

BULLETIN

Workplace Relations



Reference No: COVID Hardship Fund/dh-8-21

Date issued: 12/08/2021

Details of Small Business COVID Hardship Fund Guidelines Released

Further to yesterday's [Bulletin](#), the [Small Business COVID Hardship Fund Guidelines](#) have now been released. For small- and medium- sized businesses that are not eligible under existing business support funds, the Fund will enable those with a **payroll of up to \$10 million** who have experienced a **70 per cent or greater reduction in revenue**, to apply for grants of up to **\$10,000**. It is intended to cover those businesses that, whilst legally allowed to operate, have been restricted in their ability to generate income - for reasons including lost custom due to restrictions affecting foot traffic.

Key Eligibility Criteria

To be eligible, the business must demonstrate that as a direct consequence of COVID-19 restrictions in the 'Impacted Period' from 27 May 2021 (until 10 September 2021), they have experienced a reduction in turnover of **at least 70 per cent for a minimum consecutive two-week-period** comparable to a minimum consecutive two-week-period within the '**Benchmark Period**' (being between **27 May 2019 to 10 September 2019**). The Guidelines note that the comparison period should generally be the similar time of year unless exceptional reasons apply – and that for businesses that were not actively trading in 2019, the Benchmark Period is between 1 February 2021 to 28 July 2021.

The reduction in turnover evidence **must be attested to by a qualified accountant (Qualified Agent), who must include a signed copy of the [Letter from the Qualified Agent](#)**. However, where a business is unable to engage a Qualified Agent to support their application, they can register their interest to apply by submitting the following [form](#).

Applications are **now open and will close 10 September 2021**.

Members are encouraged to access the Business Victoria [website](#) for further information.

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