

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



Thursday, 16 September 2021

SUPPORTING REGIONAL BUSINESSES WHEN THEY NEED IT MOST

Support for licensed bars, cafes, hotels and clubs across regional Victoria will continue through September, and other businesses in regional areas will also be supported where ongoing restrictions severely affect operations.

With the City of Ballarat entering a seven-day lockdown, all eligible businesses in that local government area will receive *Business Costs Assistance Program* and *Licensed Hospitality Venue Fund* payments for the last two weeks of September – along with more than 100,000 metropolitan businesses.

Payments to businesses will range from \$5,600 to \$40,000 for the fortnight to help pay wages, rent, utilities and other ongoing expenses.

In recognition of ongoing patron and density limits, *Licensed Hospitality Venue Fund* payments will be made across the state for the period 17-30 September, regardless of location.

Some 2,300 eligible cafes, restaurants, hotels and bars in regional areas and more than 7,000 in metropolitan Melbourne will receive automatic payments. Venues with a capacity of under 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.

In addition to automatic *Business Costs Assistance Program* payments in Melbourne and the City of Ballarat, the Victorian Government has confirmed that payments under this program will be made for the next two weeks to eligible businesses outside these areas.

Eligible businesses include hospitality and accommodation operations, gyms, hair and nail salons, and tourism and events-related businesses. The full list of eligible ANZSIC codes for the *Business Costs Assistance Program* in regional Victoria outside the City of Ballarat will be available on the Business Victoria website from Friday.

Under the *Business Costs Assistance Program Round Four*, 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 and businesses with a wages bill of \$3 million-\$10 million will receive \$16,800.

The Victorian Government has provided more than \$10 billion in direct economic support to business since the start of the pandemic, including \$4.2 billion in cash grants to 145,000 businesses since the May/June lockdown.

The *Business Costs Assistance Program Round Four* and payments under the *Licensed Hospitality Fund* since 28 July 2021 are jointly funded by the Victorian and Commonwealth governments.

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

“This continuing support recognises the changed restrictions in regional Victoria, particularly in Ballarat. It’s about providing support to businesses most impacted and who are making sacrifices to keep our community safe.”

Quote attributable to Minister for Small Business Jaala Pulford

“Whether it’s in Ballarat or Bairnsdale, those businesses most affected by restrictions will continue to be supported as we move towards levels of vaccination that will allow us to re-open the economy – and stay open.”

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