
Notice of Ofwat's decision to extend the requirement for Retailers to have in place a Covid-19 Repayment Scheme until 31 July 2021

Retailer obligations under section 7.1.6 of the CPCoP

Section 7.1.6 of the CPCoP states that until 31 March 2021, or such other date as the Authority may notify in writing to Retailers, Retailers must have in place a Covid-19 Repayment Scheme. Section 7.1.6 of the CPCoP also notes that from 20 January 2021, and on a monthly basis thereafter, Retailers must submit to Ofwat and CCWater a report which includes data relating to customer uptake of repayment plans and the level of debt recovery action being carried out.

On 22 February 2021, the Government published its four-step roadmap, which set out a plan for the gradual easing of Covid-19 restrictions across England. The plan outlined an intention to ease restrictions on large sections of the economy from 12 April onwards, with the hope that all legal limits on social contact could be removed on 21 June (at the earliest). We considered the continued restrictions resulting from Covid-19 and recognised that some customers would continue to be impacted by business closures for some time. On the 18 March 2021, we [published a notice](#) confirming that we had extended the requirement for Retailers to have in place a Covid-19 Repayment Scheme until 30 June 2021.

Decision to further extend the period of these obligations

On 14 June 2021, the Government announced that it would be delaying the final step of the roadmap and the easing of all legal limits on social contact would not be removed until 19 July 2021. **We have decided therefore to further extend the requirement for Retailers to have in place a Covid-19 Repayment Scheme until 31 July 2021.** The Government has indicated that it may lift restrictions earlier than 19 July, should the data support such a decision. If restrictions are lifted earlier, this requirement will still remain in place until 31 July 2021.

As noted in our previous notice, this is not the date that all repayments must be made by, but instead is the date by which customers may be placed onto a Covid-19 Repayment Scheme. While the requirement under the CPCoP is now due to expire on 31 July 2021, **there is nothing to prevent Retailers from continuing to operate a Covid-19 repayment scheme for customers beyond this date.**

In line with this decision, the requirement for Retailers to submit monthly reports to Ofwat and CCWater, relating to the customer uptake of repayment plans and debt recovery action is also extended until 31 July 2021.

Signed

Georgina Mills,

Director of Business Retail Market