



# Empty Premises Relief

**The Empty Premises Relief scheme has been created to help get long term empty retail premises back into business. The rate relief scheme will come into effect from 1st April 2012.**

The scheme is primarily intended to bring long term empty shops back into use, helping to regenerate our high streets and core shopping areas.

This fact sheet has been developed to help answers some of your questions.

If you require this fact sheet in a different language or format, please dial **0300 200 7801** (calls charged at local rate). Dial **18001101** for textphone.

## Who will be eligible for the relief?

Any business ratepayer who moves into premises, which were previously used for retail purposes and have been unoccupied for 12 months or more, will be eligible.

## What about new properties which have never been occupied?

This type of property will be treated as being unoccupied from the date of the Completion Notice issued by LPS or from the date of entry into the Valuation List.

## How much relief will I receive under the scheme?

The scheme will effectively allow for 50% rate relief for up to a year once a long term empty retail premises becomes occupied.

However, due to European Union (EU) state aid regulations there will be a threshold on the amount of relief. Therefore, the relief awarded will be:

- 50% of the rates chargeable in relation to the net annual value (NAV) of the property; or
- an amount which does not contravene the EU State Aid thresholds.

## What is the EU State Aid threshold?

EU obligations dictate that a maximum level of relief can be awarded to businesses over a three year period. The current threshold is a rolling total of 200,000 euro over a three year period. Any grant aid you receive from other sources will count towards this total.

## If I rent the property from a Landlord am I still entitled to the relief?

Where the property is rented, and the landlord is liable to pay the rates, the landlord must pass the benefit onto the tenants.

## Will I be entitled to any other reliefs or exemptions while receiving Empty Premises Relief?

No. You are not entitled to any other occupied reliefs or exemptions during the period which Empty Property Relief has been awarded.

## Do I have to use the property for retail purposes after occupation?

No, the relief will apply whether or not the property is used for retail purposes on first occupation after it has been empty for at least 12 months.

## How do I apply?

You will have to complete an application form and submit this to Land & Property Services with any supporting documentation required.

You will be asked to declare any grant aid which you might have received from other sources on the application form together with any other information or evidence that LPS may require.

You can request the application form by calling the LPS helpline or downloading the form from the website [www.nibusinessinfo.co.uk/rates](http://www.nibusinessinfo.co.uk/rates)

### EMPTY PREMISES RELIEF APPLICATION FORM GUIDANCE NOTES

- Any business ratepayer who moves into a property from 1st April 2012 onwards may be entitled to empty premises relief if;
  - The property was previously used for retail purposes; **and**
  - It has been unoccupied for 12 months or more, immediately prior to your occupation date.
- We recommend that you read the Empty Premises Relief fact sheet before completing this application form.
- This application can be made by the owner of the business or the landlord, if they are the ratepayer. All necessary information and supporting evidence must be provided, if it is not the application will be rejected.
- We will acknowledge receipt of your application within 10 working days.

**PLEASE  
RETURN THE  
COMPLETED  
FORM TO:**

#### Land & Property Services

Application Based  
Rate Relief Team  
Lincoln Building  
27–45 Great Victoria  
Street  
Malone Lower  
BELFAST, BT2 7SL

**VISIT OR  
TELEPHONE:**

Visit

[www.nibusinessinfo.co.uk/rates](http://www.nibusinessinfo.co.uk/rates)

Dial **0300 200 7801** (calls charged at local rate) and ask for the Rate Relief Team

If outside NI, dial

**+44 28 9051 4613**

Textphone **18001101**



Land & Property Services.



An Agency within the Department of

**Finance and  
Personnel**

[www.dfpi.gov.uk](http://www.dfpi.gov.uk)

# EMPTY PREMISES RELIEF APPLICATION FORM



Land & Property Services®

If you require this application in a different language or format, please dial **0300 200 7801** (calls charged at local rate). Dial **18001101** for textphone.

## SECTION 1 – DETAILS OF PROPERTY

1.1 Ratepayer ID\*

1.2 Occupancy ID\*

1.3 Account ID\*

\*These reference numbers will be found on the rate bill.

1.4 Address of property

Postcode

1.5 When did the property become occupied? . . . . .

DD/MM/YYYY

1.6 Do you own the property? . . . . .  Yes  No

**If not**, please state the name and address of the landlord

1.7 Landlord's surname

1.8 Landlord's first name(s)

1.9 Landlord's address

Postcode

## SECTION 2 – APPLICANT DETAILS

2.1 Applicant's surname

2.2 Applicant's first name(s) in full

2.3 Correspondence address

Postcode

2.4 Contact telephone number

2.5 Email address

## SECTION 3 – EU STATE AID

Empty premises relief constitutes State Aid and will be given in compliance with the State Aid rules<sup>1</sup>. **State Aid is aid granted to a business by a public body, publicly funded body or a body under public sector control.**

Please provide details of any State Aid financial assistance that you have received or applied for during the current and previous two years and provide evidence (for example copies of award letters).

<sup>1</sup> Commission Regulation (EC) No 1998/2006 on de minimis aid

### SECTION 3 – EU STATE AID (CONTINUED)

3.1 Date of application

DD/MM/YYYY

3.2 Date assistance granted

DD/MM/YYYY

3.3 Name of body that provided assistance

3.4 Nature of assistance (eg grant, loan, etc)

3.5 Value of assistance (in sterling) . . . . .

£

### SECTION 4 – LANDLORD INFORMATION

If you rent your property you must ask your landlord to complete **Section 4** of this application form. If this section is not completed then your application may be rejected.

4.1 Who was the last occupier of the property?

4.2 What date did they leave the property? . . . . .

DD/MM/YYYY

4.3 What type of business was the property last used for?

  

### SECTION 5 – LANDLORD DECLARATION

I confirm that the information contained in **Section 4** is true and complete. I understand that if I am liable for rates on the property I must pass on the rate relief to the occupier.

5.1 Landlord's signature

5.2 Date

(DD/MM/YYYY)

### SECTION 6 – DECLARATION

- I confirm that the information I have provided in this form is true and complete. I understand that I must tell Land & Property Services (LPS) if there are any changes in circumstances relating to this application.
- I confirm that I give consent for LPS to seek any further information from other sources to assess this application.

6.1 Applicant's signature

6.2 Date

(DD/MM/YYYY)

**Data Protection:** LPS collects and stores information for the purpose of rating, valuation, mapping and land registration in Northern Ireland. LPS will use and disclose/share the information you provide in full compliance with the Data Protection Act 1998 and the Department of Finance and Personnel's Data Protection Policy.

### FOR INFORMATION

**You should continue to pay your rate account while your application is being considered.** This will enable you to reduce the amount owing if your application is unsuccessful. If your application for relief is successful, monies already paid will be refunded, if appropriate.