

# Media Release

**The Hon James Merlino MP**  
Acting Premier  
Minister for Education  
Minister for Mental Health



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## TRAVEL VOUCHERS TO SUPPORT REGIONAL TOURISM BUSINESSES

The Victorian Government today announced a new round of travel vouchers as part of a package of support to boost tourism recovery right across regional Victoria.

Tourism operators in regional areas have been hit particularly hard by the effects of the pandemic. The latest round of regional travel vouchers will encourage Victorians to support attractions and accommodation providers across the state once it is safe to do so.

Victorians will have access to 80,000 regional travel vouchers valued at \$200 each to help operators affected by the current restrictions recover strongly.

The \$32.2 million *Regional Tourism Support Package* will also provide accommodation, attraction and experience providers with grant top-ups worth up to \$4,500 per business, while alpine businesses will receive up to \$15,000 to help them provide a COVIDSafe ski season.

A \$16 million investment will fund a fourth release of popular regional travel vouchers – 10,000 new vouchers and 70,000 vouchers allocated through previous rounds but not claimed. A release date for the vouchers and travel windows will be advised in due course.

Victorians snapped up 160,000 regional travel vouchers during the first three rounds of the *Regional Travel Voucher Scheme* and 40,000 for the *Melbourne Travel Voucher Scheme*. More than 88,000 regional vouchers have been claimed so far, with those travellers injecting an estimated \$130 million into local economies.

The travel period for round three of the *Regional Travel Voucher Scheme* will be extended by three weeks so people whose plans have been affected by the current restrictions can still experience the best of Victoria at a subsidised price.

The *Regional Tourism Support Package* also provides \$11.8 million to support eligible Victorian tourism businesses with grant top-ups for the current *Business Costs Assistance Program*. This means that all eligible tourism businesses in Victoria will receive a payment of \$7,000 under the program.

The *Alpine Support Program* invests \$4.4 million to support Victoria's alpine resorts as they prepare for the return of skiers and snowboarders. Grants of up to \$15,000 will be available for more than 300 businesses including hire outlets, shops, pubs, restaurants, cafes and adventure companies at Falls Creek, Mt Hotham, Mt Buller, Mt Stirling, Lake Mountain, Mt Baw Baw and Dinner Plain.

The grants will help businesses cover the costs of re-opening and implementing COVIDSafe measures, including buying equipment and supplies, developing COVIDSafe plans and training staff, as well as defraying everyday costs such as utility bills and rent.

More information about the *Regional Tourism Support Package* is available at [business.vic.gov.au/grants-and-programs/regional-tourism-support-package](https://business.vic.gov.au/grants-and-programs/regional-tourism-support-package).

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**Quotes attributable to Acting Premier James Merlino**

*“The effort to combat this outbreak makes a call on all of us – and we know that means a significant pause in the steady recovery being experienced in our tourism sector, especially across regional Victoria.”*

*“We have backed business with announcements over the past seven days and today we’re showing regional tourism businesses and their workers that we understand the pressures they face.”*

**Quote attributable to Minister for Tourism, Sport and Major Events Martin Pakula**

*“Travel vouchers provide a terrific incentive for Victorians to explore their own backyard and we know from recent experience that they will be popular.”*

**Quote attributable to Minister for Regional Development Mary-Anne Thomas**

*“Most people understand why there can’t be unchecked travel between Melbourne and regional Victoria at the moment – this support means businesses will be ready to welcome metropolitan visitors when it is safe to do so.”*

**Quote attributable to Minister for Small Business Jaala Pulford**

*“The Business Costs Assistance Program top-up payments mean eligible tourism businesses will receive a \$7,000 payment, regardless of where they are based. This is substantial and deserved support.”*