

COVID-19 RESTRICTIONS – FINANCIAL SUPPORT AVAILABLE TO BUSINESSES

The Victorian Government has announced the reinstatement of Stage 3 ‘Stay at Home’ restrictions across metropolitan Melbourne and Mitchell Shire from 11:59 on 8 July 2020, in order to help slow the spread of coronavirus (COVID-19) in Victoria. These restrictions will be in place for six weeks and will then be reviewed by the Chief Health Officer.

The reinstatement of these restrictions means that businesses within metropolitan Melbourne or Mitchell Shire such as restaurants, cafes, pubs, gyms, indoor sporting venues, cinemas, live music, entertainment venues and others are either restricted in their operations or must cease operations during the period of the restrictions.

As a service to our clients, we would like to inform you that there are options available to businesses that meet certain criteria to apply for financial assistance to support them during these difficult times. Where the eligibility criteria is met a business, can apply for one or more of the financial support options listed hereunder.

1 : VIC GOVT, BUSINESS SUPPORT FUND – EXPANSION

Businesses within metropolitan Melbourne and Mitchell Shire that are affected by the return to Stay at Home restrictions may be eligible for a one-off, \$5,000 grant under the Business Support Fund - Expansion program. (Please note that the eligibility criteria has changed from that of the original grant)

To be eligible, businesses must:

- Operate a business with an address located in one of the 31 metropolitan Melbourne Local Government Areas (LGA’s) and Mitchell Shire subject to the return to Stage 3 ‘Stay at home’ restrictions;
- Be a participant in the Commonwealth Government’s JobKeeper Payment scheme;
- Employ people and be registered with WorkSafe on 30 June 2020 (note : sole traders must employ persons other than themselves to be eligible);
- Have an annual payroll of less than \$3 million in the 2019-20 year, on an ungrouped basis;
- Hold an Australian Business Number (ABN) at 30 June 2020;
- Be registered for Goods and Services Tax (GST) on the 30 June 2020; and
- Be registered with the responsible Federal or State Regulator.

Applicants must provide evidence of participation in the Commonwealth Government’s JobKeeper Payment scheme.

Applicants must also provide evidence of the location of their business operation by providing the most recent:

- Utility Bill (gas, electricity, telecommunications, water); or
- Lease Agreement; or
- Council Rate Notice.

Applications for the program close on the **19 August 2020**.

Please find below the link for further information regarding the grant.

<https://www.business.vic.gov.au/support-for-your-business/grants-and-assistance/business-support-package/business-support-fund>

2 : VIC GOVT, OTHER SUPPORT

There are a number of other financial support packages being offered by the State Government:

- Regional Tourism Accommodation Support Program: <https://www.business.vic.gov.au/support-for-your-business/grants-and-assistance/business-support-package/regional-tourism-accommodation-support-program>. Applications for this program are now open.
- CBD Business Support Fund: <https://www.business.vic.gov.au/support-for-your-business/grants-and-assistance/business-support-package/cbd-business-support-fund>. Applications for this program are not yet open and very few details are available as yet. We encourage you to register your interest and check back regularly if you believe you may be eligible for this funding.
- Night time economy support program: <https://www.business.vic.gov.au/support-for-your-business/grants-and-assistance/business-support-package/night-time-economy-support-program>. Applications for this program are not yet open and very few details are available as yet. We encourage you to register your interest and check back regularly if you believe you may be eligible for this funding.

In addition to the above:

- \$26 million in mental health support is to be made available to ensure Victorians dealing with the compounding challenges of running a small business can get the support they need as they navigate their way through the crisis; and
- \$10 million is to be made available for a business mentoring program, pairing small business owners with experienced professionals who can help them navigate their way through the crisis.

More information on access to these programs is expected to be announced by the Victorian Government soon.

3 : LOCAL GOVT, GRANTS FROM MUNICIPALITIES

We encourage you to contact your local council to ascertain if they are offering any grants to businesses within your locality.

For instance, the City of Glen Eira is offering a COVID-19 Small Business Grants Program 2020 offering up to \$2,000 excluding GST.

Should you wish to discuss any of the above-mentioned options, please contact Debbie Gruber – Practice Manager on 9091 4999.

We wish you all the best in these difficult times and remind you that we are here to help you whenever we can.

Stay safe & well.

Michael Diamond, Ricky Diamond and Andrea Murphy