

Joint Media Release



Jaclyn Symes
Attorney-General
Minister for Emergency Services



Australian Government
Senator The Hon Murray Watt
Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry
Minister for Emergency Management

Wednesday, 10 January 2024

DISASTER ASSISTANCE FOR FLOOD-IMPACTED COMMUNITIES IN VICTORIA

Jointly funded disaster assistance has been activated for communities impacted by the Victorian Floods and Storms that commenced on 24 December 2023, under the Commonwealth-State Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements (DRFA).

The assistance is available for communities and councils within the registered Local Government Areas of: **Alpine Shire, Baw Baw Shire, Benalla Rural City, Campaspe Shire, East Gippsland Shire, Gannawarra Shire, Greater Bendigo, Loddon Shire, Macedon Ranges Shire, Mansfield Shire, Mitchell Shire, Mount Alexander Shire, Murrindindi Shire, South Gippsland Shire, Strathbogie Shire, Wellington Shire and Yarra Ranges Shire.**

Emergency Recovery Victoria (ERV) is continuing to work with local councils to understand the assistance required to support communities following the floods and storms. Councils can notify ERV of impacts via the Claims Management System or email ndfa@justice.vic.gov.au. Further councils may be added in the coming days.

Eligible community members whose homes have been impacted by the Victorian Floods and Storms can access emergency relief assistance through the Personal Hardship Assistance Program (PHAP) led through the Victorian Department of Families, Fairness and Housing.

You are eligible for a relief payment if you have unmet immediate relief needs and:

- your principal place of residence is, or was, in an evacuation warning area, and the floods or storms have damaged your home; or
- your home has flooded above the floor.

Assistance under the PHAP includes a one-off payment of \$640 per adult and \$320 per child up to a maximum of \$2,240 per eligible family to help cover the costs of essentials like food, clothing, medication and accommodation. Payments are a fixed amount for each member of a household and are not calculated based on how much money you earn.

Support from the Albanese and Allan Labor Governments will also provide funding for Local Governments' counter disaster operations, including making residential properties safe and habitable, and emergency works for urgent transport, infrastructure and public assets restoration.

If you think you may be eligible for a relief payment, please visit an Emergency Relief Centre, or call your local council. You can search for your local council at vic.gov.au/know-your-council.

If your business has been impacted, reference your insurance policies or contact your local council for support.

Information on disaster assistance is available on the Australian Government's website at disasterassist.gov.au and the VicEmergency website emergency.vic.gov.au/relief

Quotes attributable to Federal Minister for Emergency Management Murray Watt

"This type of support is designed to help people meet immediate needs like food and clothing, and we'll continue to work with the Victorian Government to make sure assistance gets to where it's needed."

"I want to assure those affected that we are working as quickly as possible to make assistance available and I want to thank emergency services personnel and volunteers for their efforts.

"Although the majority of the floodwaters have peaked and the forecast is for conditions to ease over the coming days, the impact on communities will be long-lasting and we will continue to work closely to support recovery efforts."

Quotes attributable to Minister for Emergency Services Jaclyn Symes

"We're working hand-in-hand with the Commonwealth Government to make this funding available, for community members and councils who need support during this incredibly difficult time."

"By making emergency relief assistance available it goes some way to help with the immediate needs of Victorians who in many cases are still recovering from previous significant emergency events in recent years."

Media contacts

Tali Eley 0499 770 772 (Minister Watt)

Casey Lodge 0410 964 928 (Minister Symes)