

No. 506/2020

19th October 2020

Dear Colleagues

POST OFFICE: COVID 19 – TAX RELIEF FOR HOMEWORKING

Branches are advised that as a response to the Covid-19 pandemic and in line with Government guidance, many of our Admin and Field Support members have been temporarily working from home due to their usual workplace(s) being closed. As homeworkers they are eligible to claim from HMRC for increased costs e.g. heating and electricity. To assist members with this claim is the following Joint Statement:

JOINT STATEMENT - TAX RELIEF FOR HOMEWORKERS UP TO £6 PER WEEK

In March at the outbreak of Covid-19 in the UK and the consequential lockdown, the Government issued guidelines specifying that "everyone should work from home, unless they cannot work from home". As a result the Post Office quickly responded by making the decision to close or partially close Post Office Headquarters in Finsbury Dials and other administrative buildings including Chesterfield, Farnworth, and Springburn. Consequently many colleagues, including field support workers, have been homeworking since the lockdown.

Tax Relief

If you are one of the colleagues working from home you may be able to claim tax relief via HMRC for some of the bills you have to pay because you have to work at home on a regular basis.

Here is the link to HMRC guidance. <https://www.gov.uk/tax-relief-for-employees/working-at-home>

How to claim the Tax Relief

For most people, the process simply requires completing a P87 form which can either be done via your Government Gateway account or by filling in a postal P87 form.

*You'll be asked for your employer's name and PAYE reference (which you can find on your payslip or P60), and your job title. For postal P87s, you will also need your National Insurance number. The key section for completing the form is **'Using your home as an office'**.*

In the online form, there are two boxes:

- **Amount paid by you.** *HMRC has stated that provided you've had increased costs all you need do is to put a total amount that's equivalent to £6 per week for the period you've been working from home. You won't need to show receipts.*
- **Amount paid to you by your employer.** *Post Office will not be reimbursing expenses, therefore, in this section you need to put £0.*

If you're claiming through the postal form, you'll need to add a 'Using your home as an office' expense manually in the 'Other expenses' section. As you claim retrospectively on expenses and, if you're only at home due to coronavirus, it might be worth waiting until you're back at work (or a few months anyway) then make the whole claim at once. Your tax code will likely be adjusted so you pay less tax over the year, as opposed to you getting a direct refund.

Once you've submitted the claim, if you do it online you may hear back within a couple of weeks unless, of course, HMRC is under pressure which would then take longer.

Finally, we hope the above information will assist in making the process of claiming tax relief easier. Your ability to adapt to the challenges we all face in the current time has ensured the Post Office has been able to operate effectively.

Thank you for your continued commitment and hard work.

*Lee Kelly
Employee Relations and
Policy Director*

*Andy Furey
Assistant Secretary
CWU*

I believe the details in the Joint Statement demonstrate the simplicity of the process and the fact that members can complete the forms online without the production of receipts, which will encourage them to apply for tax relief for homeworking.

Therefore, I would urge our Reps to bring this LTB and Joint Statement to the attention of Post Office members working from home, especially as we can see the homeworking arrangements continuing into next year.

Yours sincerely

Andy Furey
Assistant Secretary