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Business rates relief

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There are a number of reliefs and exemptions available for local business depending on the size of their premises and how it is used. The most common reliefs and exemptions are detailed for occupied and unoccupied empty premises.

Occupied properties

Small business rate relief

You may be eligible for small business rate relief if you submit an application and:

- Your property's [rateable value](#) is less than £15,000, **or**
- Your business only uses one property - you may still be able to get relief if you use more

What you receive

If you meet the qualifying criteria you will not pay business rates on a property with a rateable value of £12,000 or less.

For properties with a rateable value of £12,001 to £15,000, the rate of relief will go down gradually from 100% to 0%.

Examples

If your rateable value is £13,500, you'll get 50% off your bill. If your rateable value is £14,000, you'll get 33% off.

If you use more than one property

If you take on an additional second property you can continue to receive any existing relief on your main property for 12 months.

If you have multiple properties you can still receive small business rate relief on your main property after this if both the following apply:

- None of your other properties have a rateable value above £2,899, **and**
- The total rateable value of all your properties is less than £20,000

You're a small business but do not qualify for small business rate relief

If your property has a rateable value below £51,000, your bill will be calculated using the small business multiplier, which is lower than the standard one which means you will pay slightly less. The small business multiplier is £0.499 and the standard multiplier is £0.512 from 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023.

Retail discount

You could qualify for a retail discount if your premises is open for trade to visiting members of the public and it is officially described in the rating list as being:

- A shop
- A restaurant, café, bar or pub

What you receive

If you are eligible you will receive:

- 75% off your business rates bills for 2023 to 2024 - up to a total value of £110,000

Mandatory charitable relief

Charities and community amateur sports clubs can apply for charitable rate relief of up to 80% if a property is used for charitable purposes.

To qualify for this relief you will need to be a charity registered with the Charity Commission or a community amateur sports club registered with HMRC and the premises will need to have been used wholly or mainly for charitable purposes.

Exempt buildings

Certain properties are exempt from business rates. This means they do not appear in the rating list and the local authority cannot charge business rates.

You may not have to pay business rates on:

- Agricultural land and buildings, including fish farms
- Buildings used for training or welfare of disabled people
- Buildings registered for public religious worship or church halls

However, there are strict legal requirements for these exemptions and an application needs to be made to the Valuation Office Agency to remove the property from the rating list.

You can report that you think it should be exempt using the [Valuation Office Agency service](#). Blackpool Council are not involved in this process.

Empty properties

You do not have to pay business rates on empty property for the first 3 months since it became empty. After this time, most businesses must pay full business rates.

Some properties can receive extended empty property relief if they are:

- Industrial premises (for example warehouses) are exempt for a further 3 months (6 months in total)
- Listed buildings - indefinitely, or until they are reoccupied
- Buildings with a rateable value under £2,900 - until they're reoccupied
- Properties owned by charities - only if the property's next use will be for charitable purposes
- Community amateur sports clubs buildings - only if the next use will be as a sports club

Improvement relief

If you make certain improvements to your property, you may get relief from higher business rates bills.

You do not need to apply for improvement relief or do anything differently. If you meet the necessary requirements, your council will apply the relief to your bills.

[Find out more about which improvements are eligible.](#)

If you have questions about a certificate of qualifying works, please contact the Valuation Office Agency (VOA) at the email address on your certificate. Please note that the VOA cannot answer queries about the occupation condition or your business rates bill.

Improvement relief from 1 April 2024

- Improvement relief supports businesses who have invested in their property
- It provides relief from higher business rates bills, where the increase in your bill was due to making certain improvements to your property
- The relief lasts for 12 months from when the improvement works were completed

Eligibility

- You do not need to apply for improvement relief or do anything differently
- Your local council will apply the relief to your bills if you are eligible

To be eligible for improvement relief, you must:

- Have qualifying improvement works, and
- Meet the occupation condition.

More information

- You will receive a certificate from the Valuation Office Agency (VOA) if you have qualifying works. The VOA will give the same information to your local council
- The council will apply the relief and send you a revised bill if they are satisfied that you meet the occupation requirements. This means that you have occupied the property during and after the improvement works.

VOA Certificate

- If you have received a certificate of qualifying works from the VOA, this means that you may be eligible for improvement relief
- Improvement relief provides relief from higher business rates bills, where the increase in your bill was due to making certain improvements to your property
- The VOA will send this information to your local council
- Your local council will apply the relief to your business rates bill if you also meet the occupation condition

Apply for business rates relief

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