

Media Release

The Hon Daniel Andrews MP
Premier



Tuesday, 18 October 2022

MORE HELP FOR VICTORIANS WHO NEED IT MOST

The Victorian Government is providing extra support to schools and kinders in flood-affected areas to make sure students don't miss out on vital learning or exams, alongside more food relief and a volunteer effort to support the state's recovery from the floods.

Families who have been directly affected by the floods will be able to send their three- and four-year-old children to kinder for free for Term 4. The Government will also deliver \$2 million in grants for sessional kinder services that have been damaged by the floods – or that have staff or families directly affected – to recover and rebuild.

With final VCE written exams beginning next week, the Government is providing more support for students whose homes or schools have been flood-affected during this critical last chapter of their secondary schooling.

The Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority and Department of Education and Training will work with schools to make sure no student is disadvantaged during this exam period, with Derived Examination Scores (DES) to be automatically available to students who are directly affected by the flooding.

A DES makes sure that, if any extenuating circumstances affect a student's exam period, their final result reflects the level of achievement that would be expected, based on the student's hard work demonstrated over the year.

A dedicated hotline has been set up for schools and VCE students who have been impacted by the floods, available daily from 8:00am until 10:30pm on 1800 717 588 or 2022VCE@education.vic.gov.au.

In addition to school support, the Government is making sure flood-affected communities don't experience food scarcity while supply chains are disrupted, with a \$5.5 million food relief package to deliver extra food to areas that need it most.

Food charities Foodbank Victoria, OzHarvest, Second Bite and FareShare will each receive up to \$750,000 to help with food purchasing, extra staffing and delivery logistics – while \$500,000 will help neighbourhood houses across the state to provide extra food in their communities and stay open for longer to support more Victorians.

The Government will also provide \$1 million for regional food hubs and multicultural food providers to make sure Victoria's diverse communities are supported with the food they need, alongside \$1 million for Shepparton FoodShare to help build a new Food Relief Hub and warehouse after it was inundated by floodwater.

Emergencies bring out the best in the Victorian community – in response to many generous offers of support from across the state, the State Control Centre will partner with Disaster Relief Australia to coordinate a volunteer effort.

An online registration process has been launched today, based on successful models from natural disasters in Queensland – interested volunteers are encouraged to register their interest and skills at disasterreliefaus.org/vic-flood-recovery.

Many generous Victorians have also expressed a desire to contribute to flood recovery efforts financially. Not-for-profit donation service GIVIT, which supports communities across Australia affected by fire and flood emergencies, will act as a central point for financial donations – Victorians can contribute at givit.org.au/storms-and-flooding.

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Quote attributable to Premier Daniel Andrews

“This emergency is distressing enough for families without worrying about their kids’ education – that’s why we’re making kinder free, and providing special consideration for VCE students, for those most affected by the floods.”

Quote attributable to Minister for Education Natalie Hutchins

“We want all Year 12 students – and their families – to know we’re providing extra support during this challenging time, to make sure every student has the most positive end to their secondary schooling possible.”

Quote attributable to Minister for Early Childhood and Pre-Prep Ingrid Stitt

“More than 100 early childhood education centres have been affected by flooding – we want to help them continue supporting local communities and reduce costs for families trying to get back on their feet after the floods.”

Quote attributable to Minister for Disability, Ageing and Carers Colin Brooks

“No Victorian should have to worry about having enough to eat – this support will ensure vital food supplies are delivered to communities in need.”