



CREDIT GUARANTEE SCHEME FOR BUSINESSES

The Credit Guarantee Scheme for Businesses is sponsored by the Central Bank of Barbados in an effort to assist businesses in obtaining adequate security for their loans from credit institutions. The Scheme is designed to offer a substantial degree of protection to credit institutions against possible losses in respect of the credit granted to businesses.

Any credit institution desirous of participating in the Scheme may apply to the Central Bank to do so and, upon approval, will be able to obtain guarantees on credit facilities to eligible borrowers.

GENERAL GUARANTEES

Eligibility

The borrower may be an individual, partnership, a corporate body, or an association of individuals, and must have the ability to contract loans and other credit facilities.

To qualify as an **eligible business**, the borrower must **either** be a company incorporated under the Companies Act and approved as a small business in accordance with the Small Business Development Act, 1999-23 **or** meet the eligibility criteria listed below: -

- ✚ Gross sales/revenue must not exceed **\$4,000,000** per annum.
- ✚ Stated or paid-up capital must not exceed **\$2,000,000**.
- ✚ It is majority Barbadian-owned.
- ✚ It is not controlled by a business whose reserves and/or capital or non-Barbadian ownership exceeds the limits above.
- ✚ For an enterprise engaged in agriculture, acreage under cultivation must not exceed 25 acres.

In addition to the criteria listed above, eligible businesses should clearly demonstrate a need for financial assistance and/or security. Guarantees will be given on behalf of those businesses which demonstrate the greatest need in relation to their operating potential.

Eligible borrowers must have or make an equity contribution of at least 10% of the loan facility being sought. The borrowers' contribution may be in the form of equity in the business, a cash injection or tangible security with an equivalent net realizable value.

Credit institutions may apply for guarantees not only on behalf of businesses already established but also on behalf of those about to be established or contemplating expansion.

TYPES OF FACILITIES GUARANTEED

The Central Bank will guarantee short-term, medium-term as well as long-term credit facilities as follows:

-  Short-term facilities are guaranteed for a maximum of **three (3) years [including a maximum grace period of one (1) year]**.
-  Medium-term facilities for a maximum of **twelve (12) years [including a maximum grace period of one (1) year]**.
-  Long-term loans are guaranteed for up to **fifteen (15) years [including a maximum grace period of two (2) years]**.

Short-term loan facilities, up to a maximum of **\$300,000** will be guaranteed by the Central Bank where such facilities are for the purpose of meeting working capital requirements, (i.e. for the purpose of purchasing raw materials, fertilizers, trade merchandise, etc. and meeting labour costs and other direct operating expenses). Bids for Government or private contracts which require an initial deposit or bond are also included in such short-term facilities.

The repayment period for working capital may be extended for seven (7) years in cases where the working capital can be classified as “permanent working capital” and is directly related to loans granted for fixed asset purchases.

Medium-term and long-term loan facilities, up to a maximum of **\$700,000** will be guaranteed by the Central Bank where such facilities are for the purposes of purchasing fixed assets, machinery and equipment. Guarantees will be granted for a period not exceeding the useful life of the assets acquired or for a maximum period of fifteen (15) years, whichever is shorter.

EXTENT OF THE GUARANTEE

The Scheme offers commercial banks and other credit institutions protection against losses arising from the failure of borrowers to repay their loans. The risks covered under the guarantee are:

-  Insolvency of the borrower
-  Protracted default by the borrower

All advances given under short-term, medium-term and/or long-term guaranteed facilities will remain covered. In the event of loss except in the case of energy projects for individuals, the Central Bank will indemnify the credit institutions to the extent of 80% of the loss sustained. For credits provided to individuals in respect of **energy projects**, the Central Bank will indemnify the credit institution to the extent of **100%**.

The maximum amount of loss to be borne by the Central Bank shall not exceed **\$240,000** in respect of short-term facilities or **\$560,000** in respect of medium-term or long-term facilities.

EXTENT OF THE GUARANTEE (Continued)

However, in the case of a new (start-up) business the Central Bank will guarantee up to 90% of the loan provided there is an equity contribution of at least 10% (i.e. of the guaranteed loan) by the borrower and the business has not been in operation for more than eighteen months.

TOURISM LOAN GUARANTEE FACILITY

The Tourism Loan Guarantee Facility was established as an extension of the Credit Guarantee Scheme for Businesses.

Eligible Activities

New loans and debt service payments through approved financial intermediaries in respect of hotels and enterprises in the tourism sector that provide accommodation for tourists in Barbados will be eligible for guarantee support.

Extent of Guarantee

The value of guarantees shall be expressed in Barbados dollars and shall not exceed **BDS\$3.0 million in facilities for any one enterprise or BDS\$6.0 million for a group of associated enterprises**. Guarantees may be provided for up to 100% of facilities.

Maturity and Grace Periods

Maturity periods on guarantees for new short-term loans and debt service shall be according to the requirements of each sub-project but shall not exceed a maximum of **seven (7) years**.

A moratorium on debt service for up to **three (3) years** may be included for new loans. The maturity and grace period will depend on the capacity to repay and other characteristics of the particular project.

ELIGIBLE FACILITIES

Guarantees may be issued for:

-  Working capital purposes including the maintenance and minor repairs of hotels and enterprises providing accommodation for tourists in Barbados.

- ✚ Payment of debt service incurred by hotels and enterprises providing accommodation for tourists in Barbados.

Eligible Enterprises

Companies seeking support under this facility must have a Loan to Value (LTV) ratio of 80% or lower.

Interest Rates to Borrowers

Financial intermediaries may set interest rates on guaranteed facilities according to the risk profile of the respective project.

Guarantee Premium

An annual premium of up to 0.75% will be charged on guarantee facilities. Premiums may be payable in advance at the beginning of the calendar year or on the anniversary date of the guarantee.

HOW TO OBTAIN A GUARANTEE

Commercial banks and other credit institutions approved by the Central Bank, which are desirous of obtaining guarantees for loans to small and medium-sized businesses, should apply on the prescribed forms, to the Foreign Exchange & Export Credits Department of the Central Bank.

Small and medium-sized business owners can also submit their application forms and supporting documentation to the Central Bank of Barbados for submission to the financial institution of their choice.

Credit institutions should evaluate loan proposals from business applicants and indicate the extent of their loan participation to the Central Bank. Guarantee applications should be accompanied by all relevant documents and evidence supporting the borrower's financial position and creditworthiness.

Approved Financial Intermediaries providing loan facilities to businesses may apply to the Central Bank of Barbados for permission to approve loan guarantees under delegated authority. The maximum limit for loans approved **under delegated authority is \$250,000 for one business**. Special conditions will apply to the credit institutions to which this status is granted.

The following credit facilities will not be eligible for guarantee under the Scheme:

- ✚ Any credit facility in respect of which risks have already been covered by Government or under any other scheme.

- ✚ Any credit facility which does not conform to the credit regulation policy of the Central Bank of Barbados.
- ✚ Any credit facility to refinance an existing debt except where the Central Bank is satisfied that such refinancing has not arisen from default or inability of the borrower to repay an existing debt.

OBLIGATIONS

Borrowers

- ✚ It shall be the responsibility of the borrower to provide the credit institution with reliable and up-to-date information concerning the business in order that a complete assessment of the financial needs may be undertaken and the appropriate guarantee be provided by the Central Bank.
- ✚ The borrower must provide the credit institution and the Central Bank with timely reports on the operation of the business as may be required from time to time.
- ✚ The borrower will ordinarily be required to comply with the terms and conditions of any loan granted to him by a credit institution and must ensure that the repayment schedule, as specified under the terms of the Central Bank's Guarantee is complied with.

Credit Institutions

- ✚ It will be the responsibility of the credit institutions to ensure that loans granted under the Credit Guarantee Scheme are used for the intended purpose. To this end, the credit institutions should monitor the loans and report to the Central Bank, without delay any misuse of funds guaranteed under the Scheme.
- ✚ Credit institutions must comply with the terms and conditions of credit guarantees and ensure that the terms on which credit facilities are given do not in any way conflict with the provisions of the Credit Guarantee Scheme.

The Central Bank's approval must be sought for any modifications to credit facilities guaranteed under the Scheme.

Credit institutions will be required to certify that financial and other data submitted to the Central Bank on behalf of borrowers are relevant and adequately represent the current status of borrowers.

Enhancements, renewals and extensions of credit facilities guaranteed under the Credit Guarantee Scheme must be submitted to the Central Bank for approval. Requests for such enhancements, renewals and extensions should reach the Central Bank at least seven (7) days prior to the intended effective date.

Credit institutions will be required to take all normal and reasonable steps to deal with borrowers in default and to notify the Central Bank, in due course, of the necessary action taken against such borrowers.

In accordance with the terms and conditions of the Credit Guarantee Scheme for Businesses, credit institutions will be required to comply with any directives issued from time to time by the Foreign Exchange and Export Credits Department of the Central Bank of Barbados for the purpose of administering the Scheme.

RATES OF INTEREST AND PREMIUM

The rate of interest on loans guaranteed under the Scheme shall be determined by the individual credit institution. Such rates of interest should be determined after taking into consideration the percentage of the loan guaranteed and the risks associated with the entire loan.

A guarantee premium shall be payable by credit institutions at the rate of **0.75%** per annum on the highest amount of the facility outstanding at any time during any one calendar quarter. The liability to pay the premium shall be that of the credit institution.

BUSINESS PLAN CHECKLIST

-  The qualifications and experience of the management team.
-  An overview of the industry including its outlook.
-  Financial statements for the previous year.
-  Projected balance sheets, income statements and cash flow statements for at least three (3) years or the life of the loan.
-  A detailed breakdown of the projects costs and financing plan.
-  Copies of contracts or agreements received from potential customers for the sale of goods or services.
-  Copies of quotations or invoices received from suppliers for the purchase of goods and services for the project.
-  The project's implementation schedule.
-  Details of the product or service market including the competitors and pricing.
-  Number of employees after the project is completed (if applicable).
-  Technical or engineering consideration (where applicable).

BENEFITS

Businesses which make use of the facilities provided under this Scheme could derive substantial benefits including:

-  Adequate security for loans
-  Increased working capital
-  Expansion of fixed assets, machinery and equipment
-  Increased cash flow
-  Increased sales and profits
-  Lower rates of interest
-  Expansion and diversification of operations
-  Opportunity to employ more people and new skills
-  New technology
-  New products

Similarly, credit institutions which participate in this Scheme may derive several benefits including:

-  Added protection for loans
-  New business from new clients
-  Additional business from existing clients
-  Lower losses from loan defaults
-  Better working relationships with small clients
-  Opportunity to provide advisory services

Any further queries regarding the Credit Guarantee Scheme for Businesses should be directed to:

The Foreign Exchange and Export Credits Department
Central Bank of Barbados
Tom Adams Financial Centre
P.O. Box 1016
Bridgetown

Telephone: (246) 436-6870
Email: foreignexchange@centralbank.org.bb
Website: <http://www.centralbank.org.bb/>