



Coronavirus Response

Final AXA update - Unoccupied businesses and premises

Further concessions to customers for the period July 16th to August 31st 2020 inclusive.

Cover for businesses and premises that continue to be unoccupied after July 15th 2020, due to lockdown, staff furloughing or working from home as a result of Covid-19.

As per previous communications, the continued temporary closure of many business premises due to the Covid-19 lockdown has significantly increased the number of unoccupied buildings, which have a higher risk of damage/loss from various causes such as water damage, arson and theft.

Standard AXA policies define a building as unoccupied if empty, or mainly empty, and not being fully utilised for business purposes for a period in excess of 30 days (please check your policy wording for full details).

In response to the current situation, we have, over recent months, supported all existing customers and selected new business customers by amending our normal unoccupancy conditions for businesses who have closed their business due to the Covid-19 lockdown.

Premises that are compulsorily closed

We will offer a final extension to previous concessions up to and including 31st August 2020 for:

- all existing customers (AXA policyholders prior to 16th March 2020)
- new business customers where we have previously confirmed we would extend our normal Unoccupancy terms (this will have been made clear when cover was incepted)

whose businesses remain compulsorily closed due to the lockdown (under the Health Protection (Coronavirus Restrictions) Regulations, as appropriate for England/Scotland/Wales/Northern Ireland, including any temporary local lockdown regulations). No compulsory terms will apply to these clients and there is no need to contact us to inform us of the unoccupancy.

After this date, our normal unoccupancy conditions will apply to all policyholders. Please contact us to inform us of any businesses or premises that are likely to remain closed after this date, with details of the premises and potential future unoccupancy, so we can discuss any variation to our normal conditions and any other required changes to the policy terms and conditions.



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Businesses where the insured has chosen not to reopen the premises

For businesses where closure is not mandated, but the business chose to remain temporarily closed, and you have declared to our underwriters that the premise / building is unoccupied, the following changes to our normal Empty Buildings Conditions will continue to apply up until and including 31st August 2020.

We will not:

- increase the rate or premium charged, or restrict the perils covered, unless the previous loss experience illustrates an underlying cause for concern.
- require the removal of contents or stock from the premises.
- require you to seal letterboxes.
- require the water supply to be isolated at the mains and all systems drained down.

We will however require the premises to be appropriately secured and protected as follows:

- the building must be inspected internally and externally at least once per week.
- all refuse and waste materials must be removed from the premises.
- the building must be secured, and all protective locks/alarms activated.
- any building / premises with a Material Damage sum insured larger than £5m will require an intruder alarm, to a standard acceptable to AXA, to be fitted and in use.
- Gas and electricity must be turned-off at the mains (other than any electricity supply supporting any intruder or fire alarm, security equipment or essential servers, Telephony or IT equipment).

Provided we have been notified of the Unoccupancy and the above conditions are complied with, full cover will remain in place pending any specific requirements being advised by our underwriters. As our policy advises, if you do not comply with these conditions you will not be covered, and we will not pay your claim.

After August 31st, AXA's normal Unoccupancy conditions will apply in full.

Could we please remind all our brokers and customers that AXA should already have been notified if a business premises has chosen to remain closed / unoccupied after June 26th. If for any reason any such premises have not yet been notified to us, please contact your AXA branch as a matter of urgency.

National or temporary local lockdowns commencing or continuing after 31st August 2020

The normal policy unoccupancy conditions will apply to any business that remains closed or becomes closed for business after 31st August 2020. However, for the sake of clarity, any business that resumes normal trading or business occupancy for a period of at least 7 calendar days will be regarded as reopened. In these circumstances any further future lockdown will only trigger the unoccupancy clause after a further period of 30 days closure.



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Clarification / definition of premises that are closed / Unoccupied

For the purposes of this clause, premises that are open for reduced trading hours, or that are open but only for reduced services (for example a restaurant providing a takeaway service or premises that are occupied one or two days per week), will not be regarded as empty / unoccupied.

Clarification / definition of “Mainly Unoccupied”

For the avoidance of doubt, businesses and premises that are mainly occupied (the business is operating / staffed within 50% or more of the building or site) will not be regarded as empty/unoccupied.

Please note:

- **For buildings that were empty or unoccupied prior to 16th March, for customers who have businesses or premises that are permanently closed and will not be reopening in their original form, and for non-qualifying new business customers, the unoccupancy/empty buildings conditions continue to apply in full.**
- **Wherever the words Vacant, Empty or Unoccupied are used we are referring to any building or business premises that is Wholly or Mainly Unoccupied as per AXA Policy Wordings.**

If you have any further questions regarding the application of our unoccupied/empty buildings conditions, please check our updated Q&A section on our [Coronavirus Hub](#) or discuss with your local AXA representative who will be happy to help.