What lockdown support is available to Victorian business?

Support is available if you are impacted by the Victorian lockdowns.

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A series of grants and top-up grants are available to support Victorian business. There are two main streams for grants in Victoria:

- **New grants** - Grants or grant extensions for businesses that previously did not qualify or did not access the available grants:
  - Licensed Hospitality Venue Fund 2021 July Extension
  - Business Costs Assistance Program Round Two July Extension
  - Small Business COVID Hardship Fund
  - Alpine Resorts Winter Support Program
- **New and existing grant beneficiaries** – top-up support for those who successfully qualify for the:
  - Business Costs Assistance Program Round Two and the July Extension
  - Licensed Hospitality Venue Fund and the July extension, and
  - Alpine Resorts Winter Support Program.

As many of the Victorian support programs are industry specific, it's important that your business's ANZSIC classification is correct (this is the industry category identified when your registered your business's ABN). This code can be updated on the Australian Business Register through your MyGov account.

New and Open Grants

Licensed Hospitality Venue Fund 2021 July Extension

Grant applications close **Friday, 20 August 2021**. Liquor licensees without an eLicence email address need to set one up on their VCGLR Portal by 11.59pm on **Monday, 16 August 2021**.

The $7,200 July extension grant is for businesses that did not apply or qualify for the June Licensed Hospitality Venue Fund 2021. Successful businesses will also be eligible for the August top-up payment.

Eligibility

To be eligible for the Licensed Hospitality Venue Fund 2021 July Extension, you must:

- Operate a licensed bar, restaurant, pub, club, hotel, cafe or reception centre that is registered to serve food and alcohol located in Victoria on 15 July 2021; and
- Hold a general or late night (general), full club, restaurant and cafe, producer's or on-premises or late night (on-premises) liquor licence as at 15 July 2021; and

- Have a food business (which may be a third party or the Applicant) holding a Class 2 or 3 Service Sector Certificate of Registration that is valid in 2020 or 2021 under the Food Act 1984 which serves food on the same premises; and
- Be registered for GST on or from 15 July 2021, and
- Hold an ABN and have held that ABN from 15 July 2021; and
- Be registered with the responsible Federal or State regulator (ASIC, ACNC, Consumer Affairs Victoria, VCGLR; local councils, PrimeSafe Victoria etc).

If your business is an employing entity, your business must also attest that the business is supporting its workers to access any paid leave entitlements, or that if a person can work from home, to work from home during the COVID-19 restrictions, and supporting their casual workers, where possible.

Businesses that are eligible for any other support packages launched on or after 27 May 2021, will not be eligible for grants under the July extension fund. In addition, organisations that operate a private gender-exclusive club where membership is only by invitation or nomination by an existing member are not eligible for assistance under the Program.

The grant might also be denied to businesses subject to adverse findings by a Government agency or local council, is subject to external administration or a petition for bankruptcy or deregistration, or becomes deregistered.

How to apply

Eligible liquor licensees with an eLicence email address registered with the Victorian Commission for Gambling and Liquor Regulation (VCGLR) should receive an email containing their grant application link from Business Victoria. Liquor licensees without an eLicence email address need to set one up on their VCGLR Portal by 11.59pm on Monday, 16 August 2021 to receive their grant application link.

Applications for a grant can only be submitted through the link emailed by Business Victoria and close on Friday, 20 August 2021. If you have not received your link, call the Business Victoria hotline on 13 22 15.

Business Costs Assistance Program Round Two July Extension

Grant applications close **Friday, 20 August 2021** or until funding is exhausted.

The $4,800 July extension grant is for businesses that did not previously receive funding through the Business Costs Assistance Program Round Two (May and June 2021).

Eligibility

To be eligible for the Business Costs Assistance Program Round Two July Extension, you must:

- Be located within Victoria; and
- Be registered as operating in an eligible industry sector identified in the List of Eligible ANZSIC classes (categories include non-essential retail, hospitality, tourism, transport, events and related services, services and education, health care and social assistance). Your ABN registration contains this information; and
- Have incurred direct costs as a result of the July COVID restrictions and the business cannot predominantly operate remotely; and
- Have an annual Victorian payroll of up to $10 million in 2019-20 on an ungrouped basis; and
- Be registered for GST on and from 15 July 2021 (or a not-for-profit not registered for GST that has annual turnover between $75,000 and $150,000);
- Hold an ABN and have held that ABN on and from 15 July 2021; and
  Be registered with the responsible Federal or State regulator (ASIC, ACNC or Consumer Affairs Victoria).

If your business is an employing entity, your business must also:

- Be registered with WorkSafe Victoria; and
- Attest that the business is supporting its workers to access any paid leave entitlements, or that if a person can work from home, to

work from home during the COVID-19 restrictions, and supporting their casual workers, where possible.

Organisations that operate a private gender-exclusive club where membership is only by invitation or nomination by an existing member are not eligible for assistance under the Program. The grant might also be denied to businesses subject to adverse findings by a regulator, is subject to external administration or a petition for bankruptcy or deregistration, or becomes deregistered (including a lapse in registration).

How to apply

Applications are made online through the Business Victoria website and close on 20 August 2021 or until funds are exhausted.

Small Business COVID Hardship Fund

Grant applications close **10 September 2021**.

The Small Business COVID Hardship Fund offers grants of up to $10,000 to businesses that have been severely impacted by COVID-19 experiencing a decline in turnover of at least 70% but are ineligible for other business grants programs.

Eligibility

To be eligible for the hardship fund, you must:

- Be located within Victoria; and
- Have experienced a decline in turnover of at least 70% for a minimum consecutive two-week period since 27 May 2021 (based on your worst minimum consecutive two-week trading period between 27 May and 10 September 2021 compared with a minimum consecutive two-week trading period between 27 May and 10 September 2019 from a similar time of the year); and
- Have an annual Victorian payroll of up to $10 million in 2019-20 on an ungrouped basis; and
- Be registered for GST on and from 28 July 2021;
- Hold an ABN and have held that ABN on and from 28 July 2021; and
- Be registered with the responsible Federal or State regulator (ASIC, ACNC or Consumer Affairs Victoria).

If your business is an employing entity, your business must also:

- Be registered with WorkSafe Victoria; and
- Attest that the business is supporting its workers to access any paid leave entitlements, or that if a person can work from home, to work from home during the COVID-19 restrictions, and supporting their casual workers, where possible.

Businesses that are eligible for any other support packages launched on or after 27 May 2021 will not be eligible for the hardship fund. In addition, organisations that operate a private gender-exclusive club where membership is only by invitation or nomination by an existing member are not eligible for assistance under the Program.

How to apply

To apply for the hardship grant, you can:

- Have your accountant complete your application on your behalf; or
- Complete your application online and submit a letter from your accountant attesting to the business's decline in turnover. Your accountant cannot be an employee or director of the applicant, or an associated entity of the applicant, or a director or employee of an associated entity of the applicant.
- Complete your application without a letter from your accountant. Using this method, you will be contacted to supply additional information verifying your application. Applications lodged using this method may take up to 25 business days to process.

Alpine Resorts Winter Support Program

Grant applications close **Friday, 20 August 2021** or until funding is exhausted.

The Alpine Resorts Winter Support Program provides funding though two streams: on-mountain and Dinner Plains; or off-mountain businesses. Eligible businesses should have received a phone call from the Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions to assist with the application process. If you believe your business

qualifies but you have not been contacted, contact alpineprograms@ecodev.vic.gov.au.

The program is open until Friday 20 August 2021 or until funding is exhausted.

Funding amounts are less any funding received through the Business Costs Assistance Program Round Two and Licensed Hospitality Venue Fund 2021 (capped at a deduction of $7,000, top-up funding through these programs is not deducted from the total amount).

To be eligible, your business must:

- Hold an ABN and have held that ABN as at 15 July 2021
- Have an annual Victorian payroll of up to $10 million in 2019-20 on an ungrouped basis
- Be registered for GST as of 15 July 2021 (or a not-for-profit with annual 2019-20 turnover between $75,000 and $150,000 registered with the ACNC).
- Be registered with the responsible Federal or State regulator (ASIC, ACNC, CAV), and
- Meet the specific eligibility details of the program.

Funding may be denied to businesses subject to adverse findings by a regulator, is subject to external administration or a petition for bankruptcy or deregistration or becomes deregistered (including a lapse in registration).

On-mountain and Dinner Plain stream

The On-mountain and Dinner Plain stream provides funding of:

- Up to $58,000 per premises for employing businesses registered with WorkSafe Victoria, and
- Up to $33,000 for businesses not registered with WorkSafe.

To be eligible for this program, in addition to the general eligibility criteria, your primary business must be:

- Located within a Victorian Alpine Resort or Dinner Plain, and
- Operate:
  - A food and beverage venue (restaurant, café, pub, bar or other food venue);
  - A retail outlet (rental, clothing, footwear, equipment, supermarket, pharmacy, gifts);
  - A business that provides services directly to visitors or contributes to the visitor experience (transport, activities, experiences, entertainment, health & wellbeing); or
  - An accommodation business that also has a public on-site food and beverage venue or a retail outlet

A business is responsible for managing lift operations at an Alpine Resort is not eligible for funding under this program.

WorkSafe registered employers can apply for funding for up four premises. Non-WorkSafe businesses are limited to one per ABN.

Off-mountain stream

The Off-mountain stream provides funding of up to $18,000.

To be eligible for this program, in addition to the general eligibility criteria, your business must be:

- Located within one of the following regional Local Government Areas: Alpine Shire; Mansfield Shire; Murrindindi Shire; Baw Baw Shire; East Gippsland Shire; and provide:
  - Rental of snow equipment (including snowboards, skis, boots and clothing) for use within a Victorian Alpine Resort as the primary activity of the business; and/or
  - Tours within a Victorian Alpine Resort as the primary activity of the business; and/or
  - Bus transfers to, from and within a Victorian Alpine Resort.

Top-up support for existing grant beneficiaries

The Victorian Government is using the existing grant funding channels to provide top-up and additional funding for those that receive support through the:

- Business Costs Assistance Program Round Two or the Business Costs Assistance Program July Extension;
- Licensed Hospitality Venue Fund 2021 (including regional businesses) or the Licensed Hospitality Venue Fund 2021 July Extension; and
- Alpine Resorts Winter Support Program

Business Costs assistance program top-up

Top-up payments are made automatically to businesses that qualified for the Business Costs Assistance Program Round Two or the Business Costs Assistance Program July Extension.

A round 3 top-up payment of $2,800 was announced on 12 August 2021 and is expected to be paid within 7 days.

In addition to the 'top-up' payments, 24 sectors including gyms, cafes, restaurants, catering services and hairdressers, will automatically receive a business continuity fund payment of $5,000 with an additional separate $2,000 paid to businesses located in Melbourne's CBD. The 24 sectors are based on ANZSIC classifications (see the full list here). Recipients will be contacted by Business Victoria from mid-August to confirm they will receive a payment.

The top-up and business continuity payments are made automatically.

Licensed Hospitality Venue Fund 2021 top-up

Top-up payments are made automatically to businesses that qualified for the June Licensed Hospitality Venue Fund 2021 and the Licensed Hospitality Venue Fund 2021 July Extension.

On 12 August, additional payments were announced for licensed hospitality venues in metropolitan Melbourne. The value of the payments is based on venue capacity:

Top-up payment	Venue capacity
$5,000	Up to 99 patrons
$10,000	100 to 499 patrons
$20,000	500 plus patrons

Support for commercial tenants and landlords

From 28 July, commercial landlords must provide rental relief to eligible tenants that matches the tenants' COVID-19 impacted decline in turnover under the reintroduced *Commercial Tenancy Relief Scheme*.

To be eligible for relief, commercial tenants must have:

- An annual turnover of less than $50 million, and
- Have suffered a decline in turnover of at least 30% as a result of COVID-19.

To support landlords, the Victorian Government will create a Landlord Hardship Fund.

Where an agreement cannot be reached between the tenants and landlord, the parties are encouraged to enter negotiations directly, with the Victorian Small Business Commission (VSBC) available to provide mediation if required. See Commercial tenancy relief for Victorians in small business, for further details.

How to contact us

We're available to assist you with the lockdown support for you and your business.

Here's how you can contact us:

Stones Sharp Partners Pty Ltd
Phone: 03 9853 0641
Web: stonessharp.com.au
Email: reception@stonessharp.com.au

The material and contents provided in this publication are informative in nature only. It is not intended to be advice and you should not act specifically on the basis of this information. If expert assistance is required, professional advice should be obtained.

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