

Media Release

The Hon Daniel Andrews MP
Premier



Wednesday, 8 April 2020

HELPING PEOPLE GET BACK TO WORK, WORKING FOR VICTORIA

Almost 1,300 people who were looking for a job due to the coronavirus crisis are now working for Victoria thanks to the Victorian Government.

Premier Daniel Andrews joined Minister for Jobs Martin Pakula today to announce the first raft of positions secured through the *Working for Victoria Fund* – with thousands more to benefit in the coming weeks and months.

More than 60 people have taken up new roles with Foodbank – helping prepare care packages for people in need across Victoria. Foodbank has received a grant through the Fund to support the new team members.

Around 450 jobseekers have found work in roles connected to the quarantine program for returning international travellers – including transport operations, security and cleaning – while others are working in call centres, including as part of coronavirus contact tracing efforts, help lines and administration.

We are also putting the call out to businesses – if you need workers, we can match you with staff quickly. Free online courses in cleaning, food hygiene, first aid and other important skills are also now available to people who have lost their jobs and are registered with Working for Victoria – so they're ready for the call-up to work.

More than 2,500 workers are expected to be placed through the \$500 million *Working for Victoria Fund* by the end of next week. The Fund is part of the Government's \$1.7 billion Economic Survival Package that is providing a range of support to Victorian businesses.

Small businesses have taken up the offer of assistance with more than 16,000 applications for *Business Support Fund* grants – \$50 million in grants will have been paid to 5,000 businesses across the state by the end of today.

The Government has also paid back more than \$384 million in payroll tax refunds – putting cash back in the bank of nearly 17,000 small and medium-sized businesses.

Liquor licensing fees have been waived for more than 20,000 pubs, clubs, hotels and bottle-shops, and no tenant in a government building is paying rent – helping them survive to the other side of the crisis.

Working for Victoria is open to workers who have recently lost their job or casuals who no longer have shifts – including international students and temporary migrants. Relocation, accommodation and transport subsidies are available to eligible participants. Businesses and workers can register at vic.gov.au/workingforvictoria.

The Government will continue to work closely with business and unions and will announce further support over the coming weeks and months, in consultation with the Commonwealth, as the impacts of the coronavirus evolve.

Quote attributable to Premier Daniel Andrews

"This is just the beginning – over the coming weeks thousands of Victorians will be matched with employers that need staff, and given the support they need to skill up and start work."

Quote attributable to Minister for Jobs, Innovation and Trade Martin Pakula

"We're supporting jobs by providing businesses with grants and cash refunds – and trained, willing workers."

Quote attributable to Minister for Training and Skills Gayle Tierney

"Giving Victorians new skills will be vital in getting through this crisis – that's why we're offering these free online courses through Working for Victoria."

For information about coronavirus, visit coronavirus.vic.gov.au or call 1800 675 398