

Media Release

The Hon Natalie Suleyman MP

Minister for Tourism

Minister for Small and Family Business

Minister for Employment

Minister for Veterans



Friday, 3 July 2026

LABOR IS PROTECTING VENUES FROM ARSONISTS

Labor is keeping Melbourne safe and supporting businesses by helping bars and restaurants catch arsonists.

Minister Suleyman today opened the \$10 million Hospitality Security Fund which enables businesses to access payments to protect their venues, staff and the community.

Victoria Police is also acting through Operation Eclipse, with more than 65 arrests and 350 charges laid since April.

\$5,000 grants are available to improve security and fire safety with a matched contribution by business not directly impacted by fire-related crimes.

Up to \$25,000 will be provided to venues directly impacted by fire-related crime investigated by Operation Eclipse, without requiring a matched contribution.

The grants are available for venues in the City of Melbourne, City of Port Phillip, City of Stonnington and City of Yarra local government areas.

Funding will help businesses with safety audits and security upgrades including CCTV, alarms and sprinklers.

Labor is investing in these practical safety measures to protect businesses and help prevent crime.

Victoria is proudly home to more than 735,000 small businesses.

They make a large contribution to Victoria's economy, employing more than 1.3 million Victorians and generating over \$417 billion in income.

Grant applications are now open.

Applications close at 4pm on 27 August 2026.

For more information and to apply, visit business.vic.gov.au/grants-and-programs.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Small and Family Business Natalie Suleyman

"Small business owners work so hard and put everything they have into their businesses they shouldn't have to put up with this."

"We're giving hospitality businesses more support to protect their businesses, their staff and their communities."

Quote attributable to Minister for Police Anthony Carlines

"We're backing small businesses with what they need while giving Victoria Police more tools, more resources and more officers on the beat to crack down on these gutless thugs."