

Media Release

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SLICING RED TAPE FOR LOW-RISK FOOD BUSINESSES

The Andrews Labor Government has slashed red tape for thousands of Victorian cafes, restaurants and food manufacturing businesses, removing the need to undertake unnecessary compliance programs.

The game-changing initiative is saving almost 30,000 low-risk businesses more than 80 hours a year that otherwise would have been spent stuck in paperwork completing their food safety programs.

Cafes, restaurants and food manufacturers rated as class two premises are the beneficiaries of the reforms, freeing up time to focus on customers and business development – and making it easier for new businesses to set up.

The overhaul is one of more than 90 business acceleration initiatives delivered or in train as part of a \$50 million regulatory reform package that will grow the Victorian economy by more than \$300 million per year, and enable time savings of more than 280,000 days a year.

More than 2,000 Victorians have used a new online system that allows them to apply for and display a digital Working with Children Check card on the Service Victoria app since it was introduced in February.

Reforms are making it easier for Victorians to access local government services with changes to fast-track heritage permit processes, saving property owners and builders up to 14 days.

The application process for hundreds of “low harm” and “no harm” heritage applications each year has been simplified and requirements for some permits have been completely removed.

Local government initiatives also include digitising health, hospitality and trader applications at Knox City Council, transferring permit applications from email to interactive at the Stonnington and Port Philip councils and consolidating business customer data at the City of Kingston.

The *Victorian Budget 2023/24* builds on this wave of reform with further significant investment in regulatory reform programs as we continue to ensure Victoria is the best place in Australia to do business.

The funding will allow new initiatives to maximise benefits for businesses and customers by streamlining application and approvals processes, improve information flow and provide faster licensing at local and state levels.

Quotes attributable to Assistant Treasurer Danny Pearson

“By cutting red tape we’re making it easier for businesses to get off the ground, and then to grow and employ more people.”

“Victoria is the best place in the country to run a business and by investing in improvements right across the economy everyone wins – businesses and consumers alike.”

“We’re digitising the everyday services that Victorians rely on and that saves time and money.”