



Real Meal Deal: Guidance for Employees

We're campaigning for a 'Real Meal Deal' that could boost employee purchasing power and cut household food bills in half for millions across the UK. Implementing the scheme requires the Government to act — but we can only secure this if we show MPs that employees and businesses support the scheme.

You can help highlight the campaign by raising it with your employer and asking them to support our call for a Real Meal Deal. We've developed a short practical guide to help you talk about the scheme and convince your employer to take action.

1. General tips for talking about Meal Cards

- Start with why. Don't get stuck into the detail of how the scheme would work straight away. Talk about the benefits meal cards would provide in your opinion.
- Get personal. We've included some big stats below about the benefit we think meal cards could have for employees across the country. But don't be afraid of talking about your own views. What would an extra £10 a day mean to you personally?
- Be clear about where the money comes from. Meal cards would be funded by your employer thanks to a small change to the tax system, providing a tax exemption to both your employer and yourself. Employers would opt-in to the scheme and distribute the meal card to all employees.

2. Why do we need Meal Cards?

- Millions of employees are struggling with the rising cost of living. Meal cards would give employees a vital lifeline to help them secure their food budget during the working day.
- As well as helping employees, meal cards would also improve productivity at work by giving people a way to access high-quality nutrition. Research from the World Health Organisation has proved that good levels of nutrition during the working day can increase the productivity of the economy up to 20%.
- Meal cards would create jobs and boost the local economy. Businesses can be at the heart of rejuvenating local communities and driving post-pandemic recovery.

3. How would Meal Cards work?

- Meal cards are a simple tax-relief funded scheme worth up to £220 a month for employees.
- Companies buy vouchers provided by professional issuers.
- Once implemented, employers would be able to sign up to the scheme and all of their employees would receive a meal card loaded with up to £220 each month (£10 per working day) free of tax to spend on food and non-alcoholic beverages at local restaurants and food providers that opt-in to the scheme.
- Meal cards can be provided by the issuer as a physical or digital card, so it's always easily accessible.



4. Would Meal Cards actually work?

- Meal cards are proven to be highly successful, and similar schemes operate in 35 countries around the world, benefiting over 50 million people.
- The data clearly shows that where meal cards already exist, they create thousands of jobs in the hospitality sector, cut household food bills for employees by as much as 50%, and pump extra money into the economy.
- Economic analysis commissioned by the Real Meal Deal Campaign shows that introducing a meal card scheme would create 300,000 new jobs in the UK and add £6.4bn in Gross Value Added (GVA) to the UK economy.

Our website includes lots of information about the scheme, as well as resources to help your employer take action — you should ask them to visit realmealdeal.co.uk to learn more.