

Mobile Workers Support Grant

Having spent much of yesterday listening to concerns around the application and distribution of the Mobile Workers Support Grant. We the licencing committee, the licensing team and the grant administrator want to provide guidance, give reassurances and clarify the requirements and qualifications of said grant.

Firstly, it has been agreed following discussions between councillors and the grants administration team that this grant will be open to any driver with a registered Southampton licence and reside in an address with an SO Post Code. This will capture all the drivers that work in Southampton supporting Southampton residents and businesses.

There are restrictions placed upon the grant scheme by government and we have to demonstrate due diligence and expect to be audited on how the grant was distributed. This, together with the desire to make payments as speedily as possible, all contributed to the creation of the application process.

Council Tax number:

This should be provided even if a driver is not the registered Council Tax payee. It helps in confirming their address as well as providing a pathway for future communications, and is an established confirmation of secondary ID. This is also a safeguard against fraudulent activity.

Bank Statements:

These are necessary; this information is essential not least to enable us to check payment details so that the grant reaches its recipient in a timely manner and without error. Experience demonstrates 40% of applicants provide incorrect banking details, this then adds a huge burden on the administrators and significantly delays the processing of payments. These statements are not audited regarding income, as this particular grant is not income means tested.

National Insurance Number:

Please ensure that you provide a National Insurance Number as we will have to refuse any application without one

Working Outside the Trade:

Working to support your family with other work, such as delivery driving, does NOT impact your eligibility for this grant. We understand the need

to source additional means of income at this difficult time and as such, this information is helpful in understanding the sector and how the pandemic may have impacted on driver work patterns. So please complete as appropriate.

We wish to assure all in the taxi trade that it is our intention to ensure that every penny earmarked for grants is distributed in full across the trade to all sectors and all members no matter their background, provided we are satisfied to their legitimacy.

We are fully aware of the economic hardship that many are facing across the sector and in fact the City as a whole. It is our hope that these grants begin to help in any future recovery. We do not suggest that this is in any way the whole solution and look to work with the trade over the coming months to find resolutions where possible.

To each of you, you have our sincerest respect for the way you have served this community throughout the pandemic.

Cllr. McEwing - Chair - Licencing Committee

Cllr. Matt Renyard – Vice Chair - Licencing Committee

Mr. Phil Bates - Licencing Manager

Mr. Matthew Hill – Economic Development Operations Manager
(Growth)

19th March 2021

The online form is comparable with other authorities and drivers also need to be aware that grants are taxable. It is likely that HMRC will be asked by GOV to run checks on our schemes and also cross-reference with the SEISS.