

Victorian Budget 2023/24



The Hon Danny Pearson MP
Assistant Treasurer
Minister for Government Services

The Hon Melissa Horne MP
Minister for Local Government

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DIGITAL SERVICES TO MAKE LIFE EASIER FOR VICTORIANS

The Andrews Labor Government is doing what matters for families and businesses: cutting costs and red tape for businesses, and saving busy Victorians time and money.

The *Victorian Budget 2023/24* invests more than \$160 million to make services more user-friendly – helping people interact with government in a way that is convenient and efficient for them.

More than \$120 million will be provided to Service Victoria to build and maintain the digital services Victorians expect, with an allocation of \$90 million supercharging already guaranteed funding.

That means more credentials like the existing digital Working with Children Check and Ambulance Victoria card can be housed on the app – with a Digital Seniors Card to be added in coming months.

This month we announced a digital driver's licence pilot for Ballarat that will lead to a statewide rollout by 2024 – giving every Victorian driver the option of carrying their licence on their phone.

The Service Victoria app is installed on 1.4 million devices. It features more than 100 services, including a Savings Finder to help Victorians take full advantage of discounts and rebates ranging from winter gas discounts to subsidised travel and free dental treatment – helping drive down the cost of living.

This funding will see the development of faster and easier payment options for government services, adding to the Labor Government's broader time and money-saving reforms.

The new Service Victoria investment will mean more services can be added in the coming year, making things easier for local government and businesses.

Delivering more digital services wouldn't be possible without strong cybersecurity, and there's never been a more critical time to invest in it.

We'll put a further \$34.7 million towards boosting cybersecurity protections for essential services and creating a new Cyber Defence Centre – giving us the ability to detect and block threats in real-time.

Alongside the Centre itself, we'll partner with leading Victorian TAFEs and universities to provide opportunities for cyber graduates to kickstart their careers with hands-on experience in the new Defence Centre.

Victorian businesses will benefit from simpler applications and streamlined approval processes with an investment of \$30 million in the Business Acceleration Fund.

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The Fund will allow government and regulators to speed up their services, making it cheaper and easier to do business. With state and potentially local government services to be digitised with Service Victoria, it will speed up licence and permit processes and allow pilots for automatic approvals for low-risk local activities.

Combined with a further \$8 million for a whole-of-government regulatory reform program, this package makes sure Victoria is the best place to do business by reducing the time, paperwork and cost involved in official dealings.

These actions build on the success of existing \$50 million investments in business acceleration and regulation reform which will deliver more than \$300 million in savings every year, including time savings of more than 280,000 days a year.

Victorians and visitors will benefit from \$1.5 million to extend free public Wi-Fi access in the Melbourne CBD until April 2025. The visitor economy has rebounded to be worth \$31.5 billion to the state – 97 per cent of pre-pandemic levels – and this investment will continue to build momentum and support jobs.

Victim-survivors of family violence shouldn't have to worry about cost of living pressures and financial stress while they rebuild their lives, that's why we'll invest \$1.7 million to provide specialist financial counselling to support those who need it most.

An investment of \$12.1 million will deliver on the promise we made to help councils create new apprenticeships and traineeships, and enable a tailored Fair Jobs Code to operate for local government – supporting councils to fill skills shortages and better serve their communities.

Public libraries are much-loved community meeting places and we're proud to continue recurrent funding for libraries of \$51.4 million in 2023/24. Since 2015/16, we've supported libraries across the state with more than \$410 million in funding.

Quotes attributable to Assistant Treasurer and Minister for Government Services Danny Pearson

"Victorians want to get basic tasks done simply and efficiently – that's why we're working to make Service Victoria a one-stop app for everyday life."

"We're streamlining processes and putting common sense at the front of our services – it's all about saving time and money for Victorian families and businesses."

Quote attributable to Minister for Local Government Melissa Horne

"Investing in a skilled workforce for our councils ensures Victorians have the parks, gardens and other facilities that matter to them. It means councils can do the best job possible to serve their communities."