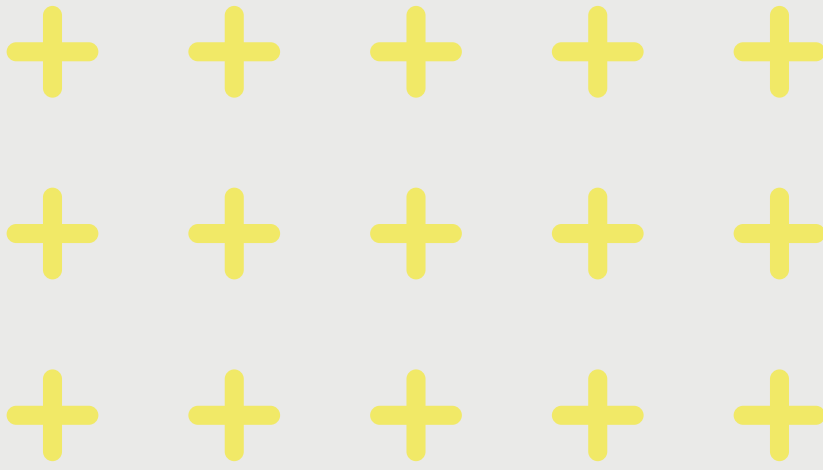
You can access the resources available at the Market Research Centre [here](#) and identify report titles online

Clients are invited to contact the Enterprise Ireland Market Research Centre via the dedicated MRC email: market.research@enterprise-ireland.com

Information, advice and webinars

Enterprise Ireland will engage directly with businesses to provide information and practical support. Over the coming weeks, Enterprise Ireland will be developing an online portal of relevant advice, articles and webinars which will be accessible [here](#).

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Essential Links

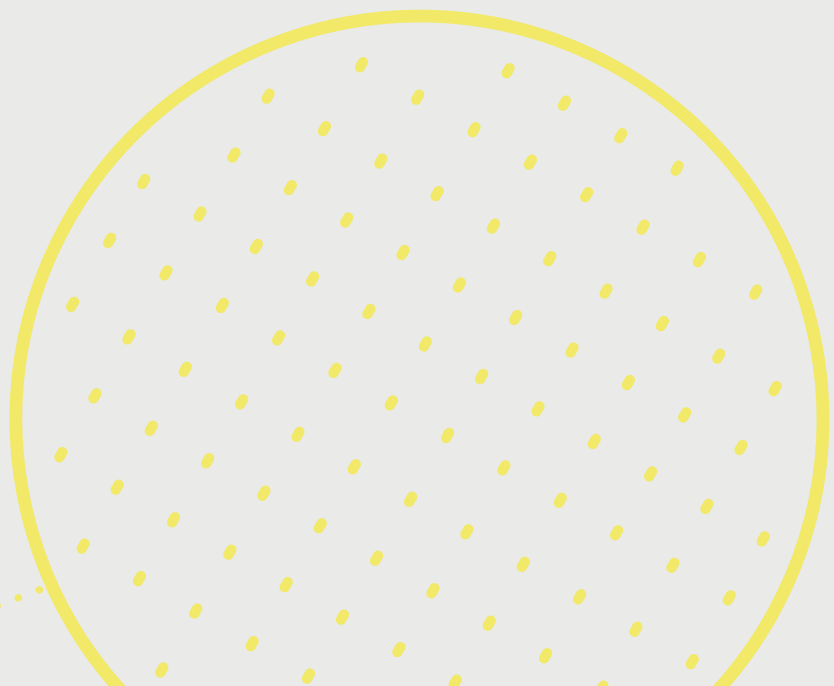
[Department of Business Enterprise and Innovation](#)

[World Health Organisation](#)

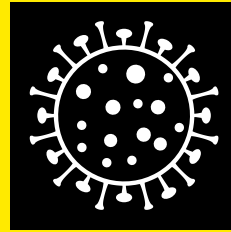
[Health Service Executive](#)

[Government of Ireland](#)

[Department of Foreign Affairs](#)



Coronavirus COVID-19



Coronavirus
COVID-19
Public Health
Advice

The Facts

Most at Risk

- Anyone who has been to an affected region in the last 14 days **AND** is experiencing symptoms
- Anyone who has been in close contact with a confirmed or probable case of COVID-19 (Coronavirus) in the last 14 days **AND** is experiencing symptoms

Prevention



Wash

your hands well and often to avoid contamination



Cover

your mouth and nose with a tissue or sleeve when coughing or sneezing and discard used tissue



Avoid

touching eyes, nose, or mouth with unwashed hands



Clean

and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces

Symptoms

> A Cough > Shortness of Breath > Breathing Difficulties > Fever (High Temperature)

Affected Regions

Check the list of affected regions on www.hse.ie

What to do if you are at risk

I've been to an affected region in the last 14 days and

I HAVE symptoms

1. Stay away from other people
2. Phone your GP without delay
3. If you do not have a GP
Phone 112 or 999

I DO NOT HAVE symptoms

For advice visit www.hse.ie

I've been in close contact with a confirmed or probable case of COVID-19 (Coronavirus) in the last 14 days and

I HAVE symptoms

1. Stay away from other people
2. Phone your GP without delay
3. If you do not have a GP
Phone 112 or 999

I DO NOT HAVE symptoms

For advice visit www.hse.ie

For Daily Updates Visit

www.gov.ie/health-covid-19
www.hse.ie

About Enterprise Ireland

Enterprise Ireland is the government organisation responsible for the development and growth of Irish enterprises in world markets. We work in partnership with Irish enterprises to help them start, grow, innovate and win export sales in global markets. In this way, we support sustainable economic growth, regional development and secure employment.

Disclaimer

Enterprise Ireland has made efforts to ensure the information in this general guide is accurate at the time of publication. However, Enterprise Ireland will not be liable for actions taken on the basis of this guide and advise all clients and businesses to take professional advice in these areas.