

Companies House support for businesses hit by COVID-19

Businesses will be given additional support to help them meet their legal responsibilities under changes announced today.

Companies House will temporarily pause the strike off process to prevent companies being dissolved. This will give businesses affected by the coronavirus outbreak the time they need to update their records and help them avoid being struck off the register.

In addition, companies issued with a late filing penalty due to COVID-19 will have appeals treated sympathetically.

Today's announcement builds on measures already implemented by the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, which give businesses the ability to apply for a [3-month extension to file accounts with Companies House](#).

As part of the agreed measures, while companies will still have to apply for the 3-month extension to be granted, those citing issues around COVID-19 will be automatically and immediately granted an extension.

The Secretary of State has stated that we will continue to monitor what companies are filing and will provide further extensions if needed.

He also announced that the government will introduce legislation to ensure those companies required by law to hold Annual General Meetings (AGMs) will be able to do so safely, consistent with the restrictions on movement and gatherings introduced to address the spread of coronavirus.

Companies will temporarily be extended greater flexibilities, including holding AGMs online or postponing the meetings.

Martin Swain, Director of Strategy, Policy and Communications at Companies House said:

We know that many businesses are finding it difficult to keep up with their filing requirements at the moment.

We're committed to helping them meet their legal responsibilities while keeping the register as up to date as possible.

We will continue to contact customers to remind them of their responsibilities, and we encourage all companies to file their statutory documents as soon as they're able to do so.

- Companies House is the register of limited companies in the UK. It incorporates and dissolves limited companies, registers the information companies are legally required to supply, and makes that information available to the public.
- There are approximately 4.3 million companies on the Companies House register, and all companies must submit their accounts and a confirmation statement each year. Companies that file accounts late are issued with an automatic penalty. Companies House also has powers to strike off a company from the register if these documents are not ultimately filed.
- For companies who make an application for voluntary dissolution, the DS01 (striking off application by a company) will be registered at Companies House and a notice published in the Gazette. However, after this point, any further action to strike off the company will be suspended.
- Any person with an interest in a business which is nearing strike off should [register an objection to dissolution at Companies House](#). This also applies to those who may have already registered an objection, but where the time period for that objection is due to expire.
- These changes do not apply to businesses which are being dissolved as the result of an insolvency procedure such as administration or liquidation. Businesses in this position will continue to be dissolved by operation of the Insolvency Act.
- This policy will be kept under review and amended as necessary in light of the progress of the COVID-19 outbreak.