



06<sup>th</sup> November 2020

## **JIB-PMES Participant employer update**

### **1. Government Support for Employers (Important: This revises some of the information circulated in our last update (sent out 06<sup>th</sup> October 2020))**

#### **1.1 The Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme (CJRS)**

Following the Government's decision to impose a second National Lockdown from 05/11/2020, the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme has been extended until the end of March 2021. The current rates of support (November 2020) are as follows:

- Government will provide up to 80% of furloughed workers wages (up to a maximum of £2,500 per month); Employers will continue to pay NI and pension contributions.
- Flexible furlough can still be agreed upon, between the employer and employees where businesses remain open
- The employer will meet the costs for any hours worked
- All operatives are eligible for inclusion in the 'November' CJRS as long as they were enrolled on their employer's PAYE scheme at 23.39 on 30<sup>th</sup> October 2020.

The above rates of support will be reviewed in January to determine whether any changes will be made to the contribution rates up until the scheme closes on March 31<sup>st</sup> 2021. The CJRS bonus payments which were due to be paid in February 2021 have now also been postponed. The Government has said that an alternative retention incentive will be out in place at the appropriate time.

The latest information on guidance on the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme is available on the Gov.UK website via the following link: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/coronavirus-job-retention-scheme>

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#### **1.2 JIB-PMES Board determination on Government Support Schemes for employers**

The JIB-PMES Board industrial parties signatory representatives (APHC, NFB and Unite the Union) to the JIB-PMES National Working Rule Agreement, have agreed the following determination:

*'This determination has been made in the interests of JIB-PMES participating employers and their employees to mitigate against the unpredictability of these difficult and unprecedented times.*

*It should be noted that the 37.5 hour guaranteed working week remains a cornerstone of the JIB-PMES National Working Rule Agreement*

*It has been agreed that for a limited period, operatives can be paid in accordance with the government's Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme. This will continue to be reviewed on a regular basis.'*

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**Note of reminder (NWR Appendix H 2.2):**

*“It is recommended in the light of redundancy that employers consult with Unite the Union, if the number of operatives being made redundant in any one instance is less than the statutory minimum of 20. If the number is 20 or more, then the employer MUST consult with Unite the Union, which shall have sole bargaining rights in this matter.”* If this applies, please contact the JIB-PMES and we will put you in touch with the appropriate Officer from Unite.

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**2. JIB-PMES Sickness Benefit claim procedure for operatives required to ‘self-isolate’ due to Covid-19**

The JIB-PMES Sickness Benefit scheme pays operatives sickness benefit at the appropriate rate from the 4<sup>th</sup> day of illness (i.e. after 3 days ‘waiting time’ [waiting time days are paid in full if the period of illness extends beyond 4 weeks]).

Current government guidance is that anyone who has been in contact with someone who has been confirmed with a case of Covid-19, or is showing symptoms of Covid-19 and is awaiting the results of a test, should self-isolate for a period of 14 days from the last time that they were in contact with the infected/symptomatic person.

If you have operatives who have been asked to self-isolate, you should ask them to go online and complete a Covid-19 isolation note:

- <https://111.nhs.uk/isolation-note/>

Once completed, the operative should send a copy of the note to you, as their employer. If you, as the employer need to check the validity of an isolation note, you can do so via the following link:

- <https://111.nhs.uk/isolation-note/check>

In cases where a valid NHS Covid-19 isolation note is provided in support of a JIB-PMES Sickness Benefit claim, the JIB-PMES will pay the appropriate level of sickness benefit for the operative up to a maximum of 14 days, or until the operative returns to work (whichever is sooner). ***The JIB-PMES will undertake checks to confirm the validity of isolation notes.***

**Note:** *Sickness claims for any illness or injury other than those for Covid-19 should be made in the usual manner. In such cases the usual scheme conditions apply (benefits are payable from the 4<sup>th</sup> day of illness, and only up to 7 days if an operative ‘self-certificates’ without providing a valid doctor’s note).*

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**3. Reminder: Access to welfare benefits**

Please note that your ability to access the full range of JIB-PMES welfare benefits (including Death in Service benefit – which unfortunately has had to be accessed recently) is dependent on continued up to date payment of Holiday Credits or Welfare Benefit payments for your operatives.

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Wishing you all the best, and hoping you stay safe.

**JIB-PMES  
06/11/2020**