

Easier. Safer. More Affordable.

Victorian Budget 2026/27

Hon Jacinta Allan MP
Premier of Victoria

Hon Michaela Settle
Minister for Agriculture and Regional Development

Tuesday, 5 May 2026

LABOR DELIVERS FOR REGIONAL VICTORIA

The Allan Labor Government is making life easier, safer and more affordable for families in our regions.

This Budget includes more than \$2.7 billion, including \$481 million for regional transport services and \$279 million for regional education and healthcare.

Over the past 12 years, this Labor Government has invested more than \$50 billion in regional Victoria.

No matter where you live, every Victorian deserves access to the same quality public services.

That means good schools and hospitals, transport that gets you home faster, and help with the cost of living.

Help with the cost of living in regional Victoria

Donald Trump's war in the Middle East is hurting regional families and businesses.

That's why we're easing cost of living pressures with real help, right now.

We've already delivered instant relief with two months of free public transport.

We're making sure Victorians can find the cheapest fuel by introducing a daily cap on maximum fuel prices and setting up mandatory reporting on fuel prices to Servo Saver.

Now we're slashing the cost of catching a train and driving your car.

This Budget is cutting the cost of vehicle registration this year by 20 per cent – giving Victorians money back in their pockets.

We're making PT half price until the end of the year.

We're continuing to help families meet rising costs with free public transport for under 18s, free dental check-ups in schools and an expanded free glasses program for kids.

And we're supporting more Victorians to make regional Victoria home – with more social and affordable homes.

Regional health

Too many children are waiting too long for surgery because of surging demand – we’re tackling it head on.

The Budget delivers 4,000 more kids’ surgeries and 45,000 more specialist appointments.

Health services will be prioritised for the additional activity based on need – including Barwon Health and Bendigo Health.

Labor is also investing in our regional hospitals.

We are redeveloping the Ballarat Base Hospital, Barwon Women’s and Children’s Hospital at University Hospital Geelong and Warrnambool Base Hospital.

In this Budget, we’re also investing:

- \$75 million for the Regional Health Infrastructure Fund to renew and upgrade infrastructure across rural and regional health services
- \$10 million to meet growing demand for Hospital in the Home beds operated by Barwon Health
- \$7.1 million to operate the new PET scanner at Goulburn Valley Health
- \$4.2 million to continue eight regional Infant, Child and Youth Area Mental Health and Wellbeing Services
- \$1.1 million to prevent chronic disease through the Health Loddon Campaspe program, with a focus on healthy eating and keeping people active
- \$985,000 to continue mental health services and supports in regional and rural communities, including the Q*Space and Be Well in the Ranges programs.

Regional education

Every Victorian deserves the best start, no matter where they live.

Our reforms to early childhood education have rolled out in regional Victoria first.

We have delivered Three-Year-Old Kinder, Early Learning Victoria centres and more hours of Free Kinder for regional families.

We’re providing \$95 million for upgrading schools across regional Victoria, including:

- Ararat Primary School
- Bacchus Marsh College
- Daylesford Primary College
- Eaglehawk Primary School
- Maryborough Education Centre
- Stawell Primary School
- Surfside Primary School
- Warragul North Primary School
- Yarrawonga College P-12

This Budget also provides:

- \$6.3 million to continue supports for rural and regional students to access high-quality vocational and applied learning pathways
- A new Victorian Renewable Energy TAFE Centre of Excellence led by TAFE Gippsland
- \$5 million to deliver hydrogen and battery electric vehicle training at Wodonga TAFE
- \$1.2 million to provide targeted youth education support officers to regional areas
- \$2.7 million to pilot a blended model for VCE students in Morwell for virtual subjects
- \$1.2 million for the Shepparton Education Plan to provide engagement, wellbeing services and post-secondary pathways at the Greater Shepparton Secondary College.

Regional transport

Since last year, the number of train services in regional Victoria has increased – with 32 new services on the Traralgon, Seymour and Echuca lines.

And with the completion of the Gippsland Line Upgrade, passengers now have access to 55 new weekday and 32 new weekend services.

We're investing a further \$481 million in regional transport services to continue improving these connections. This includes:

- \$318 million for upgrades to reduce delays and improve reliability on the regional rail network
- \$127 million to improve regional freight rail infrastructure across Victoria to support the efficient movement of goods and fewer trucks on regional roads
- \$30 million for even more train services on the Shepparton line
- \$3.9 million to continue passenger services on the Portarlington Ferry
- \$2 million for V/Line to improve safety at Ballarat, Little River Station and Beaufort stations.

More buses are coming, and we're investing \$73 million more into regional road, intersection and crossing upgrades.

Regional economy

The Allan Labor Government is making it easier to do business in regional Victoria.

Regional Victoria has the lowest payroll tax rate in the nation, helping to support further economic growth.

This Budget supports a strong, regional economy by investing in businesses, infrastructure and local jobs, including:

- \$23 million for the Future Regions program to boost productivity, liveability and investment
- \$1.5 million to continue the Regional Business Events Program
- \$909,000 to streamline regulatory and licencing requirements in Victoria's border communities
- \$800,000 to support longer-term tourism in Porepunkah, Bright and the surrounding region
- \$450,000 to support the Gippsland Trades and Labour Council to develop skills and reconnect those who are unemployed with education and training
- \$279,000 to continue the Rural Women's Network's Leadership and Mentoring Program.

Every year, more than 27 million tourists visit regional Victoria, generating about \$18 billion in economic activity for our state.

From the natural beauty of the great outdoors to our incredible regional galleries, we're investing in the things that make regional Victoria great. This Budget invests:

- \$13 million for the Nyaal Banyul Geelong Convention and Event Centre and for the Victorian Convention and Exhibition Trust
- \$4.3 million to maintain and activate state-owned cultural facilities across Victoria
- \$4 million for the Rochester Aquatic Facility
- \$1.2 million to support regional audiences to access and experience more regional creative venues
- \$480,000 to support the five Basketball High Performance Hubs in Ballarat, Bendigo, Geelong, Shepparton and Traralgon.

From hiking and camping to fishing and boating, some of the most affordable and enjoyable experiences can be found in regional Victoria. This Budget invests:

- \$43 million to renew infrastructure in the River Murray catchment area
- \$7.9 million to restore the historic Cape Otway Lightstation, renew parts of the Twelve Apostles Precinct, and provide other upgrades within the Great Ocean Road coast and parks
- \$5 million to continue to stock fish in Victoria's waterways each year
- \$1.7 million to improve outdoor spaces and facilities such as playgrounds, trails and community gardens
- \$1.5 million to complete new facilities at Bancoora and Point Lonsdale Surf Life Saving Clubs, making sure Victorians can enjoy our beautiful beaches safely.

Regional safety

Regional Victoria is one of the most bushfire prone areas in the world.

The Budget ensures our firefighting fleet is strong with \$100 million for new CFA tankers and pumpers.

It also includes \$26.2 million for CFA station builds, planning, land acquisition and upgrades at Lakes Entrance, Barongarook West, Charlton, Nar Nar Goon, Beveridge, Dereel, Mirboo North, Kingston, Woodvale and Yarrambat.

And we're funding more support clinicians for volunteers, improving training and protective gear.

A \$217 million investment will boost firefighting capability and preparedness.

This includes the eyes-in-the-sky aviation firefighting fleet, forest firefighting vehicles, more planned burning and fuel management.

Fire Rescue Victoria receives a \$10 million boost to their existing rolling fleet replacement program for a new fireboat, heavy pumpers and ultra large pumpers.

Victoria has the most police in Australia, Australia's toughest bail laws and Australia's only Violence Reduction Unit.

We've made progress in the crime stats, with youth male offending down and bail refusals up, but there's more work to do.

This Budget invests in faster courts – with a specialised, fast-tracked youth court list in the County Court.

We're also investing \$33 million in Victoria's Violence Reduction Unit (VRU).

Funding will go directly towards new programs that identify and disrupt youth crime patterns early.

The Liberals oppose the VRU – it's just another example of a Liberal cut that will make our community less safe.

Support for our farmers

Victoria is Australia's largest food and fibre exporter.

Our farmers are central to the strength of our regional communities and food security.

This Budget invests \$84 million in support for Victoria's farmers and agricultural industries.

That includes \$62 million provided in response to the January 2026 bushfires for our primary producers and agricultural sectors, including through primary producer grants, concessional loans and emergency fodder support.

We're also providing \$5.9 million for programs that support the health, safety and wellbeing of our farmers and agricultural communities.

This includes funding for the National Centre for Farmer Health and for the Rural Financial Counselling Service.

We're also investing \$5 million to support farmers with reducing emissions on their farms and \$2.2 million to extend the Fox Bounty program to manage the impact of livestock predation.

We know drought and tough weather conditions put real pressure on our farmers and communities.

Labor has backed Victorian farmers with more than \$146.5 million as part of our Drought Support Package. This investment is supporting our farmers and communities to stay resilient and overcome drought conditions.

We're also investing \$7.6 million in biosecurity, protecting the future of our agriculture industries.

Quotes attributable to Premier Jacinta Allan

"Only Labor will deliver the services country people rely on closer to home."

"We have invested more than \$50 billion in regional Victoria, creating more jobs and services, while ensuring regional Victoria has the second lowest unemployment rate of anywhere in the country."

Quotes attributable to Minister for Agriculture and Regional Development Michaela Settle

"We're backing our farmers through tough times, helping them recover from bushfires and drought, grow their businesses, and protecting them from predators and biosecurity threats."

"The Liberals and their junior Nationals are too weak to stand up for regional Victoria."