

# Media Release

**The Hon Gayle Tierney MLC**

Minister for Training and Skills

Minister for Higher Education



Friday, 15 May 2020

## NEW INITIATIVE TO KEEP APPRENTICES LEARNING

The Victorian Government is helping apprentices and trainees displaced by the coronavirus crisis to complete their apprenticeships and training and find work.

Minister for Training and Skills and Higher Education Gayle Tierney today announced the *Retrenched Apprentices and Trainees Program* – a collaboration with the Apprenticeship Employment Network, the peak body for group training employers.

The program has set up a register for retrenched apprentices and trainees. It will work actively to encourage impacted apprentices and trainees to sign up and will then assist them to stay engaged with their training and to place them with appropriate employers.

Early indications show that more than 850 Victorian apprentices and trainees had their training contracts put on hold across March and April due to the impacts of the coronavirus crisis. It is expected that in the short-term there will be a growing pool of displaced apprentices and trainees.

By helping them to complete their apprenticeships or traineeships, the program will ensure participants are well placed to contribute to a skilled and productive workforce as Victoria moves towards a period of recovery.

Apprentices and trainees who register will be supported by a project officer until they are placed with an employer.

Employers can also register at the site, making the process of matching them with displaced trainees and apprentices easier.

This initiative builds on the Government's \$4.7 million funding to extend the successful Apprenticeship Support Officer program, to continue to support apprentices.

A further \$43.8 million investment was made to lift the quality of apprenticeships by supporting the introduction of independent assessments, updated learning materials and the reintroduction of trade papers

The register is up and running at [aen.org.au/outoftrade](https://aen.org.au/outoftrade).

### Quotes attributable to Minister for Training and Skills and Higher Education Gayle Tierney

*"During times like these apprentices and trainees are among the most vulnerable when it comes to losing work. That's why we're taking action to support them, so they are well placed as we start to recover from the virus."*

*"I urge all apprentices and trainees who have been impacted by coronavirus to take advantage of this program – to help them keep learning and return to work."*