

COVID-19 and the changing investor engagement landscape

What you need to know now

The COVID-19 pandemic has seen the government act quickly to offer companies some latitude when it comes to corporate actions, reporting and disclosure. From AGM requirements to accounts filing, here's a quickfire overview of all the key points and resources you need.

- 1 The Investment Association (IA) guidance**

The IA has sent a [letter](#) to FTSE 350 chairs outlining its views in light of COVID-19 on: engagement and communication, financial reporting, AGMs, dividends, executive pay and long-term capital raising.
- 2 AIM companies**

The [London Stock Exchange](#) has announced that AIM companies can apply for a three-month extension to the deadline for publication of their annual reports.
- 3 New FRC guidance**

The Financial Reporting Council has highlighted [key areas](#) for companies to think about as they prepare their reports and financial statements including: the going concern statement; business viability; and additional disclosures around risk management and internal control.
- 4 Filing accounts**

Companies will automatically be granted a [three-month extension](#) to the filing of their accounts with Companies House with a fast-track online process.
- 5 Listed companies**

The [FCA](#) has given listed companies two extra months to publish their annual report and accounts. They'll now have six months from the end of the financial year to publish.
- 6 New requirements for AGMs**

Companies can postpone their AGMs or hold them online, according to a [Government announcement](#). For more, check out [ICSA: The Chartered Governance Institute's](#) updated guidance on [holding AGMs](#) and [virtual board meetings](#).
- 7 Gender pay gap reporting**

The Government has suspended the [gender pay gap deadlines](#) for this reporting year. There will be no expectation on employers to report their data.
- 8 Preliminary results**

FCA [asked](#) all listed companies to delay the announcement of their preliminary results for at least two weeks to help maintain investor trust and reduce strain on auditors. It recently [confirmed](#) the moratorium can end on 5 April 2020.
- 9 Dividends**

The London Stock Exchange's [guidance](#) says companies have a deferral period of 30 business days for dividend payments, but not more than 60 days. The FRC has new guidance around how companies should act in the event they [can't pay a dividend](#).

For the latest on the above or more information on how COVID-19 might affect your reporting processes, contact RY at hello@ry.com

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