

# Business Costs Assistance Program FAQs

Frequently asked questions related to the Victorian Government's Business Costs Assistance Program.

## Which sectors are eligible for the grant?

Small businesses including sole traders who were most impacted by the recent COVID-19 circuit breaker action, particularly those in hospitality, food wholesaling, tourism, events and selected retail. For a full list of eligible sectors see [Eligible ANZSIC classes](#).

To see if your business is in an eligible industry sector you should:

- Confirm the 4-digit ANZSIC class linked to your Australian Business Number (ABN) on the [Australian Business Register](#) [External link \(opens in same window\)](#).
- Check if the 4-digit ANZSIC class linked to your ABN is included in the list of eligible ANZSIC classes for this program.
- If your 4-digit ANZSIC class linked to your ABN is not on the list of eligible ANZSIC classes for this program, then your business is not eligible for a grant under this program.
- For more information on how to update your ANZSIC class to accurately reflect your business activity please visit the [Australian Business Register](#) [External link \(opens in same window\)](#).

## Why have you chosen these sectors?

This program is about supporting industry sectors that are most likely to have incurred direct costs because of the circuit breaker action, such as the loss of perishable goods, flowers, cancellation fees and charges, and booking cancellations. This includes restaurants, florists, accommodation providers, musicians and performers.

## I applied for the Business Support Fund (or other COVID-19 related grant) and was not eligible. Can I still apply for this program?

Yes, but you must meet all the following criteria:

- be located within Victoria
- be registered as operating in an [eligible industry sector](#) identified in the List of Eligible ANZSIC classes (as defined by the industry classification linked to the business' ABN)
- have incurred costs (as outlined in Section 5 of the [guidelines](#)) as a direct result of the circuit breaker action announced on 12 February 2021
- have an annual Victorian payroll of up to \$3 million in 2019-20 on an ungrouped basis
- be registered for goods and services tax (GST) on 12 February 2021
- hold an Australian business number (ABN) and have held that ABN at 12 February 2021.

### Note: evidence of eligibility

- **If you are an employing business**, you will need to provide the WorkCover Employer Number (WEN) or WorkSafe Application Reference Number (WRN) linked to the business.
- **Non-employing businesses (such as sole traders)** need to provide an eligible proof of identity document.

## If I received a Licensed Hospitality Venue Fund grant, can I apply for the program?

No, businesses that received a grant under the [Licensed Hospitality Venue Fund](#) are not eligible for a grant under this program.

Eligible businesses who received a grant through the Licensed Hospitality Venue Fund will receive a further one-off payment of \$3000 to help with costs incurred as a result of the circuit breaker action. Businesses that receive this payment **will not** be eligible to receive a grant from the Business Costs Assistance Program.

You do not need to apply for this payment. We will contact you with further information.

## Can I apply for the Victorian Accommodation Support Program and for this program?

If accommodation businesses apply to both the Business Costs Assistance Program and the Victorian Accommodation Support Program, the maximum grant they are eligible for will be capped at the higher value of the two grants (not the aggregate/total of both grants).

### **My business is not in one of the eligible sectors, can I still apply?**

No, not for this grant. There are other programs and resources for small business including:

- the **Small Business Digital Adaptation Program** - helping businesses adapt and build their digital capabilities through workshops and programs
- free online courses through **Upskill My Business**
- tailored guidance from experienced business professionals through the **Business Recovery and Resilience Mentoring** program
- **free online workshops** on topics such as building resilience, marketing, finance, taking your business online and business planning
- the free, confidential **Partners in Wellbeing helpline**, which is available seven days a week to support businesses with mental wellbeing and financial concerns, along with advice on topics such as marketing, HR and risk management.

### **I received a grant/ support through another COVID-19 business support program. Can I apply for the Business Costs Assistance Program?**

Yes, if you meet the eligibility criteria you can apply for a grant through the Business Costs Assistance Program, unless you received a grant through the Licensed Hospitality Venue Fund. Eligible businesses that received a grant through the Licensed Hospitality Venue Fund will receive the \$3000 Circuit Breaker Action Payment.

### **My business lost more than \$2000 during this circuit breaker action. Can I apply for more?**

This program is about supporting as many small businesses as possible in the impacted sectors, so the grant is capped at \$2000 per eligible business.

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- the **Small Business Digital Adaptation Program** - helping businesses adapt and build their digital capabilities through workshops and programs
- free online courses through **Upskill My Business**
- tailored guidance from experienced business professionals through the **Business Recovery and Resilience Mentoring** program
- **free online workshops** on topics such as building resilience, marketing, finance, taking your business online and business planning
- the free, confidential **Partners in Wellbeing helpline**, which is available seven days a week to support businesses with mental wellbeing and financial concerns, along with advice on topics such as marketing, HR and risk management.

### **What if I incurred less than \$2000 in costs, will I need to pay some of the money back?**

No. The **Business Costs Assistance Program** is a one-off payment recognising some businesses in targeted industry sectors have incurred direct costs as a result of the circuit breaker action.

If the costs you incurred are less than \$2000, your business may still be eligible for a \$2000 grant if it meets the other criteria.

By making this program easy for all businesses to access and apply, we can support as many Victorian businesses as possible, as quickly as possible.

All successful applicants must keep evidence of their costs for 12 months for audit.

### **I am a performer/ artist who has lost work during this circuit breaker action, but I am not registered for GST. Can I still access support?**

No, under the guidelines of the program all applicants must be registered for GST. A business or enterprise must register for GST if it has a turnover of \$75,000 or more. Not-for-profit entities with annual turnover between \$75,000 and \$150,000, which are not registered for GST and are registered with the Australian Charities and Not-for-Profit Commission, are eligible to apply.

### **I have a non-employing business (e.g. sole trader, partnership). Which identification documents should I submit with my application?**

You need to provide the identity documents of the person listed on the Australian Business Register as either the owner or co-owner of the business or authorised contact of the business. We will accept: an Australian driver's licence, an Australian passport, a Medicare card and Australian visa information and a foreign passport.

### **I am a hospitality venue with a liquor licence and I incurred direct costs as a result of the circuit breaker action. Can I apply to this program?**

Licensed hospitality venues that **did not** receive a grant under the **Licensed Hospitality Venue Fund** are **eligible** to apply for assistance under the Business Costs Assistance Program.

Businesses that received a grant under the Licensed Hospitality Venue Fund are **not eligible** for a grant under this program.

### **What type of evidence do I need to keep of incurred costs?**

The types of costs incurred by businesses will vary, some examples include:

- receipts and paid invoices for perishable goods, such as ingredients and flowers, that were no longer able to be sold or used for services
- paperwork including receipts, invoices, contracts for non-refundable fees for staging equipment, performers, venue hire for cancelled events
- evidence of cancelled client bookings such as records of online booking or paper bookings.

In your application, you will need to confirm and attest to the costs you incurred.

This is not an exhaustive list so it is important to keep evidence of your costs for 12 months from the date you receive your grant, as the Victorian Government or its representatives will conduct an audit of successful applicants and you may be asked to provide these records.

### **The program assists businesses that have incurred costs as a direct result of the circuit breaker action. Does this mean costs I incurred before the circuit breaker announcement aren't eligible?**

No, costs incurred before the circuit breaker action are eligible if they were incurred in preparation for activities that needed to be cancelled **as a result of** the circuit breaker action. For example pre-paid, non-refundable fees for performers or venue deposits.

### **My business incurred a cost due to the circuit breaker action. What type of costs are covered by this program?**

The program assists eligible businesses that have incurred costs as a direct result of the circuit breaker action announced on 12 February 2021. These may include:

- the loss of perishable goods (e.g. food or flowers)
- cancellation fees and charges (e.g. venue/performer/instructor)
- booking cancellations
- any other costs and losses incurred due to the circuit breaker action that could not be reasonably avoided.