

Media Release

The Hon Ben Carroll MP
Minister for Public Transport
Minister for Roads and Road Safety



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FUNDING BOOST FOR TAXIS AND COMMERCIAL PASSENGER VEHICLES

The Victorian Government is supporting the taxi and commercial passenger vehicle industry, ensuring the safety of drivers and vulnerable passengers relying on these services throughout the pandemic.

Based on advice from the Government Advisory Panel on Commercial Passenger Vehicles, the Government will invest \$22 million towards a range of initiatives to boost the industry and support vulnerable Victorians who rely on the service and drivers who have lost work with the reduction in trips.

More than \$6 million will be invested to subsidise the depot fees paid by vehicle owners to ensure wheelchair accessible vehicles are available for those who need them, while \$1.7 million will double the wheelchair lifting fee paid by Government for the next three months to give providers incentive to keep wheelchair vehicles operating.

The Multi Purpose Taxi Program subsidy will also be increased from 50 to 70 per cent per fare over the next three months to make rides more affordable for people who need them for essential journeys.

Relief for the industry will come with a refund of the Commercial Passenger Vehicle Service Levy paid by drivers in the 2019/2020 June quarter, putting money back into the pockets of drivers experiencing hardship.

In addition to these subsidies, there will be new strict cleaning standards applied across the taxi and commercial passenger vehicles for drivers and booking service providers based on the expert advice from the Department of Health and Human Services.

To ensure the safety of all passengers and drivers, the Government will deliver up to \$3.5 million worth of grants to support increased cleaning and sanitation of vehicles across the state – further reducing any risk of transmission in vehicles alongside the Government’s mandatory masks policy for those in Melbourne and Mitchell Shire.

The Government will invest \$1 million to establish a regional essential service fund to support struggling booking service providers in regional communities that rely on their services, ensuring vulnerable regional Victorians – including the elderly or people living with a disability – do not lose access to these vital services.

This package comes on top of measures the Government has already implemented to support the commercial passenger vehicle industry, including the pausing of regulatory fees, and the \$1500 Coronavirus Worker Support Payment, for drivers who contract the virus or are required to self-isolate.

The support package will begin rolling out in the coming weeks to support drivers through the pandemic and ensure the thousands of Victorians who rely on commercial passenger vehicles for essential travel have access to vehicles close to home.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Public Transport and Roads Ben Carroll

“Many Victorians still need to access essential medical care and supplies - with taxis and commercial passenger vehicles their only means of transport.”

“We’re providing a boost to this vital industry to move through and beyond the coronavirus pandemic - keeping drivers and passengers safe and ensuring a strong and sustainable industry into the future.”