

Dacorum Borough Council – Covid-19 Additional Relief Fund (CARF) policy

Background

1. CARF is a discretionary rate relief for 2021/22, awarded under section 47 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988 (LGFA).
2. Funding to provide this relief has been made available by the Government, with a maximum of £3,816,120 available for businesses in Dacorum.
3. CARF is available to ratepayers that have been adversely affected by the pandemic and have been unable to adequately adapt to the impact of the pandemic, but with certain exclusions.

Exclusions from eligibility

4. CARF will not be awarded where the ratepayer has received or would be entitled to support under the Extended Retail Discount, the Nursery Discount or the Airport and Ground Operations Support Scheme. This means that most businesses in the retail, hospitality, leisure, accommodation and childcare sectors.
5. CARF is also subject to subsidy limits for businesses (formerly known as state aid rules). Businesses receiving CARF must not exceed the subsidy limits detailed in paragraphs 19-23 of “COVID-19 Additional Relief Fund (CARF): Local Authority Guidance” [CARF Guidance.docx](https://www.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/91222/carf_guidance.pdf) ([publishing.service.gov.uk](https://www.publishing.service.gov.uk))
6. CARF will not be awarded for periods where a hereditament is unoccupied (although hereditaments which have been temporarily closed due to the Government’s advice on COVID-19 will be treated as occupied for the purposes of CARF).
7. Under the terms of section 47 LGFA, CARF cannot be awarded to DBC, or other precepting authorities such as town or parish councils or Herts CC.

Eligibility

8. Excepting those specific exclusions, applications from all other businesses will be considered on an individual basis. This is because without knowing the specific operational issues affecting businesses, it would not be appropriate for the Council to define the types of business that would benefit from this scheme. Therefore, the scheme is open to applications from any business that can demonstrate they have been adversely affected by the pandemic.
9. The following list sets out types of businesses that are unlikely to be eligible for relief unless they can demonstrate exceptional circumstances:
 - financial services, e.g. banks, building societies, cash points, bureaux de change, short-term loan providers
 - medical services that continued to be open during any lockdown period e.g. vets, dentists, doctors
 - professional services e.g. solicitors, accountants, insurance agents, financial advisors
 - Post Office sorting offices
 - education establishments e.g. schools, colleges and universities, except language schools or schools for overseas pupils
 - utilities, infrastructure, fuel and industrial businesses e.g. communication stations, water treatment plants, energy generation plants, aggregate processing, concrete plants, petrol stations

- where the ratepayer is in administration
- ratepayers already in receipt of, or eligible to apply for, another relief or reduction

Application process and amount of relief

10. Applications will be accepted within a six-week period, details of which will be published on the Council's website.
11. Ratepayers will be required to apply for CARF, and provide details of:
 - a) how the pandemic has affected their business, and
 - b) why they were unable to adequately adapt their business.
12. Once all applications have been received and reviewed, the percentage relief to be granted will be calculated based on the total net liability of all successful applicants. This amount will be set at a level to make the total value of relief awarded as near to the Government's allocation as possible.
13. Although generally there are no appeal rights in respect of discretionary reliefs, a review of an unsuccessful application will be considered if it is made in writing within 28 days of the original decision.