



## Small independent Irish breweries face widespread closures owing to the current Covid-19 crisis

The independent Craft Brewers of Ireland is a trade organisation representing over 40 small Irish microbreweries.

Breweries like many other small businesses are attempting to conserve cash in order to pay staff and smaller suppliers. The current situation means that microbreweries are facing a very bleak future and the long term viability of many of our members will be highly questionable. If small breweries are unable to maintain some level of cashflow, they will be unable to continue for the future.

Most of our members are facing closures in the short term. Keg based trade with pubs represents a minimum of 80% of output for the majority of our members, thus temporary closures have already taken place and will continue to do so.

As an organisation and a community of local producers, we would like to express our thank the government for the work being carried out on behalf of all citizens at present and for the understanding showed to date by officials interacting with our members.

We respectfully request that the following measures be formally put in place so that as many as possible of our members and indeed all microbreweries will have a chance of trading in the future and that staff can be protected as well as small local suppliers also affected by this crisis.

- We are urgently seeking a formal pause on the collection of duty payments which are due to be paid this week
- Like other organisations involved in the hospitality sector, we are asking for a formal pause on collection of VAT payments owed whether or not direct debits are in place, though our members have been advised to submit and file as normal
- We would ask that the government strongly intervene to ensure that banks are measured in their approach to collection of payments and continue to supply credit where necessary
- We would call on the government to intervene with immediate effect to remove current exclusions in place whereby breweries cannot access loans from Microfinance Ireland. We request a temporary derogation for microbreweries as they are defined by revenue.
- Finally, we massively welcome the initiatives put in place by the department of social protection for businesses who have ceased trading and look forward to further initiatives for those who may continue to trade in a small way but have been forced to lay off staff. We also would like to pay tribute to our local revenue contacts who have championed the positions of individual breweries as things stand.

Peter Mosley, Chairperson of ICBI

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