

Media Release

The Hon Gayle Tierney MLC

Minister for Training and Skills

Minister for Higher Education



Tuesday, 7 July 2020

FREE TAFE EXPANSION TO BOOST SKILLS AND DRIVE ECONOMIC RECOVERY

The Victorian Government will expand its signature Free TAFE program as part of a major new package of investments to boost skills, create jobs and drive the state's economic recovery from the coronavirus pandemic.

Minister for Training and Skills and Higher Education Gayle Tierney today announced \$163 million in targeted investments that will make it easier for people with pre-existing qualifications to retrain so they can get work in sectors that need more skilled workers.

It includes funding to get more Victorians impacted by coronavirus into training – particularly women and young people – in the second half of this year, for jobs in industries that will drive economic recovery.

The package will create 10,000 more Free TAFE places, and expand Free TAFE to include new full qualifications linked to jobs and government priorities.

These qualifications include Certificate IV in Mental Health Peer Work, Certificate III in Health Services Assistance, and Certificate III in Civil Construction Plant Operations.

There is an increased need for the Certificate IV in Mental Health Peer Work because of the impacts of coronavirus and in line with the interim recommendation from the Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health System.

Today's announcement will also increase the availability of targeted short courses to support upskilling for existing employees, and help retrenched workers and job seekers join professions where there are jobs available.

This includes the Course in Introduction to the NDIS (skill set), as well as \$3.9 million for an additional 11,000 places in accredited short courses and skill sets in construction across TAFE and industry-owned Registered Training Organisations until June 2021.

The Government is also allocating \$1.25 million to improve literacy, numeracy and digital skills to help more Victorians progress to further study or employment.

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

"We're giving Victorians workers and industry the skills they need to help us rebuild from coronavirus."

"This package will ensure more Victorians – particularly those hit hard by the pandemic – can get new skills and a good job."

Quote attributable to Minister for Mental Health Martin Foley

"Many Victorians are doing it tough this year, and the introduction of the Certificate IV in Mental Health Peer Work course to Free TAFE will help more Victorians get back on their feet."