

Rural Rates Relief

Information Sheet

The business claiming relief must be located within a designated rural settlement with a population of less than 3,000 people.

General Stores

In order to qualify for 50% mandatory and 25% discretionary relief of rates, the following conditions must exist:

- the rateable value of the premises on which relief is being claimed is no greater than £8,500; and
- the whole or part of the lands and heritages is used as a qualifying general store for any period in a financial year if-
 - a) a trade or business consisting wholly or mainly of the sale by retail of food for human consumption (excluding confectionery) and general household goods is carried on there, and
 - b) such a trade or business is not carried on in any other lands and heritages or part of any lands and heritages, in the settlement concerned.

Post Offices

In order to qualify for 50% mandatory and 25% discretionary relief of rates, the following conditions must exist:

- the rateable value of the premises on which relief is being claimed is no greater than £8,500; and
- the whole or part of the lands and heritages is used as a qualifying post office for any period in a financial year if-
 - a) it is used for the purposes of the Post Office (within the meaning of the Post Office Act 1953), and
 - b) neither the whole nor part of other lands and heritages in the settlement concerned is so used.

Food Stores

In order to qualify for 50% mandatory and 25% discretionary relief of rates, the following conditions must exist:

- the rateable value of the premises on which relief is being claimed is no greater than £8,500; and
- the property is used as a qualifying food store if a trade or business consisting wholly or mainly of the sale by retail of food for human consumption (excluding confectionery and excluding the supply of food in the course of catering) is carried on there; and
- such a trade or business is not carried on in any other lands and heritages or part of any lands and heritages, in the settlement concerned.

- the supply of food in the course of catering includes-
 - a) any supply of food for consumption on the premises on which it is supplied; and
 - b) any supply of hot food for consumption off those premises.
 For the purposes of paragraph (b) above “hot food” means food which, or any part of which, has been heated for the purposes of enabling it to be consumed at a temperature above the ambient air temperature and is at the time of supply above that temperature.

This effectively means that butchers, fishmongers, grocers, etc, will qualify for relief whereas confectioners, cafes, restaurants and hot food take-aways will not.

Public Houses and Hotels

In order to qualify for 50% mandatory and 25% discretionary relief of rates, the following conditions must exist:

- the rateable value of the premises on which relief is being claimed is no greater than £12,750; and
- the whole or part of the lands and heritages in the settlement concerned is used as-
 - (a) a public house, where-
 - (i) the ratepayer in relation to that public house is not the ratepayer in relation to any other public house in Scotland; and
 - (ii) there is no hotel or other public house in the settlement concerned;
 or
 - (b) a hotel where-
 - (i) the ratepayer in relation to that hotel is not the ratepayer in relation to any other hotel in Scotland; and
 - (ii) there is no hotel or other public house in the settlement concerned

Filling Stations

In order to qualify for 50% mandatory and 50% discretionary relief of rates, the following conditions must exist:

- the rateable value of the premises on which relief is being claimed is no greater than £12,750; and
- where “a petrol filling station” means lands and heritages where petrol or other automotive fuels are sold by retail to the general public for fuelling motor vehicles intended or adapted for use on roads; and
- the whole or part of the lands and heritages in the settlement concerned is used as a petrol filling station, where the ratepayer in relation to that petrol filling station is not the ratepayer in relation to any other petrol filling station in Scotland.