
COVID Assistance Snapshot

August 2021

The continuation of the COVID-19 pandemic and the increased lockdown and stay-at-home orders being mandated primarily due to the current 'Delta variant' have required both State and Federal Governments to provide further economic assistance.

Whilst the support is welcome, keeping up with the latest assistance packages has placed additional strain on impacted individuals and businesses in understanding what options are available to them.

The following document provides a **snapshot** of the **most recently announced COVID-19 economic assistance packages** that have been made available in Victoria.

Commonwealth COVID-19 Disaster Payment

The COVID-19 Disaster Payment was originally announced on 3 June 2021 in response to the May/June 2021 Victorian lockdown. Its primary aim is to provide weekly assistance to eligible **individuals** (i.e., eligible full time, part time and casual workers) who have **lost hours of paid work** due to state imposed health restrictions.

Both the eligibility criteria and the value of the COVID-19 Disaster Payment have been moving targets as it has been applied to subsequent COVID-19 hotspots and the resulting public health orders. Refer to the [Services Australia website](#) for guidance.

Under the current version of the **COVID-19 Disaster Payment**, eligible recipients generally receive:

- **\$750 each week** if a person has **lost 20 hours or more** of work a week (increased from previous amounts of initially \$500 and later \$600); or
- **\$450 each week** if a person has **lost between 8 and 20 hours** of work, or a full day of their usual work if less than eight hours (increased from previous amounts of initially \$325 and later \$375).

Furthermore, recipients of Federal Government income support payments (e.g., JobSeeker, Austudy, the Age pension, etc.) or the ABSTUDY living or education allowances who have broadly lost at least eight hours of work (or a full day of their usual work of less than eight hours) in a week may be eligible for a varied **COVID-19 Disaster Payment** of **\$200 per week**.

Sole traders may also be eligible for the Disaster Payment, however they are advised to first check to see if they are eligible for any State or Territory COVID-19 business support payments. This is because they can generally only be eligible for either the COVID-19 Disaster Payment or a State or Territory business support payment for a relevant period (but not both).

To make a claim, most individuals will do this directly online via their **myGov** account that needs to be linked to their Centrelink Online account.

VIC COVID-19 Economic Support Measures

Small Business COVID Hardship Fund

\$8,000 to small businesses that:

- are **not** eligible for support under existing programs;
- have experienced at least a **70% reduction in turnover**; and
- have a payroll of up to \$10 million.

More information will be provided on **Business Victoria** [here](#).

Business Costs Assistance Program Round Three ('BCAP3')

Eligible businesses will be paid a 'Business Costs Assistance Program' **Round Three** ('BCAP3') grant of **\$2,800**.

This is in addition to the [Business Costs Assistance Program Round Two \('BCAP2'\)](#) which looked to pay grants to eligible small and medium businesses in **specific industries** most affected by the May-June 2021 COVID-19 Victorian restrictions.

Businesses that missed out on the BCAP2 may instead be eligible under a "BCAP2 July Extension" to receive a grant of up to \$4,800.

A business eligible for the BCAP2 or BCAP2 July Extension should automatically receive the BCAP3 by mid-August 2021.

Further information and Frequently Asked Questions ('FAQs') on BCAP3 can be found on the [Business Victoria](#) website

A New Business Continuity Fund

\$5000 grants to up to around 30,000 businesses impacted by capacity limits placed on businesses by necessary public health restrictions.

Recognising businesses located in the CBD will continue to be impacted due to restrictions on the number of staff allowed in office buildings, they will be eligible to receive an additional **\$2000 CBD grant**.

Further information and FAQs can be found on the [Business Victoria](#) website

Licensed Hospitality Venue Fund

Payments of up to **\$20,000** will be made to Victorian hospitality venues that received funding from the 'Licensed Hospitality Venue Fund' through the May/June lockdowns.

An additional **\$2,000** grant will also be made available to the business if it is located within the CBD.

Automatic payments of **\$5,000 to \$20,000** will be made to hospitality venues that received funding support from the Licensed Hospitality Venue Fund through the May/June and July Lockdowns.

More information is available at **Business Victoria** [here](#) in relation to the existing fund, with updates expected soon.

Commercial tenancy relief for Victorian businesses

The Victorian Government has also reintroduced the Commercial Tenancy Relief scheme to ease pressure by providing rent relief for eligible tenants.

Separate support is being given to landlords who provide rent relief (via the \$80 million Landlord Hardship fund).

Broadly this makes it a requirement for commercial landlords to provide rent relief that matches their tenant's fall in turnover (where the tenant is otherwise eligible for the support).

This will generally be available for businesses with an annual turnover under \$50 million that has experienced a fall in turnover of at least 30% due to the coronavirus.

More information can be found at the **Victorian Small Business Commission** [here](#)

Tenants and landlords can contact the **Victorian Small Business Commission** on **1387 22** or visit vsbc.vic.gov.au

Microbusiness concierge

Sole traders or microbusinesses seeking information or advice about COVID-19 business support in Victoria, can now call a dedicated concierge service to understand what support is available to them.

This concierge service is relevant for individuals who work for themselves, or have 1 to 2 employees and an annual turnover of less than \$75,000, and are not eligible for Victorian Government COVID-19 business support grants.

Contact the Victorian microbusiness concierge on **13 22 15** or see more information at **Business Victoria** [here](#)

Application

Applications will close soon. If you would like to engage HHG Foothills to manage your application please email admin@hhgfoothills.com.au or speak to your accountant.

If you require further assistance please contact the office on 9739 4066 or email admin@hhgfoothills.com.au