

Support for Victorian businesses

Economic Survival Package

The Victorian Government has established an unprecedented economic survival package to support Victorian businesses and workers through the devastating impacts of coronavirus.

The combined support for businesses, workers and the community exceeds \$3 billion.

Relief on JobKeeper payments

Businesses participating in the JobKeeper scheme in Victoria will be exempt from payroll tax and the WorkCover premium on payments to their employees if their staff are currently stood down.

Visit www.sro.vic.gov.au

Payroll tax refund

Businesses with annual taxable wages up to \$3 million will have their payroll tax for the 2019-20 financial year waived. This will support 24,000 businesses and up to 400,000 workers.

The State Revenue Office will directly contact eligible businesses to reimburse them for payroll tax already paid in the financial year.

Eligible businesses must continue to lodge returns but do not need to make further payments for this financial year.

These businesses can also defer payroll tax for the first quarter of the 2020-21 financial year.

More information about the administration of these relief measures will be sent directly to eligible businesses.

Visit www.sro.vic.gov.au

Liquor licence fees waived

Renewable liquor licence fees for 2020 will be waived. Businesses that have already paid will be reimbursed.

The State Revenue Office will administer the reimbursement, regardless of whether the licence fee was paid to it or the Victorian Commission for Gaming and Liquor Regulation.

Visit www.sro.vic.gov.au

Business Support Fund

The \$500 million Business Support Fund will provide one-off grants of \$10,000 to support affected businesses in the hardest hit sectors, including hospitality, tourism, accommodation and food services, arts and entertainment, health and beauty services, retail other than supermarket, groceries, liquor and pharmacy businesses, and other services such as real estate agents as assessed against the criteria.

The Fund eligibility criteria now also includes include all businesses with a wages bill less than the payroll tax threshold of \$650,000 that are participating in the Commonwealth Government's JobKeeper program, regardless of the sector they operate in.

The Government will work with the Victorian Chamber, Australian Hotels Association and Australian Industry Group to deliver the Fund, which will help these businesses survive and keep people in work. Applications are open until 1 June 2020.

Grants can be used towards business costs such as rent, utilities and salaries, and activities to support business continuity planning, such as seeking financial and legal advice.

Visit www.business.vic.gov.au

Working for Victoria Fund

Under the \$500 million Working for Victoria Fund, displaced workers will be eligible to apply for different types of work. This presents opportunities for paid work and an opportunity to contribute to Victoria's ability to manage this event and support the community.

Working for Victoria has partnered with Sidekicker to create an online platform to connect employers with workers who have lost their jobs.

Workers can use the platform to provide information about their job preferences, skills and experience and receive matching available employment opportunities.

Employers can register their requirements for talent and connect with candidates who meet their business needs.

Visit www.vic.gov.au/workingforvictoria

Fast tracking outstanding supplier invoices

The Government will pay all outstanding supplier invoices within 10 business days – ensuring funds reach businesses and the economy faster. The private sector is urged to do the same where possible.

Rent relief for tenants in government buildings

The Government will work directly with tenants in government buildings who can apply for rent relief. Private landlords are also being encouraged to provide rent relief or holidays to help businesses.

Land tax deferral

Landowners that have at least one non-residential property and total taxable landholdings below \$1 million have the option of deferring their 2020 land tax payment until after 31 December 2020.

The State Revenue Office will contact all taxpayers who are eligible for this deferral.

Visit www.sro.vic.gov.au

Freezing fees and fines

The Victorian Government will freeze a host of fees, charges and levies to reduce the financial burden on households in another package to support Victorian businesses, workers and families through the coronavirus crisis.

All fees and fines that were due to be increased in July at current levels – including drivers licenses, traffic infringements, court-imposed penalties and permit fees. The Fire Services Property Levy paid by all Victorian households will also be frozen at this year's collection level.

The Government has already announced it will defer the planned Landfill Levy increase due to the coronavirus pandemic.

Support for tenants and landlords

New temporary laws exist to protect Victorian tenants, landlords and the rental market from the impact of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.

These include a moratorium on evictions, land tax reductions and deferrals for landlords, a new dispute resolution process, supported by a \$500 million package providing land tax relief for landlords and rent relief for tenants experiencing financial hardship.

Supporting commercial tenants

Evictions will be banned for six months for the non-payment of rent for commercial tenancies involving small and medium-sized businesses.

Rental increases will also be banned for commercial and residential properties for the same period.

Small and medium sized businesses with an annual turnover under \$50 million per year who have experienced more than a 30 per cent reduction in turnover due to coronavirus can be granted rental waivers or deferrals.

This aligns with the principles agreed by National Cabinet and eligibility for the Commonwealth's JobKeeper scheme.

Land tax relief for landlords

Landlords who provide tenants affected by coronavirus with reasonable rent relief will be eligible for a 25 per cent reduction on the property's 2020 land tax.

This relief is also available to landowners who are unable to secure a tenant because of coronavirus.

Landlords can also defer the remainder of their 2020 land tax to 31 March 2021.

Visit www.sro.vic.gov.au

Business Victoria HOTLINE

Businesses across the state can now access information on dealing with COVID-19 by calling the Business Victoria hotline on **13 22 15**.

Coronavirus (COVID-19) updates

For the latest updates and advice on the novel coronavirus in Victoria, visit the DHHS website:

www.dhhs.vic.gov.au/coronavirus

Commonwealth Government support

The Commonwealth Government has also announced its economic response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The support for business includes:

- JobKeeper payment
- Boosting cash flow for employers
- Temporary relief for financially distressed businesses
- Increasing the Instant Asset Write-off
- Backing business investment
- Supporting apprentices and trainees

Visit www.business.gov.au/coronavirus

Mental health and wellbeing during the coronavirus pandemic

The outbreak of the coronavirus COVID-19 has impacted people in varying ways on an international scale. It is understandable during times like this that people may be feeling afraid, worried, anxious and overwhelmed by the constantly changing alerts and media coverage regarding the spread of the virus.

While it is important to stay informed, **lifeline.org.au** and **beyondblue.org.au** have some mental health and wellbeing tips and strategies to continue looking after ourselves and each other during these difficult times.

We would like to reassure Victorians that Lifeline and Beyond Blue services will continue as normal throughout the COVID-19 outbreak.

To contact Lifeline:

Phone:

13 11 14 (24 hours/7 days)

Text:

0477 13 11 14

(6pm – midnight AEDT, 7 nights)

Chat online:

www.lifeline.org.au/crisis-chat
(7pm - midnight, 7 nights)

To contact Beyond Blue:

Phone:

1300 22 4636 (24 hours/ 7days)

Chat online:

www.beyondblue.org.au/get-support/get-immediate-support (3pm - 12am, 7 days)

Email:

online.beyondblue.org.au/email/
Get a response in 24 hours