

Media Release

The Hon Luke Donnellan MP

Minister for Child Protection

Minister for Disability, Ageing and Carers



Sunday, 22 March 2020

EMERGENCY RELIEF PACKAGES FOR VICTORIANS WHO NEED IT MOST

Victorians self-isolating due to coronavirus (COVID-19) with no access to food and essential supplies will receive emergency relief packages under a program introduced by the Victorian Government.

The program will support people in mandatory self-isolation, who have little or no food, and no network of family and friends to support them. Each eligible household will receive a two-week supply of essential goods.

Food packages will include items such as long-life milk, pasta, cereal, canned vegetables and sugar. Personal care packages will also be distributed to eligible households and include soap, toothpaste and deodorant. Additional items may also be provided depending on the needs of the household, such as nappies or baby formula.

The packages will be delivered door-to-door, with other distribution points to be established as required. For people who are not eligible for the emergency relief packages, they are encouraged to be self-reliant and call on the help of family and friends wherever possible during the current pandemic.

The emergency relief program for those in mandatory self-isolation will be coordinated by the Red Cross in partnership with Foodbank Victoria and under the direction of the State Relief Coordinator.

It will start from Monday 23 March and can be accessed by calling Victoria's dedicated coronavirus hotline on 1800 675 398. The hotline can also refer people to other support services if needed.

As has made clear by the major supermarkets and the Victorian Farmers Federation, there is plenty of food for all Victorians and there is no need to panic buy.

To assist getting more stock to supermarkets, the Victorian Government has removed curfew restrictions on trucks across Victoria. And time limits on delivery vehicles parked in loading zones will be removed while they are dropping off or picking up goods.

These are simple initiatives, but are so important to ensure supermarkets keep getting the essential goods that they need. They will be in place for the next six months.

For more information about the support services people can call the coronavirus hotline on 1800 675 398 or visit the website: dhhs.vic.gov.au/coronavirus.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Disability, Ageing and Carers Luke Donnellan

"We need to look out for each other over the next few months - but for people who have no one nearby to support them, we'll make sure they get what they need."

"There is plenty of food for all Victorians so please don't take more than you need. But if you do find yourself isolated, and can't access the basics, we have emergency relief packages for you."

Quote attributable to Foodbank Victoria CEO David McNamara

"As you saw during the bushfire crisis, Foodbank Victoria is well-placed to assist all vulnerable Victorians. At this time, when everyone's feeling anxious and uncertain our message is - in partnership with the Government - we're here to protect and support you, as we've been doing for the past 90 years."

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