

GUIDELINES

Business Support Fund

COVID-19 assistance to small businesses

Program summary

The Victorian Government has announced a \$500 million package, the Business Support Fund (the Fund), to support small businesses that employ staff and are subject to closure or highly impacted by the shutdown restrictions announced by the Victorian Government as a result of the coronavirus (COVID-19).

Small businesses are eligible if they meet all these criteria:

- Employ staff
- Have been subject to closure or is highly impacted by shutdown restrictions announced by the Victorian Government to-date. For more information on affected sectors refer to the Non-Essential Activity Directions issued by the Deputy Chief Health Officer.
- Have a turnover of more than \$75,000
- Have payroll of less than \$650,000

Further eligibility criteria are outlined below in these guidelines.

Businesses will be required to attest to their eligibility and provide supporting documentation (including BAS statements) through the application process. Applicants will be subject to audit by the Victorian Government or its representatives.

Eligible businesses will be provided with a grant to support them to manage in these unprecedented circumstances.

Please read these guidelines before completing the application form.

Completed application forms are to be submitted to the Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions.

1. Eligibility criteria

1.1 Businesses are eligible to apply for a grant through the Fund provided they meet the following criteria:

- Have been subject to closure or highly impacted by shutdown restrictions announced by the Victorian Government; and
- Employ people; and

- Have a turnover of more than \$75,000¹; and
 - Have a payroll of less than \$650,000²; and
 - Hold an Australian Business Number (ABN) and have held that ABN at 16 March 2020 (date of the State of Emergency declaration); and
 - Have been engaged in carrying out the operation of the business in the Australian State of Victoria on 16 March 2020.
- 1.2 While owners of businesses that do not employ people (non-employing businesses) are not eligible for funding through this program, they can seek support through the Commonwealth Government’s Job Seeker Payment Program.
- 1.3 Funding will be allocated through a grant process, through which businesses are invited to apply for a grant of \$10,000.
- 1.4 Applicants are required to submit an application online via the Business Victoria website (business.vic.gov.au). All questions in the application need to be completed to ensure timely assessment and grant payment.
- 1.5 Applicants are required to provide a copy of their most recent Business Activity Statement (BAS). Other supporting materials can also be provided.
- 1.6 If you require further information to participate in the program please refer to business.vic.gov.au or contact the Business Victoria Hotline at 13 22 15.

2. Available funding

- 2.1 The grant amount is \$10,000 per business.

3. How the funding may be used

- 3.1 Grants are provided to support eligible businesses that have been impacted by the shutdown restrictions enacted by Government, due to COVID-19. Grant funds could be used for example on:
- Meeting business costs, including utilities, salaries, rent
 - Seeking financial, legal or other advice to support business continuity planning
 - Developing the business through marketing and communications activities
 - Other supporting activities related to the operation of the business.

4. Evidence of eligibility and compliance

- 4.1 Applicants must certify in writing that they meet the eligibility criteria.
- 4.2 Applicants will be subject to audit by the Victorian Government or its representatives and will be required to produce evidence (such as payroll reports to demonstrate

¹ \$75,000 in annual turnover is the threshold for submission of a Business Activity Statement (BAS).

² Victorian businesses do not have to pay payroll tax if their total annual payroll tax receipt is under \$650,000. Note that Victorian Government is providing full payroll refunds for the 2019-20 financial year to small and medium businesses with a payroll of less than \$3 million.

If your company is part of a group of companies that is registered for payroll tax and will receive the payroll tax refund [announced as part of Government’s \$1.7 billion Economic Survival Package], your company is ineligible for this funding program.

impact) at the request of the Victorian Government for a period of four years after the grant has been approved.

- 4.3 If any information in applications is found to be false or misleading, or grants are not applied for the purposes of the businesses in accordance with the terms of funding as set out in these guidelines and attached application, the grant will be repayable on demand.

5. Other information about this program

- 5.1 The Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions reserves the right to amend these guidelines and application terms as required.
- 5.2 Further information may be found at business.vic.gov.au or through the Business Victoria Hotline at 13 22 15.
- 5.3 Applications will be accepted until 1 June 2020.
- 5.4 The Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions will endeavour to notify all applicants on the outcome of their submitted application within five business days.

