



Small Business Rate Relief Fact Sheet

The Small Business Rate Relief Scheme is a new Northern Ireland Government scheme.

The aim is to support the growth and sustainability of small businesses in Northern Ireland. This fact sheet answers any questions that you may have about the scheme.

What is the Small Business Rate Relief Scheme?

The Small Business Rate Relief Scheme is a new Northern Ireland Government initiative that will provide some small business owners with rate relief.

Who is eligible?

Eligibility is based on the net annual value (NAV) of each business property. The net annual value is also known as the rateable value of a non domestic property.

There are two levels of Small Business Rate Relief:

1. Business properties with an NAV of £2,000 or less
2. Business properties with an NAV of more than £2,000 but not more than £5,000

How much relief will I receive?

The amount of relief you receive will be dependent on the net annual value (NAV) of each of your properties:

1. Business properties with an NAV of £2,000 or less will receive a reduction of 50% relief
2. While those with an NAV of more than £2,000 but not more than £5,000 will receive 25% relief

The Small Business Rate Relief will provide an average relief of between £300 and £430 per year.

How do I apply?

There is no application procedure for the Small Business Rate Relief.

Instead, relief will be applied automatically by Land & Property Services to all businesses that qualify. This will make sure that all who are eligible will receive the benefit of the rate relief immediately.

There may be occasions, due to data quality issues, when we may not have the relevant information to apply the relief automatically, or we may have awarded it when it is not due. If you think that you should have been awarded the relief, or you believe you have been awarded it in error, please contact Land & Property Services immediately by phoning 101.

When will I receive the Small Business Rate Relief?

Qualifying businesses will receive the relief on their April 2010 bill and each subsequent annual bill during the life of the scheme.

What sort of businesses qualify?

All business sectors are entitled. This is provided that the premises in question are within the net annual value limits.

LPS does not hold information on whether a business ratepayer is a commercial enterprise or other organisation. This means that as this relief is applied automatically, there will be business ratepayers who are not commercial undertakings (such as small clubs) who will be eligible.

There is special provision for small post offices and information about this scheme can be found online at www.lpsni.gov.uk.

Are there any exclusions?

Excluded are properties that are unoccupied or partially unoccupied, ATMs, property used for the display of advertisements, car parks, sewage works, telecommunications masts and government buildings.

Why is net annual value (NAV) used?

It is much easier to administer, for ratepayers and government, than a scheme that is dependent on employment and turnover thresholds. It was decided to use the tried and tested criteria used in the rest of the UK namely NAV thresholds. This means that the scheme is really a small business premises relief scheme and because of this there will be small businesses that will not qualify.

How do I find out what my net annual value limits are?

Go to <http://lpsni.gov.uk/vListNDN/search.asp?submit=form> to search for the net annual value of your property. Alternatively this information should be on your rate bill.

Why are the thresholds not higher?

The thresholds adopted are those that applied to the original Small Business Rate Relief Scheme in Wales, which was introduced in 2007. The Small Business Rate Relief Scheme will cost our Government around £9m a year. Higher thresholds would render the scheme unaffordable.

How long is it for?

It is intended that the scheme will have a life of 5 years and it will be reviewed before then to establish its effectiveness and value for money.

Who do I contact for more information?

For more information, please phone 101.