



Office for Life Sciences

Office for Life Sciences Bulletin – 16 October 2020



OLS Introduction

The Office for Life Sciences (OLS) is a joint unit between the Department of Health & Social Care (DHSC) and Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy (BEIS).

This bulletin aims to keep the life sciences sector up to date on the latest guidance as we approach the end of the Transition Period and during the Coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak, providing you with information from Government to help your members and networks prepare.

If you would like to be added to the distribution list, please email Sonia.Davies@officeforlifesciences.gov.uk



News

NEW – On the 12 October the Prime Minister [announced](#) how the government will further simplify and standardise local rules by introducing a [three tiered system](#) of local COVID Alert Levels in England.

See the list of [local COVID alert levels by area](#). A [postcode checker](#) is also available.

More information on local COVID alert levels in England is [available](#), alongside guidance on the restrictions in place which includes information for businesses and venues, and going to work:

- [Local COVID alert level: very high](#)
- [Local COVID alert level: high](#)
- [Local COVID alert level: medium](#)



Transition Guidance

REMINDER – There are now fewer than 80 days until the end of the transition period and there will be no extension, so businesses need to act now. Find out what you need to do by visiting gov.uk/transition and using the checker tool.

Regardless of whether we reach a trade agreement with the EU, from 1 **January there will be guaranteed changes** to:

- the way businesses import and export goods;
- the process for hiring people from the EU; and
- the way businesses provide services in EU markets.



Events

Government departments are hosting a series of free webinars to help businesses understand the support available. Keep up to date with all the latest available webinars [here](#), watch past HMRC videos [here](#) and find videos to help you learn more about trading with the EU from 1 January [here](#).

Various dates – [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) – Self-Employment Income Support Scheme \(SEISS\)](#)

Various dates – Extension to the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme and flexible furloughing webinar. Register [here](#).

Tuesday 27 October – Life Sciences Business Support Webinar - The UK has left the EU and is leaving the EU single market and customs union. The end of the transition period means businesses should take action now to prepare for guaranteed changes and new rules from January 2021. To support business preparations the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy is hosting free webinars to help you check the new rules and understand the actions to take. Please find the full schedule and sign up for live sessions [here](#).

MHRA webinars

From 1 January 2021, the MHRA will be the UK's standalone medicines and medical devices regulator. Stakeholders need to get ready for new rules from 1 January 2021. The agency has now published guidance which will apply following the end of the transition period.

To help stakeholders understand the detail of the guidance and to ask any questions, the agency is running a series of free webinars, please click [here](#) for more detail on the webinar dates and topics.

[Register](#) for free webinars to learn more about what you need to do to export animals, fish and high risk foods not of animal origin from 1 January 2021.



Workforce

NEW – If you have been contacted by NHS Test and Trace and told to self-isolate on or after 28 September 2020, you're under a legal obligation to do so, and could be eligible for a £500 Test and Trace Support Payment. [This guidance](#) sets out who can claim support and explains how to apply.



Business Support

NEW – A [new hotline](#) has been launched to stop fraudsters illegally targeting COVID stimulus schemes. The public can now call a new COVID Fraud Hotline (0800 587 5030) anonymously and free of charge to report suspected fraudulent activity.

NEW – The COVID Corporate Financing Facility provides temporary direct support to investment grade firms with short-term cash-flow problems and is designed to ensure that firms accessing government backed CCFF financing are able to repay. To ensure the CCFF continues to meet its objectives, the Treasury has introduced a new access review process. Find out more [here](#).

UPDATED – Defer your Self-Assessment payment on account due to coronavirus. [Check what you need to do](#) if, after 31 July 2020, you chose to defer your second payment on account for the 2019 to 2020 tax year.

UPDATED – The list of medical devices given exceptional use authorisations during the COVID-19 pandemic has been updated, please find more information [here](#).



Useful Links

- [Gov.uk/transition](#) provides a central hub of resources for the transition period
- You can sign up to email alerts about the transition period on GOV.UK at this [link](#).
- Sign up for Home Office email updates about developments on the status of EU citizens in the UK after we leave the EU and the next steps for EU citizens in the UK at this [link](#).
- Access the 'Check How to Export Goods' tool [here](#) for the information you need to export goods out of the UK market.
- Click [here](#) for more information and advice on exporting.
- Click [here](#) for updated information on the Covid-19 response from the Department for Health and Social Care and Public Health England.
- Click [here](#) for a list of Business Representative Organisations and Trade Associations you can speak with to get advice.
- Specific information for businesses and employers in [Northern Ireland](#), [Scotland](#), and [Wales](#) is available. In England, [Growth Hubs](#) can advise on local and UK Government business support.
- COVID 19 key contact details:
 - General offers of help from industry: gccfcovid19enquiries@cabinetoffice.gov.uk, or visit [this](#) webpage.
 - Share the impact COVID-19 is having on your organisation with intel@beis.gov.uk
 - To provide feedback on MHRA engagement please contact engagement@mhra.gov.uk
 - To call the Business Support Helpline in England please dial **FREEPHONE 0800 998 1098**, Scotland 0300 303 0660, Business Wales 0330 060 300 and Invest Northern Ireland 0800 181 4422