

Companies to receive 3-month extension period to file accounts during COVID-19

From today (25 March 2020), businesses will be able to apply for a 3-month extension for filing their accounts.

This joint initiative between the government and Companies House will mean businesses can prioritise managing the impact of Coronavirus.

There are approximately 4.3 million businesses on the Companies House register, and all companies must submit their accounts and reports each year. Under normal circumstances, companies that file accounts late are issued with an automatic penalty.

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. Applications can be made through a fast-tracked online system which will take just 15 minutes to complete.

Business Secretary Alok Sharma said:

We have outlined a business support package on an unprecedented scale, backing companies and their employees through these challenging times.

But it is important that our support is not limited to financial assistance. We are determined to help businesses in any way we can, so that they can focus all their efforts on dealing with the impact of Coronavirus, and this new offer of a 3 month extension for filing accounts is part of that.

Companies House Chief Executive, Louise Smyth said:

We recognise that these are uncertain times for businesses and that's why we're doing all we can to help.

By easing the burden, we can help businesses through this period and enable them to thrive in the future. I would encourage companies who believe they would benefit from this new flexibility to make an application in good time.

Head of Corporate Governance, Institute of Directors, Roger Barker said:

These measures will be welcomed by directors impacted by COVID-19. Our members will be pleased to see government taking proactive steps to support them through this difficult time. By easing the administrative burden that comes with running a business, the government is supporting businesses to focus on the fundamentals during this exceptional period.

The government is also in close consultation with company representative bodies, legal practitioners and others, to look at solutions for the impact COVID-19 may have on companies' ability to hold Annual General Meetings. Updated guidance on this matter will be published in due course.

- 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
- the application process is quick and easy. Companies should simply cite COVID-19 or Health matters as the grounds for their application
- [full guidance on applying for an extension](#)
- companies that have already extended their filing deadline, or shortened their accounting reference period may be ineligible for an extension
- this policy will be kept under review and amended as necessary in light of the progress of the COVID-19 pandemic

[A guide to current financial and welfare support for the fishing industry](#)



The Marine Management Organisation (MMO) is working to continue to provide its services during the unfolding events around the Covid-19 pandemic.

Our aim in these unprecedented times is to continue to support the industry and help it to keep fishing and trading, and be ready to recover when the time comes.

In line with the Government's instructions, MMO staff are now working from home. But we can be contacted for all MMO services in several ways – online, email, by phone, social media or via our website.

For all MMO contact numbers: visit www.marinemanagement.org.uk

We encourage our fishing industry to stay in touch with MMO. We need to continue to work together to understand the impact on your businesses, and help reflect and share key information with Government. We will continue to keep you updated on new developments over the coming days and weeks.

Published 24 March 2020

Last updated 5 November 2020 [+ show all updates](#)

1. 5 November 2020

v2 added

2. 5 November 2020

New updated support document

3. 7 May 2020

Support for industry guide updated to reflect launch of Fisheries Response Fund for aquaculture businesses on 6 May 2020.

4. 3 April 2020

Guidance added from Defra and content prepared in readiness for text message

5. 27 March 2020

One-stop shop guide for industry updated to include reference to self employed scheme

6. 24 March 2020

First published.

[British nationals in Canada: returning to the UK](#)



The Foreign & Commonwealth Office (FCO) [advises British people travelling abroad to return to the UK now](#), if commercial flights are still available.

International travel is becoming very limited as air routes close, land borders close and new restrictions are put in place that prevent flights from leaving.

If you're travelling in Canada

You should:

The Foreign & Commonwealth Office is working with airlines to keep routes open, and calling for international action to enable British people to return home on commercial flights. We are working urgently to support British travellers who are already having difficulties returning, see the [Foreign Secretary's statement](#).

Airports operating international flights

In Canada, only the following airports are operating international flights:

- Toronto Pearson (YYZ)
- Montreal Pierre Elliott Trudeau (YUL)
- Calgary International Airport (YYC)
- Vancouver International Airport (YVR)

Airline flight status

If you are travelling in Canada you should contact your travel operator now.

Currently, Air Canada, British Airways and Air Transat are offering limited services to the UK, though they have suspended some routes. WestJet are no longer flying to the UK. Porter Airlines have suspended all flights.

If you are looking for a flight, please check the following airline flight status pages:

[British Airways](#)

[Air Canada](#)

[Air Transat](#)

[WestJet](#)

You can find contact details here:

- British Airways: 1 800 247 9297
- Air Canada: 1 888 246 2262
- Air Transat: 1 877 872 6728
- WestJet: 1 888 937 8538

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1. 27 March 2020

Updated 27 March 2020

2. 26 March 2020

Update to Travel Advice 26 March 2020

3. 24 March 2020

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[Visas extended for those currently unable to return home due to COVID-19](#)

Visa nationals who cannot return home due to the COVID-19 pandemic will be able to extend their visa.

The extension, announced today (24 March) by the Home Secretary Priti Patel, will apply to anyone whose leave expired after the 24 January and who cannot leave the country because of travel restrictions or self-isolation.

This will last until 31 May but will be kept under regular review in case further extensions are needed.

A dedicated COVID-19 immigration team has been set up within UKVI to make the process as straightforward as possible. Anyone in this situation just needs to contact this team, via this email address CIH@homeoffice.gov.uk, to let them know their visa has expired and they will be issued with an extension.

To help those who want to apply for visas to stay in the UK long-term, the Home Office is also temporarily expanding the in-country switching provisions.

This will mean people can apply to switch routes, such as from Tier 4 (student) to Tier 2 (General Worker), whilst remaining in the UK. UKVI will continue to process applications as quickly as possible, however some applications may take longer than usual due to COVID-19 related operational pressures.

Home Secretary Priti Patel said:

The UK continues to put the health and wellbeing of people first and nobody will be punished for circumstances outside of their control.

By extending people's visas, we are giving people peace of mind and also ensuring that those in vital services can continue their work.

Many foreign nationals have found themselves unable to return home since the outbreak of COVID-19 due to flight cancellations and border restrictions.

The extension has been put in place to give these individuals peace of mind that they will not be penalised for overstaying their visa when the situation is out of their control due to COVID-19.

Those who contact the Home Office for these visa extensions will be expected to return to their home countries as soon as possible once flight and border restrictions are lifted. No immigration enforcement action will be undertaken during this time for those who email the Home Office as outlined above.

In light of the current advice on self-isolation and social distancing, the Home Office is also waiving a number of requirements on visa sponsors, such as allowing non-EU nationals here under work or study routes to undertake their work or study from home.

Prison visits cancelled

- Prisons across the estate to receive 900 secure phone handsets as visits cancelled
- Part of plans to maintain family contact during COVID-19 outbreak – ensuring stability in jails
- All calls monitored and restricted

This is to ensure prisons are complying with social distancing rules and to protect staff and prisoners.

In recognition of the importance of continued contact with family and to ensure stability in our jails the Government has moved quickly to keep

prisoners in touch with their family members by other means.

Secure phone handsets will be given to prisoners at 55 jails. This will enable the approved use of 900 locked SIM card handsets, allowing risk-assessed prisoners to speak to a small number of pre-authorised contacts. The phones will not have internet access.

Strict measures will ensure the phones are not misused with calls being time-limited and monitored closely. Additionally, handsets will include measures to prevent non-secure SIM cards being used.

Prisons and Probation Minister Lucy Frazer QC MP said:

These are uniquely challenging times and the decision to end prison visits has not been taken lightly. We know these are important to many prisoners and that they will be concerned for the wellbeing of their family members.

It is therefore right and proportionate that we provide other, controlled ways for them to stay in touch so that they can maintain the close bonds that will ultimately reduce their chances of reoffending when they are released.

I also want to pay tribute to the thousands of staff working tirelessly to keep our prisons safe.

Visits were suspended after the Government took vital steps to limit travel and social interactions in order to limit the spread of the virus.

As well as helping prisoners connect with their families, the phones will give prisoners access to support services such as the Samaritans, therefore reducing their risk of self-harm.

A [2017 review by Lord Farmer](#) found that close ties between prisoners and key family members can significantly reduce their risk of reoffending and creating more misery for victims.

Currently more than 50 prisons across England and Wales have [in-cell telephony](#) which allows prisoners to stay in touch with their family members in a controlled and safe manner. The new handsets will make sure this ability is balanced across all prisons, and promote stability in jails without existing in-cell phones.

Alongside the handsets, the Prison Service is also exploring the use of video calls at six pilot sites, to allow prisoners to be called by their families in a secure environment with strict safeguards.

The Ministry of Justice is working closely with Public Health England, the

National Health Service and the Department of Health and Social Care to manage the challenges COVID-19 presents.

As with all Government policy at this time, the priority is to protect lives and HMPPS has put in place robust and flexible plans designed to keep all both staff and prisoners as safe as possible. These are reviewed continually.

Notes to editors

- The handsets are a temporary measure, intended only for use during the current period where contact with family and friends is limited as a result of the Government's social distancing measures.
- Ministry of Justice research shows that strong family ties are linked to a 39% reduction in the likelihood of reoffending. Less reoffending means fewer victims in the future.