

Agriculture sector support – coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic

AGRICULTURE VICTORIA

The Victorian Government is supporting agriculture, food processing and critical supply chain businesses during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.

The Victorian Government is here to help you adapt and be COVID-safe, with support available to help with worker relocation, induction and training, business adaption, sourcing seasonal workers and more.

For more information about the available support, visit the Agriculture Victoria website: agriculture.vic.gov.au/coronavirus

SUPPORT	DESCRIPTION	CONTACTS
Agriculture Workforce Plan		
Business adaptation grants	Grants between \$10,000 and \$300,000 will support eligible businesses to meet the costs of adapting workplaces to comply with health, safety and social distancing requirements or adapting to required business changes as a result of the pandemic.	Register via the Agriculture Victoria website .
Worker relocation and accommodation	A daily travel-to-work allowance of up to \$50 per employee and daily accommodation support of up to \$200 per employee is available to businesses unable to fill eligible roles locally.	Register via the Agriculture Victoria website .
Worker induction and retraining	Grants between \$1000 and \$100,000 are available to support eligible employers inducting workers into new job roles and/or delivering re-training.	Register via the Agriculture Victoria website .
Seasonal workforce support		
Seasonal Workforce Coordinators	Coordinators are providing support for seasonal workforce needs in key regions experiencing seasonal workforce pressures.	Sunraysia: Sue McConnell , Agriculture Victoria, 0418 572 087 Goulburn Murray: Aimee McCutcheon , Agriculture Victoria, 0407 545 966 Other regions: Sze Flett
CALD Engagement Officers	Engagement Officers are helping link culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities with local industry, employers, labour hire agencies, local government and other stakeholders.	Del Delpitiya , Agriculture Victoria, 0436 649 860
Seasonal Workforce Accommodation Program	This program team is working with local government, industry, accommodation providers and regional stakeholders to ensure suitable accommodation supply is available for seasonal workforce. Funding is available to address immediate seasonal workforce accommodation and transportation issues.	More information will be available on the Agriculture Victoria website shortly. Contact: Myles Gaffney, Agriculture Victoria, 0407 335 602
Connecting job seekers and employers		
Working for Victoria	The Working for Victoria platform is a free service that matches businesses with new employees, with more than 70,000 Victorian jobseekers registered on the platform. Agricultural seasonal workforce employers, labour hire agencies and those looking for agricultural work are encouraged to register their interest through the platform.	Register via the Working for Victoria website .
Skills and Job Centres	The Victorian Government's Skills and Jobs Centres support employers to meet their workforce needs, along with assisting people who want to enter the workforce, start training or re-skill.	More information can be found on the Department of Education and Training website .
Harvest Trail	The Australian Government's Harvest Trail Service connects workers with seasonal jobs in rural and remote locations.	More information can be found on the Harvest Trail website .
Additional Victorian and Commonwealth support		
Creating a COVIDSafe workplace	Information and resources to help business owners and operators understand their obligations and prepare COVIDSafe Plans, including guidance, a template and workplace attendance register.	More information can be found on the Victorian Government's Coronavirus website .
Temporary relief for financially distressed businesses	The Commonwealth Government is temporarily increasing the threshold at which creditors can issue a statutory demand on a company. The Australian Taxation Office (ATO) will tailor solutions for owners or directors of businesses that are currently struggling due to coronavirus.	More information can be found on the ATO website .

Boosting cash flow for employers	Up to \$100,000 will be available for eligible small and medium sized businesses and not-for-profits that employ people, with a minimum payment of \$20,000.	More information can be found on the Business Victoria website .
Pandemic Leave Disaster Payment	A \$1500 lump sum payment supports workers who can't earn an income because they must self-isolate or quarantine at home, or are caring for someone with COVID-19.	More information can be found on the Services Australia website .
Test Isolation Payment	A \$450 payment that provides financial support for Victoria workers required to self-isolate to wait for the results of a coronavirus (COVID-19) test.	Visit the Department of Health and Human Services website
Wellbeing and mental health support for small businesses	Victorians dealing with the challenges of running a small business can access mental health support to navigate through the impacts of COVID-19. Current support includes St John Ambulance Mental Health and Crisis Support Training.	More information can be found on the Business Victoria website .
Supporting apprentices and trainees	Eligible employers can apply for a wage subsidy of 50 per cent of the apprentice's or trainee's wage from 1 January 2020 to 31 March 2021.	More information can be found on the Business Victoria website .
Extension to JobKeeper	JobKeeper has been extended to March 2021. Support will be targeted to businesses and not-for-profits that continue to be significantly impacted by COVID-19.	More information can be found on the Australian Taxation Office website .
Business Support Fund	Meat and seafood processing, and supermarket and food distribution are among the sectors that may be eligible to access grants through the Business Support Fund. Round three offers \$10,000, \$15,000 or \$20,000, depending on the business' annual payroll, to support businesses to make it through restricted trading.	Call Business Victoria on 13 22 15 or complete a contact form .
Victorian Export Recovery Package	The \$15.7 million export recovery package will address logistics and supply chain issues caused by the pandemic and establish new export channels.	Register your interest via the Global Victoria website .
Payroll Tax Relief	Businesses with annual taxable wages up to \$3 million will have their payroll tax for the 2019-20 financial year waived.	More information can be found on the State Revenue Office Victoria website .
Useful resources		
Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS)	Essential information about COVID-19, symptoms, testing, physical distancing and Victoria's restriction levels.	More information can be found on the DHHS website .
Australian Information Industry Association (AIIA)	Tools, information and free services for businesses to keep functioning with minimal disruption through technology.	More information can be found on the Australian Business Continuity website .
Australian Taxation Office (ATO)	Up-to-date information and advice to business.	More information can be found on the ATO website .
Business Victoria	Find tips on how to create a continuity plan , evaluate risk and prepare a risk management plan . Learn how to respond and recover . Book a low-cost appointment with a mentor to help you work through or develop a recovery plan.	More information can be found on the Business Victoria website .
Worksafe	Find the latest information about COVID-19, and support for employers and employees to prevent workplace exposure. Also industry specific and multi-lingual information.	More information can be found on the Worksafe website .
Victorian Chamber of Commerce and Industry	Free annual membership and access to COVID-19 business resources.	Register via the Victorian Chamber of Commerce and Industry website .
Export Finance Australia	Support and resources for exporters during the COVID-19.	More information can be found on the Export Finance website .
Export Council of Australia	Updates on supply chains and freight and a suite of tools and resources for exporters.	More information can be found on the Export Council of Australia website .

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