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Business rates relief

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You may be able to reduce your business rates bill depending on your circumstances and how your property is used but you must continue to pay your business rates while we assess your application.

What relief can you get?

You may be able to reduce your business rates if you are:

- [A small business](#)
- [A charity or CASC](#)
- [A nonprofit organisation](#)
- [A business experiencing temporary hardship](#)
- [Occupying only part of your premises](#)
- [The owner of an empty property](#)
- [A pub or live music venue](#)

Empty Property Relief

If your property becomes empty, you may not have to pay business rates for a limited period:

- 3 months for most properties.
- 6 months for certain industrial properties.

After this exemption period, full rates are charged.

Some properties are completely exempt, including:

- Listed buildings.
- Properties with a rateable value under £2,900.
- Properties where occupation is prohibited by law.

Minimal Financial Assistance (formerly State Aid and Subsidy Control)

Business rate discounts are awarded within current [Minimal Financial Assistance \(MFA\) rules](#). You must tell us about any MFA you've received when applying for a discount.

Types of relief

Small Business Rate Relief (SBRR)

This relief is based on your property's rateable value (RV).

Eligibility

You may qualify if:

- You occupy one property in England with an RV under £15,000, or
- You occupy one main property and additional properties, as long as:
 - Each additional property has an RV below £2,899, and
 - The combined RV of all properties is below £20,000.

Relief applies only to your main property.

If your combined RV later increases above £20,000, you will continue to receive SBRR for 36 months.

How much relief you will receive

RV up to £12,000 = 100% relief. So, if you have one shop with an RV of £10,000, you will receive 100% relief and pay no business rates.

RV £12,001–£15,000 is a tapered relief, with RV £13,500 at 50% and reducing gradually to 0%. Businesses with an RV between £15,000 and £51,000 do not pay the SBRR supplement.

Mandatory Charitable Relief

Registered charities

Registered charities can receive 80% relief if:

- The property is occupied by a registered charity or its trustees, and
- It is used wholly or mainly for charitable purposes.

Empty charity properties may qualify if their next use will be charitable.

Community amateur sports clubs (CASC)

CASCs can also receive 80% relief.

Empty CASC properties may qualify if they will be used by a CASC when next occupied.

Discretionary Relief

We may award discretionary relief:

- To increase mandatory relief from 80% to 100%, or
- To support non profit organisations that are not eligible for mandatory relief.

How we assess applications

We consider:

- Membership fees and whether they are affordable
- Where the members live
- How inclusive and accessible the organisation is
- Whether facilities are available to the wider community
- Accessibility of the building and any efforts to improve it
- Memorandum and articles of association
- Audited accounts
- Details of any [minimal financial assistance](#) received

What you need to provide

Apply as early as possible so we have time to assess your application.

Discretionary Hardship Relief

In exceptional circumstances the council may award relief where it is satisfied payment of the bill will cause a business severe financial hardship.

This will only be considered where it is evident that doing so would be in the interests of the wider community. This can be because

failure to grant the relief would result in the loss of a unique and regularly required service, and/or because the failure to grant relief would directly result in a significant loss of jobs in the local community.

We consider:

- Details of the unique and regularly required service provided
- Details of how much is outstanding
- Details of their current financial circumstance, including details of any assets or security held, and including details of debts owed to other creditors
- Copies of their latest audited accounts, or if the business has not yet submitted accounts then an up to date income statement and/or balance sheet will be required
- Details of the company, such as the product sold, the customer base, numbers in the workforce

You must also provide details of any [MFA](#) received.

Part Occupied Property Relief (S44A)

You may be able to get relief if part of your property is temporarily unused for no more than six months within a 12 month period.

Who can apply

You may qualify if:

- You are gradually moving into a property
- You are gradually moving out
- You are occupying the premises temporarily (for example, while your main premises are refurbished or repaired)

What you need to provide

Applications must be made in writing and supported by:

- A completed application form, and
- Detailed scaled plans which outline the whole property and indicate the partly occupied/unoccupied parts, and
- Details of the planned period of time for the part occupation, and
- Details of future intentions, and
- Details of the cause for the part occupation

We may arrange an inspection before making a decision.

Relief periods

Relief normally begins on the date of your application and can last for:

- Up to 3 months for most properties
- Up to 6 months for industrial properties

Relief will end if the extent of occupation changes, the financial year ends, a new relief period begins, or the property becomes fully occupied or fully unoccupied, even if the 3 or 6 month period has not finished.

Time limits

We cannot deal with retrospective applications for part occupied relief. The precise wording of the regulations means applications can only be considered where the property is partly occupied at the time of the application being made.

If agreed, we will request a certification of apportionment from the Valuation Office Agency to split the property into two parts - an occupied and unoccupied part, so we can apply a 3 or 6 month exemption on the unoccupied part, and once the certificate has been returned we will recalculate your bill.

Pub and Live Music Venue Relief (2026/27)

Eligible properties can receive 15% off their 2026/27 business rates bill.

What counts as a pub

Your property must:

- Be open to the public
- Allow free entry (except occasional events)
- Serve drinks without requiring food purchase
- Serve drinks at a bar

Restaurants, cafés, nightclubs, hotels, sports venues, cinemas, theatres, museums and festival sites do not qualify.

What counts as a live music venue

Your property must:

- Be mainly used for live music performances
- Provide live music to entertain an audience

Other activities are allowed if they are incidental and don't change the main use of the building

Many eligible properties already have this relief applied automatically but if it does not appear on your bill and you believe you qualify, you can apply. This relief is counted towards [MFA](#) so if you have received this relief but do not think you should be eligible then you should tell us straight away.

[Apply for business rates relief](#)

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