



Trader Fact Sheet as at 4 January 2021

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COVID-19 Support for Businesses

City of Port Phillip Assistance

Below provides a snapshot of opportunities for businesses in the City of Port Phillip. For a detailed response to the pandemic, visit the Council's [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) page](#).

Rate Relief

Ratepayers who are experiencing financial hardship can apply for rate relief assistance. Relief includes the option to make regular rates payments or defer rates interest free until 30 June 2021.

More information, see [Rates Concessions and Rates Hardship Relief](#)

Rent Waivers

Rent waivers are available for Council commercial and community tenants and licensees. Rental waivers will be applied proportionally in line with the impact on turnover as follows.

More information, see [Rent Waivers](#)

Footpath Trading

Footpath trading fees are waived until 30 June 2021, this includes outdoor dining settings, planter boxes, umbrellas, freestanding heaters, A-frames and goods displays. Also, if you are a current footpath trading permit-holder, you can apply to extend your existing footpath trading area in front of a neighbour's business.

More information, see [Footpath Trading Permit](#)

Business Parklet

Re-purpose parking bays outside your business to increase footpath trading until 30 April 2021.

More information, see [Business Parklet](#)

Public Space Trader Extensions

If a Business Parklet is not a suitable option due to your location, you may be able to extend your dining area outdoors into public open space, if you have a park or reserve adjacent or across from your business.

More information, see [Public Space Trader Extensions](#)

Public Space Activation Initiatives

Renew Fitzroy Street

Expressions of Interest have opened for Renew Fitzroy Street, a retail pilot program aimed at revitalising St Kilda's Fitzroy Street by filling commercial vacancies.

Renew Fitzroy Street is being delivered in partnership by Port Phillip Council, Renew

Australia and the Fitzroy Street Business Association. Council is contributing \$75,000, which has been matched by the Fitzroy Street Business Association.

The initiative encourages makers, creators, artists and social enterprises to apply for vacant retail space where they can bring their creative ideas to life. Successful applicants are offered a rent-free 30-day rolling licence, negotiated by Renew Australia with property owners and agents.

More information, see [Renew Fitzroy Street](#)

Spotto

From 1-31 January we are encouraging visitors to explore our Parklets. If they visit one of 12 locations, and collect a Spotto Game Card, make a \$10+ purchase in the local area and return the Game Card, they go in the running to win a \$1000 prize of vouchers from the local area that Council is purchasing as the incentive.

The Game Cards will be in a box like a letterbox on a pole placed beside some Parklets. The Economic Growth and Activation team will restock the Cards and collect the entries every few days.

More information, see [Spotto](#)

Council Budget Update from 2 December 2020

After considering options, a \$1.21 million Economic and Social Package was endorsed at the 2 December Port Phillip Council meeting. A further \$488,888 is available to be considered for more projects as part of the next Budget quarterly review in February 2021.

The package, to be delivered under Council's Live Love Local program, includes:

- High Vehicle Mitigation on Acland St until 30 June 2021 \$5,700
- Reduced registration fees for food premises (25 per cent) and health premises, such as beauty parlours (50 per cent), for 2020/21 (\$166,412)
- Further six-month waiver of footpath trading fees (\$284,000)
- Extended rental waivers for Council tenants most affected by the pandemic (up to \$300,000)
- Data and measurement \$20,000

Free QR Code Service

Victorian business owners can now access a free QR Code Service to keep records of visitors.

Register your business via coronavirus.vic.gov.au/qrcode, download and print a poster with the Victorian Government QR Code and display it prominently in your business. Businesses or venues with multiple outlets or spaces can register for multiple QR codes.

QR code record keeping is now mandatory for smaller hospitality venues with a density limit of one person for every two square metres and up to 50 customers.

State Government Business Support Grants and Rebates

The Victorian Government announced a \$3 billion package to help businesses survive and keep Victorians in jobs.

Small Business Digital Adaptation Program

The Small Business Digital Adaptation Program will allow eligible businesses to trial and then receive access to digital products, tools and training they can use to build digital capability in their day-to-day operations, e.g. point-of-sale payment, upgrading current website to include an online store etc.

Once businesses have purchased a selected digital product, they can apply for a rebate of \$1,200 to access the product for 12 months.

Applications close at 11:59pm on 28 February 2021. More information, see [**Small Business Digital Adaption Program**](#)

Liquor Licence Relief

Liquor licencing fees will be waived for 2020 and 2021. Businesses that have paid for a renewable liquor licence for 2020 will be reimbursed their licence fee and those yet to pay will have the fee waived.

The State Revenue Office will administer the reimbursement, regardless of whether the licence fee was paid to it or the Victorian Commission for Gambling and Liquor Regulation.

Payroll Tax Waived

Businesses with annual taxable wages up to \$3 million will have their payroll tax for the 2019-20 financial year waived.

Eligible businesses must continue to lodge returns but do not need to make further payments for this financial year.

The State Revenue Office will directly contact eligible businesses in relation to reimbursement for payroll tax already paid in the financial year.

These businesses can also defer paying payroll tax for the first quarter of the 2020-21 financial year.

More information about the administration of these relief measures will be sent directly to eligible businesses.

Upskilling and Mentoring

Business Recovery and Resilience Mentoring

The Victorian Government partnered with the Victorian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (VCCI) to deliver business mentoring to help small businesses navigate the economic challenges posed by restrictions.

Through this program, eligible business owners can receive up to four 2-hour mentoring sessions with an experienced professional who will help them make informed decisions about the future of their business.

The program offers tailored guidance on Business Recovery, Market Transformation, Digital Literacy and Engagement, Market and Supply Chain Diversification and Reskilling and Retraining.

More information, see [**Business Recovery and Resilience Mentoring**](#)

Small Business Mentoring Program

Whether you're new to running a business or a seasoned business owner, a mentor can help you refine your business strategy, map out the direction that your business should be taking and assist in setting goals for your business to succeed.

Complimentary sessions are available via the Small Business Clinics and Small Business Bus, plus ongoing paid mentoring is available.

More information, see [**Small Business Mentoring Program**](#)

Upskill My Business

Business owners can gain practical skills from the state's top education providers and industry experts to set them up for a strong recovery through free online courses, live and on-demand events and a range of business resources.

More information, see [**Upskill My Business**](#)

Mental Health Support

St John Ambulance Mental Health and Crisis Support Training

Training is available to staff from local councils and key members who hold positions at Chambers of Commerce, Business Associations or Business Networks, this includes Traders Associations.

The training will be delivered in a virtual classroom, with 1 hour pre-learning and 2 days of 4 hour classroom sessions and will assist participants to:

- Build capabilities to support the local business community with wellbeing or mental health challenges
- Certify participants in a nationally recognised qualification in mental health first response
- Develop an awareness of the wellbeing and mental health support available for small business operators and other members of the community.

More information, see [**St John Ambulance Mental Health and Crisis Support Training**](#)

Further mental health support is available through the Victorian Government. More information, see [**Wellbeing and Mental Health Support for Victorian Small Businesses**](#)

Commercial Tenant and Landlord Initiatives

Commercial Tenancy Relief Scheme

The Victorian Government introduced the Commercial Tenancy Relief Scheme to alleviate financial hardship faced by tenants and landlords.

The Scheme has been changed and extended until 31 December 2020, meaning rental relief agreements between a commercial tenant and their landlord must be made within the timeframe 29 September to 31 December 2020.

For commercial tenants and landlords, the Scheme provides the following support:

- A moratorium on commercial tenancy evictions for the non-payment of rent for small to medium enterprises with an annual aggregate turnover under \$50 million that have experienced a minimum 30 per cent reduction in turnover due to coronavirus (COVID-19), commencing from 29 March 2020
- A freeze on rent increases during the moratorium
- A rent payment waiver or deferral in proportion a tenants' reduction in turnover, to be negotiated between the tenant and landlord
- Complimentary mediation for tenants and landlords
- the tenant's annual aggregate turnover doesn't exceed \$50 million
- the business is an eligible business in the Commonwealth's JobKeeper scheme
- the business is suffering financial stress or hardship as a result of the pandemic.

The Government is also providing land tax relief to eligible commercial or industrial landlords that provide rent relief to their tenants.

More information, see [**Commercial Tenancy Relief Scheme**](#)

Further Extension of the Commercial Tenancy Relief Scheme

The Victorian Government has extended the Commercial Tenancy Relief Scheme until 28 March 2021.

Small business tenants seeking rent relief from 1 January 2021 to 28 March 2021 will need to apply to their landlord in writing with evidence of their eligibility as soon as possible, as a landlord is only required to provide rent relief from the date of application.

If a tenant has already made a request and is seeking further rent relief for this extended period, then they will need to make another request to their landlord supplying the required evidence.

This extension provides a continuation of the Scheme's supports where:

- commercial landlords are required to provide rent relief that matches their eligible tenant's fall in turnover from the date the tenant applies with the required evidence
- rent increases and evictions for tenants who have requested rent relief and provided evidence of eligibility are banned
- tenants and landlords who can't reach an agreement on rent relief can apply for free mediation with the Victorian Small Business Commission (VSBC) to resolve their dispute
- tenants can apply to the VSBC for a binding order for rent relief if their landlord fails to respond to us or does not engage in mediation in good faith.

More information, see [**Commercial Tenancy Relief Scheme**](#)

Land Tax Relief

The Victorian Government is providing land tax relief to encourage landlords to do the right thing by their commercial tenants. Relief is available for eligible owners of land, including landlords who have provided rent relief to tenants impacted by the pandemic.

2020 Land Tax Relief

Landlords who provide tenants impacted by the coronavirus pandemic with rent relief during 2020 may be eligible for a reduction of up to 50% on the property's 2020 land tax. Additionally, those unable to secure a tenant because of the pandemic, and owner-occupiers of commercial properties, may be eligible for a 25% reduction on the property's 2020 land tax.

Eligible applicants can also defer payment of their remaining 2020 land tax up to 31 March 2021.

2021 Land Tax Relief

Landlords who provide residential tenants impacted by the coronavirus pandemic with rent relief between 1 January 2021 and 28 March 2021 may be eligible for a reduction of up to 25% on the property's 2021 land tax.

Eligible applicants can also defer payment of their remaining 2021 land tax (and any 2020 land tax previously deferred until 31 March 2021) until 30 November 2021.

Applications for 2021 land tax relief will be opening soon.

More information, see [**Apply for Coronavirus Land Tax Relief**](#)

CovidSafe Support and Initiatives

COVIDSafe Planning

Small Business Victoria have developed a COVIDSafe resource pack to assist businesses in reopening preparations. It includes:

- Six COVIDSafe principles to help prevent future outbreaks
- COVIDSafe Plan template
- New guidelines including Industry Restart Guidelines and Restriction Levels
- Fact sheets, social media assets and templates
- Coronavirus translated information for people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds
- Collection of signage, posters and questionnaires to assist in communicating key messages to workers and customers

More information, see [**COVIDSafe Workplaces**](#)

COVIDSafe Signage

Businesses can purchase Victorian Government Stay Safe Signage via Officeworks.

More information, see [**Essential Business Signage**](#)

COVIDSafe Deep Cleaning Rebate

Rebates to help small and medium size businesses cover the cost of cleaning after closing a worksite due to a suspected or confirmed coronavirus case.

The rebate will help eligible businesses cover the cost of hiring professional cleaning services to conduct a 'deep clean' or 'decontamination clean' of their premises or worksite. It will cover up to 80 per cent of the cleaning costs at each worksite, capped at a grant of \$10,000 (for a total cleaning cost of \$12,500).

More information, see [COVIDSafe Deep Cleaning Rebate](#)

Support for Employees

There are two payments available for workers who need to Isolate

\$300 Coronavirus (COVID-19) Test Isolation Payment for information about support for Victorian workers, including parents and guardians, who are required to self-isolate while waiting for the results of a coronavirus (COVID-19) test.

\$1500 Pandemic Leave Disaster Payment who they must self-isolate or quarantine at home or they are caring for someone with COVID-19.

Federal Government Support

JobKeeper

Eligible businesses and not-for-profits receive fortnightly wage subsidies for part or all the salary or wages for eligible employees. These payments are administered by the Australian Tax Office.

The current JobKeeper rate which was reduced and is paid at two rates:

From 28 September 2020 to 3 January 2021, the JobKeeper Payment rates are:

- \$1,200 per fortnight for all eligible employees who were working in the business or not-for-profit for 20 hours or more a week on average in the four weeks of pay periods before either 1 March 2020 or 1 July 2020, and for eligible business participants who were actively engaged in the business for 20 hours or more per week on average; and
- \$750 per fortnight for other eligible employees and business participants.

From 4 January 2021 to 28 March 2021, the JobKeeper Payment rates will be:

- \$1,000 per fortnight for all eligible employees who were working in the business or not-for-profit for 20 hours or more a week on average in the four weeks of pay periods before either 1 March 2020 or 1 July 2020, and for business participants who were actively engaged in the business for 20 hours or more per week on average; and
- \$650 per fortnight for other eligible employees and business participants

More information, see [JobKeeper Extension](#)

Apprentices and Trainees

Wage subsidies are available for apprentices and trainees for small and medium-sized businesses with fewer than 200 employees, including those using a Group Training Organisation, who retain an Australian Apprentice engaged as at 1 July 2020.

Eligible employers can apply for a wage subsidy of 50 per cent of the apprentice's or trainee's wage paid during the 9 months from 1 July 2020 to 31 March 2021, up to a cap of \$7,000 per quarter.

Employers of any size including Group Training Organisations that re engage an eligible out of trade apprentice or trainee will also be eligible for the subsidy.

More information, see [**Apprentices and Trainees**](#)

Insolvency Changes

If your business is facing financial difficulty tailored solutions for your circumstances are available via the Australian Tax Office, including temporary reduction of payments or deferrals, or withholding enforcement actions.

More information, see [**Your Safety Net**](#)

Instant Asset Write-Off

Eligible businesses can claim an immediate deduction for the business portion of the cost of an asset in the year the asset is first used or installed ready for use.

Instant asset write-off can be used for:

- Multiple assets if the cost of each individual asset is less than the relevant threshold
- New and second-hand assets

More information, see [**Instant Asset Write-off for Eligible Businesses**](#)

Accelerated Depreciation

Eligible businesses, for the 2019–20 and 2020–21 income years, may be able to deduct the cost of new depreciating assets at an accelerated rate.

Deductions are claimed when lodging a tax return for the income year.

More information, see [**Backing Business Investment – Accelerated Depreciation**](#)

Flow of Credit

The Coronavirus Small and Medium Enterprises (SME) Guarantee Scheme provides SMEs with access to unsecured working capital loans to help them manage disrupted cash flows.

Phase 2 of the Scheme commenced on 1 October 2020 until 30 June 2021.

More information, see [**Coronavirus SME Guarantee Scheme**](#)

Further Resources

For more information call Business Victoria on 13 22 15.

Information and resources can also be accessed via the Victorian Government's **Coronavirus Information and Support for Business**

For the latest information on the restrictions, please visit the **Department of Health and Human Services**.