

# 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, 23 February 2022

## MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT FOR THOSE WITH SMALL BUSINESSES IN MIND

Member-based business organisations are being offered tailored mental health and wellbeing support, through an Andrews Labor Government initiative.

Minister for Small Business Jaala Pulford today announced the *Mental Wellbeing of Business Communities Grants Program*, providing up to 200 member-based business communities with a \$15,000 grant for training and tailored support to manage stress and anxiety.

Under this program, a 'Business Community' is defined as a not-for-profit member-based organisation which represents, serves and advocates for its business members.

Eligible business communities include chambers of commerce, business councils, industry associations and trader groups, with the program set to have flow-on effects for the tens of thousands of Victorian small businesses they support.

The program is about providing practical and evidence-based strategies unique to businesses – with the business community organisation then encouraged to share the learned mental health and wellbeing solutions with their members to implement over the long term.

Grant recipients will nominate representatives to receive 10 hours of free mental health and wellbeing training plus an additional 12 hours of expert masterclasses which will help them design a care plan for their members.

The training will involve businesses collaborating on ideas of best practice for improving mental health including shifting ways of thinking and ideas on motivation.

This program forms part of the Victorian Government's \$26 million commitment to providing timely, needs-based support through the Wellbeing and Mental Health Support for Businesses Initiative, announced in August 2020.

For full details of the program and more information on other wellbeing resources for small businesses, visit [business.vic.gov.au](https://business.vic.gov.au).

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

*"Our small businesses have had massive challenges thrown at them for two years and while their resilience and ingenuity is inspirational, these pressures can take a toll."*

*"We're working closely with chambers and traders group so make sure they are equipped to support their members' health and well-being."*

### Quotes attributable to Minister for Mental Health James Merlino

*"This program will give small businesses the opportunity to learn effective strategies to improve mental wellbeing in the workplace."*

*"Supporting people when they need it most will drive change and reduce the stigma of mental health challenges facing the broader business community."*

**Media contact:** Stephanie Hobbs 0429 275 437 | [stephanie.hobbs@minstaff.vic.gov.au](mailto:stephanie.hobbs@minstaff.vic.gov.au)