

SMTA Member Update 9 —5 June 2020

To our SMTA members,

This week has seen yet more garage owners contacting me with regards to them being refused the grant support funding, especially those in the £25,000 level. We have been chasing up the Council Chief Executives to ensure that we have as many responses as possible to why they have declined the applications, the consensus appears to fall into two categories.

1. The term “garage” is not listed on the guidance paper, therefore we are not paying!
2. The level of “retail” in your business falls below the acceptable figure (although no council has confirmed what the level should be).



However what is now apparent to us within all of these responses is that the issue lies with the Scottish Government, it is their guidance notes that are being used in most case to the letter of the law and yet when challenged they have continued to point the finger at the local authorities as having the ability to be flexible on this. To be fair many local authorities are broadly sympathetic to this situation and the issues that many garage owners face as a result of this money not being made available and or the access to the 100% rate support for 2020-21.

We are finalising our list of responses and comments made and I will write once again to the Cabinet Secretary for Finance highlighting our findings and requesting an urgent review of this situation. Once we have her response we will act accordingly, this situation as I have said to many of you who have taken the time to call me or write about this, will not be a sprint, it will be a serious slog, a full blown marathon, thank you for your patience.

[The link will take you to the latest response received yesterday from the Department for Transport](#) with regards to the MOT Suspension order, I am afraid they just do not get it and I feel we may well have to try and garner support from our local constituency MP’s on this, every trade association in the country has lobbied the Government on this and they appear incapable of understanding the potentially life threatening consequences of the huge increase of dangerous vehicles on our roads right now. I sincerely hope none of us ever have reason to highlight this as a result of someone close suffering an injury or heaven forbid, death!

Finally we have lobbied the Scottish Government on the need for showrooms to be allowed to open for business in phase two on the 18th or 19th of June, we await their response at the time of writing. Further updates will be provided on our website as and when appropriate.

Sandy Burgess,
SMTA Chief Executive



**CORONAVIRUS
UPDATES**

Flexible Furloughing available from 1 July

On Friday 29 May 2020, the Chancellor of the Exchequer set out several key changes to the CJRS, which are due to be implemented gradually over the next few months until the Scheme closes altogether on 31 October 2020. Briefly, the main changes can be summarised as follows:

10 June 2020 will be the last day employers can place employees on furlough if those employees have not been furloughed previously;

From 1 July 2020, “flexible furloughing” will be allowed, whereby employers can agree with employees to bring them back to work part-time (on potentially any hours and/or shift pattern the employer needs) whilst still keeping them on furlough for the remainder of their weekly contractual hours;

From 1 August 2020, employers will no longer be able to reclaim employer’s National Insurance and pension contributions in respect of any employees remaining on furlough;

From 1 September 2020, the government will only reimburse 70% of a furloughed employee’s salary (up to a maximum of £2,190). Employers will be required to top this up to 80% (or more, depending on what has previously been agreed with the employee);

From 1 October 2020, the government will only reimburse 60% of salary (up to a maximum of £1,875), with employers having to continue to top up to 80% (or more, as above).

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Exclusive member offer from Just Employment Law

We are conscious that a number of our smaller members will be in need of increased professional support on employment and personnel issues during these difficult times. With this in mind, and in conjunction with our partners, Just Employment Law, the SMTA is pleased to be able to offer all members with up to 10 employees, unlimited expert employment law advice and support from JEL on a retainer basis for a 6 month period – all for a fixed fee of £500 plus VAT (this can be paid in monthly instalments).

Each member who takes up this offer will be assigned their own solicitor from JEL’s experienced team and the retainer will also include unlimited drafting on employment matters as well as the drafting of contracts and staff handbooks. The offer is open to any

SMTA member with up to 10 employees and the promotion will run throughout the months of June and July.

Members wishing to take advantage of this offer should contact JEL directly on 0141 331 5150 / enquiries@justemploymentlaw.co.uk quoting “SMTA6”. Preferential rates are also open to SMTA members who have more than 10 employees and who are in need of support at this time and JEL can be contacted via the same contact details.



**CORONAVIRUS
UPDATES**

DVSA UPDATES

Test Equipment Calibrations—Vehicle Testing Stations are permitted to continue testing with equipment that has expired calibration – as long as that equipment is believed to be functioning correctly. However, most emission test equipment ceases to function when calibration has expired and in such situations Testing must cease. DVSA and the Garage Equipment Association are aware of this problem. DVSA will be considering whether or not regulations can be temporarily relaxed and the Garage Equipment Association will be working with its members to try to restore normal calibration services as soon as possible.

New VTS Applications awaiting DVSA Assessment-DVSA have now issued safe working instructions for Vehicle Examiners to carry out new site assessments in a manner that enables compliance with social distancing requirements. If you are experiencing difficulty getting a site assessment for a new VTS please let us know.

MOT Tester Annual Training & Assessment-DVSA's extension to the MOT Tester Annual Training & Assessment deadline for 2019/20 has now ended. Access codes for 2020/21 Training & Assessment are now available from the SMTA. [click here for our brand new flyer and details how to book](#)



**CORONAVIRUS
UPDATES**

Out of furlough and back to work - FREE TEMPLATE

Some dealers have aptly adjusted to selling cars in the lockdown, taking on board the imposed restriction on trade and doing business distantly. Essential workers and all those who cannot work from home still need transport to commute, goods need to be delivered. There is, reassuringly, a demand to meet and there are jobs to be done. Dealers and garages may have to start to recalling their staff from furlough.

If you are in this fortunate position and need your staff to come out of furlough to do work, this certainly can be done. Just remember, the minimum furlough duration is 3 weeks. It is the employer's decision which employees remained furloughed and who is coming back to work. This decision must not be in any manner discriminatory. It is worth reminding your staff that on furlough ending, the normal terms of employment resume. [Click here for a template created by Lawgistics](#)

