



Business Rates Update

June 2017

Revaluation Appeals – Deadline: 30 September 2017

This year, Scotland had its first business rates revaluation in 7 years. The new valuations came into effect on 1 April 2017 and all businesses should have received notification of their premises' new value and their resultant business rates bill. If a business is unhappy with its valuation and believes it to be incorrect, it has until **30 September 2017** to lodge an appeal.

To lodge an appeal online, businesses can use the Rateable Values search on the [Home Page of the Scottish Assessors Association website](#) (or the local Assessor's Page) to identify the individual property concerned. (Use the link in the More Information column on the Street Search Results page). Click on the "Make an appeal" button at the right hand corner of the page to bring up the Online Valuation Roll Appeals page where the appeal form and further detailed guidance to help you through the process can be found. Lodging an appeal is free of charge. Appeals can also be made in writing or by email to the business's [Local Assessor](#). Alternatively, the business can speak to a rating consultant.

Reliefs

The Scottish Government and local authorities each operate a number of reliefs aimed at reducing the cost of business rates to specific categories of business. Many of these reliefs must be applied for and further details can be found [here](#). If a business is eligible for a relief and hasn't yet applied, it should do so as soon as possible.

Small Business Bonus Scheme

In 2017-18, the Scottish Government expanded its Small Business Bonus Scheme to effectively exempt around 100,000 premises from business rates altogether. Businesses must apply for this relief. Details of the criteria are as follows:

Based on the total rateable value (RV) of all your business premises, the following reliefs are available:

- RV up to £15,000 - 100% relief (i.e. no rates payable)
- RV £15,001 to £18,000 - 25% relief

If you have more than one business property, with a combined rateable value of between £18,001 and £35,000, you will get 25% relief on each individual property with a rateable value of under £18,000.

New Reliefs Announced in February 2017

As a result of significant increases in the business rates bills of many businesses in the hospitality sector (hotels, pubs, restaurants and cafes) and by businesses in the North East of Scotland, the Scottish Government announced plans to cap rates increases for a number of businesses at 12.5% in real terms this year – effectively 14.75% more than last year's bills.

Hospitality Sector

Businesses in the following categories can apply to their local authorities for transitional relief if their rates bill is more than 14.75% higher than their bill for 2016-17:

- Hotels, guest houses and hostels
- Public houses
- Restaurants
- Bed & breakfast accommodation
- Camping sites
- Caravans and caravan sites
- Chalets and holiday huts
- Self-catering holiday accommodation
- Timeshare accommodation

Approximately 8,500 businesses across Scotland could benefit from this relief but it is not applied automatically. Businesses must apply to their local authority to access the relief. Larger premises should note that this relief is subject to State Aid *de minimis* rules and therefore the maximum support is limited to approximately £170,000 per business.

Aberdeen & Aberdeenshire Office Space

Around 1,000 office premises in the City of Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire Council areas can also benefit from a cap on their rates bill increases this year. Again, this relief must be applied for to the business's local authority.

In addition to the Scottish Government transitional relief arrangements, Aberdeenshire Council also operates its own local business rates revaluation scheme, which will be automatically applied to eligible businesses. Further details can be found [here](#).

Small Renewables Generation

The Scottish Government also announced a new relief for the small renewables sector this year, which will benefit around 100 premises. This package of reliefs includes:

- Rolling forward current rates relief up to 100% for qualifying community renewables and new build schemes, and lower the eligibility threshold for community schemes from 1 MW to 0.5 MW
- Cap rates bill increases at 12.5% for small-scale hydro schemes (up to 1 MW)
- Offer a new 50% relief for district heating schemes

Further Questions

If you have any further questions regarding business rates in Scotland, the appeals system, or any of the reliefs, please do not hesitate to contact Garry Clark on 0141 204 8337 or at gclark@scottishchambers.org.uk

Scottish Chambers of Commerce
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