

# Media Release

**The Hon Jaala Pulford MLC**

Minister for Employment

Minister for Innovation, Medical Research and the Digital Economy

Minister for Small Business

Minister for Resources



Wednesday, 25 August 2021

## MORE RENT RELIEF FOR COMMERCIAL TENANTS

The Victorian Government has locked in further relief for commercial tenants struggling with rent payments, with new regulations finalised as part of the *Commercial Tenancy Relief Scheme*.

The scheme will help small and medium-sized businesses with an annual turnover of less than \$50 million that have experienced a loss in turnover of more than 30 per cent during the pandemic.

Eligibility for rent relief has been broadened, with tenants now able to choose three consecutive months between 1 April and 30 September 2021 to compare to their turnover in the same three months in 2019.

Businesses will get financial relief in the form of a proportionate reduction in rent. For example, a business with a turnover of 40 per cent of pre-pandemic levels can only be charged 40 per cent of its rent. Of the balance, at least half must be waived, with the remainder to be deferred.

As part of the scheme, the Victorian Small Business Commission will support tenants and landlords with information to negotiate an agreement and free mediation for those who need assistance.

New businesses will also be protected under the scheme, with any business which has opened since April 2019 eligible for assistance. Details on assistance for new businesses can be found on the VSBC website.

The Scheme will apply retrospectively from 28 July 2021 and will run until 15 January 2022.

To help landlords that are doing the right thing by eligible tenants, the Government will provide land tax relief of up to 25 per cent, in addition to any previous relief, with the support worth up to \$100 million.

Small landlords who can demonstrate acute hardship will be eligible to apply for payments as part of a \$20 million hardship fund.

Tenants and landlords can contact the Victorian Small Business Commission for further information on 13 87 22 or visit [vsbc.vic.gov.au](https://vsbc.vic.gov.au).

### Quotes attributable to Minister for Small Business Jaala Pulford

*"We know businesses are doing it tough – that's why it's important that we continue to back them with practical measures, including rent relief."*

*"We want everyone to get a fair outcome – the Victorian Small Business Commission will provide free support to businesses to help them negotiate an agreement with landlords, if they're unable to reach agreement themselves."*