

Media Release

The Hon Gayle Tierney MP
Minister for Skills and TAFE
Minister for Water



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KEEPING APPRENTICES SAFE, SUPPORTED AND SUCCESSFUL

The free Apprentice Helpdesk is proving a valuable support tool for apprentices and trainees, thanks to the Allan Labor Government.

Minister for Skills and TAFE Gayle Tierney this month revealed there have been 1,500 calls to the helpdesk since its launch in June, providing support with training, work and personal challenges.

The helpdesk is a free phone and online service for apprentices and trainees, their parents and employers. It is staffed by specially trained Case Support Officers who provide information, guidance and referrals.

The helpdesk Case Support Officers are actively providing practical guidance on the top three issues raised by apprentices: pay, conditions and finding employment.

The helpdesk is one of a range of services provided by the Labor Government to help the state's 74,000 apprentices and trainees deal with work and training challenges and look after their health and wellbeing.

In addition to the helpdesk, the Apprentice Support Officer program provides one-on-one support to apprentices across the state. The Apprentice Support Officer program has supported more than 169,100 apprentices since it began.

Apprentices and trainees can also access free counselling through the Apprentice Employee Assistance Program, which provides confidential short-term support for mental health and personal issues, difficult workplace situations and financial concerns.

These initiatives were implemented by the Labor Government in response to the recommendations from the Apprenticeships Taskforce. The taskforce's final report, released in October 2024, provides 16 recommendations to improve support, safety and fairness for apprentices and trainees.

The *Victorian Budget 2025/26* is investing \$23 million to strengthen the apprenticeship system and help apprentices and trainees to complete their training.

The Apprentice Helpdesk is available from 9am-5pm, Monday to Friday (excluding public holidays). Contact 1300 311 820 or apprenticehelpdesk@djsir.vic.gov.au.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Skills and TAFE Gayle Tierney

"Our apprentices deserve someone in their corner, and that's exactly what these services deliver."

"Reaching 1,500 calls shows the helpdesk is needed and is making a difference."

"We're backing every apprentice with the support they need to stay confident, safe and on track."