



Ministry of Finance & Economic Management

Government of the Cook Islands

Media Release

20 Sep 2021

EXTENSION OF BUSINESS SUPPORT MEASURES

With the ongoing community transmission of Covid-19 in New Zealand and the resulting extended border closure for October 2021, the Cook Islands Government will be extending the Wage Subsidy and Sole Trader Grants to the end of October 2021 to ensure employers keep their staff on the payroll and businesses and sole traders are able to keep functioning as best as possible under the current circumstances.

The process follows the same application process as previous Wage Subsidy and Sole Trader grants. There will also be an option of extending on a month-by-month basis should this situation continue. Further to this, as previously mentioned, a round of Business Grants is being rolled out in October to assist the private sector to weather this temporary border closure. These grants have increased in amount from previous iterations, to provide support in the absence of other more specialized measures. The process for these follows the same application process as previous grants – with four tiers of grants, based on the turnover of your business.

The measures will operate as follows:

Wage Subsidy

Whether or not your business received a September 2021 wage subsidy, you can apply for the October 2021 wage subsidy once you have submitted your September 2021 CINSF declaration. RMD will conduct an assessment of eligibility to receive an October 2021 wage subsidy based on a 30% reduction in revenue for October 2021 compared to October 2019.

Applications for October wage subsidies will be available from 01 October 2021 unless an update is announced.

Sole Trader Grants

Further Sole Trader Grants of \$1,000 for October will be available to those who have previously received support and those new Sole Traders who have yet to register with RMD and CINSF. Registration for new Sole Traders closes on 16 September 2021. Information on eligibility can be found on the MFEM website (www.mfem.gov.ck/err), and on MFEM social media accounts. The new round of grant applications will be available from 1 October to 31 October 2021.

Business Grants

Business Grants for October will be available for those who have seen a 30% reduction in revenue for September 2021 when compared with September 2019 (or a replacement month when this is not available). Your business must be registered with RMD and CINSF and RMD will conduct an assessment of eligibility.

The rates of grants are as follows:

\$5,000 for those businesses with a turnover of less than \$50,000

\$10,000 for those business with a turnover between \$50,000 and \$300,000

\$15,000 for those businesses with a turnover between \$300,000 and \$5 million

\$20,000 for those businesses with a turnover greater than \$5 million.

For any queries regarding Wage Subsidy or Sole Trader Grant applications, please contact the Revenue Management Division on 29365 (Mon - Fri from 1pm - 4pm) or email tax.info@cookislands.gov.ck

Or for more information on the reinstated support measures, contact the MFEM Economic Planning Division on 29511 or email mfem.economics@cookislands.gov.ck

Alternatively, factsheets with further information on each of the funding initiatives are available on our website www.mfem.gov.ck/economic-planning/covid-19-err.