

Laois County Council

BUSINESS INCENTIVE SCHEME FOR VACANT PREMISES

Terms and Conditions

Please read this guide before completing the grant application form

1. Who/What buildings are eligible for this scheme?

The application must be made by either the property owner or leaseholder(s). In the case of the leaseholder, a minimum lease agreement of 12 months is required. Evidence of said lease agreement must be provided. Eligible buildings must be rateable.

2. What is the minimum vacancy period to avail of the grant?

Premises vacant for more than six months would be eligible to apply for the scheme.

3. What costs will the scheme cover?

The scheme covers 75% of the rates cost in Year 1, 50% of rates cost in Year 2, & 25% of the rates cost in Year 3. In year 4 the full amount of the rates costs are due and must be paid in that financial year.

4. What if you owe monies to Laois County Council?

The scheme shall not apply to any business or person who owes money for rates, contributions, or charges to Laois County Council. Contact rates@laoiscoco.ie to set up a payment plan if you are in arrears.

5. Property Compliance Requirements

The property must be in compliance with Planning Legislation, Architectural Conservation Area guidelines and/or protected structure guidelines.

6. Assessment

Applications will be assessed by the Business Support Unit & the Rates Department.

7. What business types are eligible for this scheme?

The grant awarded to successful applicants shall only apply to the following types of premises associated with establishing a new business:

- Use as a shop under class 1 of the Planning & Development Regulations 2011 (And any subsequent amendments).
- Office use as per class 2 & 3 of the aforementioned regulations,
- Use for medical or health professional clinic
- Use as a creche, day nursery or day centre.

8. What business types are not eligible for this scheme?

The types of businesses that are not eligible to apply for this scheme are defined as follows;

- Takeaways
- Amusement arcades or premises with gaming machines
- Head shops
- Betting Offices
- Nightclubs & Public Houses
- Unwanted Jewellery (Cash for Gold) or Clothes (Cash for Clothes)
- Premises where unauthorised developments have taken place or which are subject to enforcement proceedings.
- Businesses relocating to a similar sized premises within the designated areas will not qualify for grant relief under the scheme.

9. Can I reapply if I have previously been approved for funding?

Businesses who have been approved for the scheme in the previous 3 year period cannot reapply.

10. Freedom of Information Act & GDPR

Information on the Freedom of Information Act & General Data Protection Regulations can be accessed here: <https://laois.ie/departments/business-and-economic-development/freedom-of-information-act-gdpr/>