

Media Release

The Hon Martin Pakula MP

Minister for Industry Support and Recovery
Minister for Trade
Minister for Business Precincts
Minister for Tourism, Sport and Major Events
Minister for Racing

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, 8 September 2021

SUPPORT CONTINUES FOR VICTORIA'S REGIONAL BUSINESSES

Cash grants for regional businesses most affected by the current lockdown will proceed next week, unaffected by today's announcement that restrictions in most areas outside of Melbourne will be lifted from Friday.

Minister for Industry Support and Recovery Martin Pakula and Minister for Small Business Jaala Pulford said full payment for the two weeks from 2-16 September – automatic deposits ranging from \$5,600 to \$40,000 – would go ahead, as had always been intended.

Business Costs Assistance Program Round Four grants will be made to about 18,000 regional business at tiered levels, depending on worker numbers.

Businesses with an annual payroll of up to \$650,000 will receive \$5,600 – equal to two weekly payments of \$2,800. Businesses with a payroll of \$650,000-\$3 million will get \$11,200 (two weekly payments of \$5,600) and businesses with a wages bill of \$3 million-\$10 million will receive \$16,800 (two weekly payments of \$8,400).

The grants can be used to pay for costs such as wages, rent, utilities and insurance by businesses including gyms, cafes, hairdressers, nail salons, dance and swim schools, and accommodation, tourism and events businesses.

Some 2,300 eligible cafes, restaurants, hotels and bars in regional areas will receive automatic payments through the *Licensed Hospitality Venue Fund*. Venues with a capacity of less than 100 people will receive \$10,000 for the fortnight, those with a capacity of 100-499 will receive \$20,000 while the largest venues will receive \$40,000.

The Victorian Government will assess which sectors remain under severely impacted settings before making further announcements on arrangements for the two-week period from 17 September.

The \$700 million *Small Business COVID Hardship Fund* provides \$20,000 to eligible businesses who do not qualify for other Government programs and is open to all Victorian businesses, regardless of location.

More than 16,000 Hardship Fund grants have so far been paid to businesses that have experienced a reduction in revenue of at least 70 per cent due to the effects of the pandemic.

The *Commercial Tenancy Relief Scheme* requires landlords to provide proportionate rent relief for businesses with a turnover of less than \$50 million that have experienced a fall in turnover of 30 per cent or greater, regardless of location. More information on the Scheme is available at vsbc.vic.gov.au or by calling 13 87 22.

The Government has provided more than \$10 billion in direct economic support to business since the start of the pandemic, including \$3.3 billion in cash grants to 145,000 businesses since the May/June lockdown.

For full information on available business support grants, go to business.vic.gov.au or call 13 22 15.

Quote attributable to Minister for Industry Support and Recovery Martin Pakula

"It's great news that lockdown will end in most of regional Victoria, and we're making sure that this much-needed support will get to businesses as quickly as possible."

Quote attributable to Minister for Small Business Jaala Pulford

"Regional businesses have shown amazing resilience but they're doing it tough – these grants will put them in a position to recover as we move towards those crucial 70 per cent and 80 per cent vaccination rates."

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