

Aga Khan Economic Planning Board for Scandinavia
Guidance Notes for Businesses and Employees regarding CoronaVirus
(Last Updated: 10 April 2020)

Finland

The coronavirus will have dramatic effects on business activities, initially on service companies in sectors such as tourism and catering, but over time the effects will spread to all sectors. The effects will be immediate on many sole entrepreneurs and SMEs.

Support for business

- In the first step businesses are advised to contact their own bank and other financing providers. Due to the exceptional situation caused by the coronavirus, banks are prepared to discuss arrangements such as loan repayment holidays and repayment rescheduling. Actions taken by the central government make banks better equipped to provide financing to companies.
- The Government has prepared an extensive package of approximately EUR 15 billion to support companies and to alleviate the negative effects of the coronavirus epidemic. Companies are advised to first contact their own bank. Business Finland's grant authorisations will be increased by EUR 150 million to permit immediate business support measures. ELY Centres' grant authorisations for business development projects will be increased by EUR 50 million. More information on this is available [here](#).
- Finnvera (Government organization) primarily offers guarantees; i.e. banks provide financing, and Finnvera provides the guarantee. Finnvera also grants loans. You can find the information regarding Finnvera [here](#).
- Business Finland is also providing loans to SME's and midcaps operating in Finland whose businesses are suffering from the coronavirus situation. They have increased their grant by EUR 150 million to permit immediate business support measures. You can find the information on the link of Business Finland [here](#).
- As a temporary measure, entrepreneurs will be entitled to labour market support on the grounds of sudden and unforeseen decline in the demand due to the coronavirus epidemic. Labour market support is one form of unemployment benefits.
- The Tax Administration will ease the tax payment arrangements for businesses, and the Government has proposed a lower interest rate on the late payment of taxes that are covered by a payment schedule.

Support for employees

- Employees may stay out of work if their presence at home is necessary e.g. to take care of small children as daycare centres or schools have been closed down. The law does not entitle to paid absence in such cases, but there may be regulations concerning this in the collective agreements. People should check if this is the case.
- The Social Insurance Institution of Finland can pay an infectious disease daily allowance when an employee is ordered to be absent from work to prevent the spread of an infectious disease, such as a coronavirus.
- If the employee has been quarantined under the Communicable Diseases Act, he or she is entitled to a 100% daily allowance for the duration of the quarantine. If the employer pays a salary during this period, they have the right to receive the daily allowance.
- The obligation to provide a sick leave certificate is laid down in the Employment Contracts Act and stipulated in collective agreements. To avoid unnecessary burden on healthcare personnel and to prevent the spread of the coronavirus, labour market organisations have issued recommendations that the employee's own statement is sufficient to justify the sick-leave pay.
- Starting from 1 April 2020, employers have the right to lay off an employee in a fixed-term employment relationship under the same conditions as an employee with an employment contract of unspecified duration. This amendment is intended to be in force for three months, or until 30 June 2020.
- If you have been unemployed due to the current situation you can contact your own unemployment fund or Kela, the Social Insurance Institution of Finland. Based on unemployment, you are entitled either to unemployment allowance (earnings-related or basic) or to labour market support. Further information on [unemployment benefits is available on Kela's website](#).
- The Livelihood for students will continue as before. But if a student has an internship and it gets closed due to the corona situation. The changed situation must be reported to the TE Office and the Service Sector Unemployment Insurance Fund.

For further details please check the information [here](#) and check this [link](#) as well.

The situation is changing rapidly and the above may change in the coming weeks. Additional measures can also be added. It is therefore recommended to monitor information from the government to ensure that you always have the most up-to-date information.