

Media Release

The Hon Martin Pakula MP
Attorney-General
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FAIRNESS SHOULDN'T BREAK THE BANK: NEW VCAT FEES

The Andrews Labor Government is introducing a fairer fee structure for the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT), providing more support to victims of family violence, low income earners and charities.

From 1 July 2016, a three-tiered fee structure will operate – concession fees, discounted individual fees and corporate fees – which better aligns charges with an individual or organisation's financial situation.

For the first time, victims of family violence will be able to apply to have fees waived in residential tenancy matters arising from a family violence situation – ensuring they're not deterred from taking action at VCAT due to financial hardship.

Concession fees will also lower charges for those with Commonwealth Health Care Cards for the first time, with some charges – such as those in the Residential Tenancies Division, previously \$59.80 – to be abolished.

The individual fee will provide discounted charges for individuals, small businesses and charitable, benevolent or philanthropic organisations.

Corporations, government agencies, local governments and businesses with an annual turnover of more than \$200,000 will now pay a corporate rate to access VCAT.

While fees for these applicants have in some cases been reduced, in many cases they have been increased to better reflect their capacity to pay.

For example, the corporate fee to challenge the refusal of a planning permit for a development with a value of between \$15 million and \$50 million will increase from \$2,086 to \$2,328, while the concession fee to challenge the grant of such a permit will now be \$150.

Quotes attributable to Attorney General Martin Pakula

"Fairness shouldn't break the bank – particularly if you're a victim of family violence, or already struggling to make ends meet on a low income."

"This is about ensuring all Victorians have access to fair, effective dispute resolution, regardless of their personal financial circumstances."