

Media Release

The Hon Luke Donnellan MP
Minister for Child Protection
Minister for Disability, Ageing and Carers



Thursday, 11 March 2021

GEELONG TO SHARE IN EXPANDED FOOD RELIEF FUNDING

The Andrews Labor Government is boosting food relief funding for Geelong, so the local community gets the food support they need.

Minister for Disability, Ageing and Carers Luke Donnellan today joined Member for Geelong Christine Couzens at Geelong's Food Relief Centre to announce the centre will receive more than \$700,000 to boost its services as part of the Labor Government's regional and community food relief programs.

Community Food Relief Grants have been provided to support local community organisations supply food to Victorians in need during and after the pandemic – \$5 million was invested to support the 93 projects which will deliver an additional two million meals and 180,000 food hampers to Victorians in need.

The Geelong Food Relief Centre received \$70,000 for a purpose-built refrigerated food transport van to guarantee delivery of fresh food throughout rural Geelong, the Surf Coast and the Colac and Otway Shires.

Working in partnership with Deakin University, the Centre aims to streamline delivery of emergency food relief into isolated townships, boost cost effectiveness and improve service convenience. The centre provides support for around 48,000 people and 60 regional food agencies.

Under the *Building Regional Food Relief Networks* program, a further \$368,750 has been invested to expand and improve existing services while \$300,000 has been put towards the fit-out of the new Geelong Emergency Food Distribution Hub.

The Building Regional Food Relief Networks is a \$3.5 million partnership with Foodbank Victoria to increase capacity of food distribution to those in need in regional areas by sourcing food from regional producers and providing the appropriate storage and distribution.

The Geelong Food Relief Centre is one of five regional food distribution hubs which also includes Albury-Wodonga Foodshare, Warrnambool and District Foodshare, Bendigo Foodshare and Mildura Foodshare.

Since the start of the pandemic the Labor Government has invested more than \$25 million to support people when and where they need food. This is additional to the \$3.6 million the Government provides to Foodbank Victoria every year which provides 140,000 Victorians with food every month.

Quote attributable to Minister for Disability, Aging and Carers Luke Donnellan

"We are ensuring that Victorians not matter where they live, get the food relief they need, when they need it."

Quote attributable to Member for Geelong Christine Couzens

"The increased funding and regional food distribution hub will make a difference for Geelong families, in providing the essentials they need."

Quote attributable to Member for Lara John Eren

"Every Victorian has a right to food and essential items – this funding will help the Geelong Food Relief Centre cater for increased demand and ensure Victorians in need get the support they need."

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