

Bushfire recovery assistance for small business

Stakeholder kit
October 2020



VICTORIA
State
Government

Introduction

A range of bushfire recovery initiatives are available for Victorian small businesses that have been impacted by bushfires, including:

- Small Business Bushfire Support Grants of up to \$10,000 for eligible businesses who have been directly or indirectly impacted by bushfires. These grants help cover the costs associated with recovery following the fires.
- Small Business Bushfire Recovery Grants of up to \$50,000 for eligible businesses and non-profit organisations that have sustained direct damage as a result of the fires.
- Business Recovery Advisory Service which provides free, one-on-one support to assist with business impact assessment, developing recovery plans and resilience mentoring.

As a key supporter of small businesses, we need your help to spread the word about this program, to ensure every eligible business can access this resource.

In this pack, you'll find links to all the materials you need to easily promote grants and the advisory service on your channels, including:

- Images for use on Facebook, LinkedIn and Instagram
- An article and short piece for use in your newsletter or website
- A case study video for use online
- A selection of stock imagery to help bring promotions to life
- Information on the grant application process
- Links to additional services and information

These bushfire support initiatives are jointly funded by the Victorian State Government and Commonwealth under the Disaster Recovery Arrangements.

What you can do to help

- Spread the word about bushfire support initiatives to the small businesses in your network, using the channels and methods you know reach them best. You can use the materials in this pack.
- Direct people to the Bushfire Recovery page on the Business Victoria website at business.vic.gov.au/bushfire-recovery

Social media posts

Here are some messages you can use:

Small Business Bushfire Recovery Grants

\$50,000 grants are available for eligible small businesses and non-profit organisations. Apply by 31 December.

Has your business been impacted by bushfires? The Victorian and Australian governments are providing grants to help. Open until 31 December. Apply now.

Up to \$50,000 is available for eligible small businesses directly impacted to cover costs for restoration and rebuilding. Apply now.

Small Business Bushfire Support Grants

If you were directly or indirectly affected by the bushfires and experienced income loss of 40% or more, apply now.

\$10,000 grant available for eligible small businesses and primary producers experiencing significant income loss. Apply now.

Business Recovery Advisory Service

Qualified local advisers can help you find support that is relevant to your situation and guide you every step of the way.

Speak to qualified local advisers for help on accessing financial support, impact assessments and business recovery planning.

 Download social tiles



Video for sharing

 [Download video](#)

The 2019/20 bushfires affected Sue Svetlik's business, Equine Facilitated Learning, in many ways. Their horses needed to be evacuated multiple times, and as the facility was located in a fire restricted area, clients weren't allowed to access the program, which meant losses for their business.

But, by connecting with the Business Recovery Advisory Service, Sue was able to access a \$10,000 Small Business Bushfire Support Grant.

"After four years of drought, the fires, and now COVID-19, to relieve the pressure of finding the next dollar to continue with our program — was just exceptional."

"I would highly recommend the Business Recovery Advisory Service to other businesses."

"We could not thank them enough."



Newsletter articles



Introduction

This document includes copy to promote the Victorian and Australian government grants and support for bushfire affected businesses. It contains a news article, to be distributed through the stakeholder pack and delivered directly to news media, blogs and business websites, to facilitate sharing of stories among these groups.

Web article

Fire affected businesses could be missing out on grants of up to \$50,000

Small businesses affected by bushfire in regional Victoria could be missing out on up to \$50,000 grants from the Victorian and Australian governments.

Small Business Bushfire Recovery Grants of up to \$50,000 are available for small businesses affected by the Victorian bushfires, and Small Business Bushfire Support Grants of up to \$10,000 are available for eligible businesses and primary producers who have been indirectly affected due to the Victorian bushfires.

Approximately 2,300 small businesses have already received grants, but figures suggest there are many more businesses eligible for the grants that are yet to apply.

Carol Nelson, who operates a small business out of Mallacoota in East Gippsland, bringing authentic Greek food to markets and festivals around the region, said the grant she received was invaluable.

“We were doing really well before the fires, I’d say. It’s hard to really judge your own numbers with a business like this, but we’d often sell out, so that’s always a good sign,” said Nelson.

“In the fires, we lost our home and our trailer – which is what we operated our business out of – so that was really hard. It was the loss of trading opportunities more than anything... it just meant we couldn’t work, even if we wanted to.”

After the fires, Nelson received a \$50,000 Small Business Bushfire Recovery Grant, which helps businesses directly damaged by the fires to recover.

“The grant has just taken so much pressure off us. We haven’t had to worry as much and have been able to take some time and reflect after what has been a really rough year,” said Nelson.

“You’ve really got nothing to lose. We’re in the process of getting a custom-built trailer for our business – really, it’s a dream come true.”

Helen Marshall, a small business owner located in Corryong in north east Victoria, said the \$10,000 Small Business Bushfire Support Grant kept her business alive.

“If we didn’t have the grant, I don’t think we would have reopened. It just gave us that cushion, a buffer that meant we could pay our staff and look after our fixed costs,” said Marshall.

“As the local café, the grant meant that we could provide our community with a place to gather once more. People would come and talk to one another, or just sit and reflect. It’s something people really need.”

Marsh and her business partner did not have all the financial information they needed to apply for the grant, so they engaged the assistance of the Business Recovery Advisory Service to help them with their application.

“I think we would’ve just given up, but the advisory service advisor really persisted. Normally you’d touch base once and then never hear again, but they kept in touch, read over our application and really helped us,” said Marshall.

“At one point, we thought we weren’t going to get it because we didn’t qualify but our advisor called on our behalf and just made it happen. They were terrific.”

The Business Recovery Advisory Service supports businesses in applying for small business grant programs in bushfire affected areas and has to date supported more than 1,090 businesses in Victoria.

All small businesses impacted by the bushfires are encouraged to check their eligibility and apply for a grant.

To find out more about the grants and to apply, please visit business.vic.gov.au/bushfire-recovery

To find out more about the Business Recovery Advisory Service, please visit business.vic.gov.au/bushfire-recovery-advice or call 13 22 15.

Newsletter copy

To help Victorian small businesses recover from the 2019/20 bushfires, the Victorian and Australian governments are providing grants of up to \$50,000. If you were affected by the fires, either directly or indirectly, apply for a grant, or get in touch with the [Business Recovery Advisory Service](#) or call 13 22 15 for free advice and grant assistance.

Find out more at business.vic.gov.au/bushfire-recovery



Imagery

Use these photos in your newsletter and on your website.

 Download images



Grant eligibility

\$50,000 Small Business Bushfire Recovery Grants Victoria

Grants of up to \$50,000 are available to eligible Victorian small businesses and non-profit organisations (NPOs) affected by the Victorian bushfires. The eligible affected areas are Alpine Shire, Ararat Rural City, City of Ballarat, City of Wodonga, East Gippsland Shire, Glenelg Shire, Golden Plains Shire, Greater Bendigo, Indigo Shire, Mansfield Shire (including Mount Buller), Moyne Shire, Northern Grampians Shire, Pyrenees Shire, Rural City of Wangaratta, Shire of Strathbogie, Southern Grampians Shire, Towong Shire, and Wellington Shire.

The Small Business Bushfire Recovery Grant is provided to help pay costs associated with clean up and reinstatement of the small business. This may include:

- a. engagement of tradesperson to conduct a safety inspection of damage to a property, premises, or equipment;
- b. purchasing, hiring or leasing equipment or materials to clean a property, premises, or equipment;
- c. purchasing, hiring or leasing equipment or materials that are essential for immediately resuming operation of the small business;
 - i. employing a person to clean a property, premises or equipment if the cost would not ordinarily have been incurred in the absence of the eligible disaster; or
 - ii. the cost exceeds the costs of employing a person to clean the property, premises or equipment that would ordinarily have been incurred in the absence of the eligible disaster;

- d. removing and disposing of debris or damaged materials;
- e. removing and disposing of spoiled goods and stock due to power outage;
- f. repairing a building, or repairing or replacing fittings in a building, if the repair or replacement is essential for resuming operation of the small business. If the repair or replacement is for small businesses that is home based, applicants are only permitted to claim the costs for damage to the premises which is directly attributable to the business, not other household damage;
- g. any of the following:
 - i. replacing lost or damaged stock if the replacement is essential for immediately resuming operation of the small business;
 - ii. leasing temporary premises for the purpose of resuming operation of the small business.

Applications are open until 31 December 2020 and can be made [here](#).

Grant eligibility

\$10,000 Small Business Bushfire Support Grants Victoria

Grants of up to \$10,000 to support small businesses who have experienced a significant loss of income due to the Victorian bushfires.

These grants assist with the costs of maintaining businesses, including covering salaries, rent and utilities. The grants are for small businesses and primary producers in the shires of Towong, East Gippsland, Alpine, Mansfield, Indigo, Wellington and Wangaratta.

You may also be assessed under exceptional circumstances if you don't meet specific eligibility criteria.

Applications are open until 31 December 2020 and can be made [here](#).

For more information about bushfire recovery and response, please visit [Bushfire Recovery Victoria](#).

Additional support available to Victorian small businesses affected by bushfire

Emergency Bushfire Primary Industries Grant of up to \$75,000 is available to eligible primary producers directly impacted by the Victorian Bushfires to help pay for the cost of clean-up and other emergency measures including disposing of dead stock, and rebuilding or replacing damaged or destroyed on-farm infrastructure.

Bushfire Recovery Grants for Aboriginal Communities of up to \$500,000 - supports Aboriginal community or Traditional Owner led projects that value and respect Aboriginal culture, address trauma, support healing and promote cultural safety, ownership, resilience and participation.

Wine Grape Smoke Taint Grant of up to \$10,000 is available to eligible wine grape producers who have suffered crop damage from smoke taint caused by the Victorian Summer bushfires, who are located outside the areas that are eligible for Emergency Bushfire Response Primary Industries and Small Business Bushfire Support Grants.

Tax Relief Package including a range of tax relief measures for businesses affected by bushfires.

Victorian Bushfire Concessional Loans of up to \$500,000 to support small business, primary producers and non-profit organisations impacted by the Victorian bushfires. The loans are intended to be used for the purposes of restoring and/or replacing damaged assets and/or to meet working capital expenses.

For more information about bushfire recovery and response, please visit [Bushfire Recovery Victoria](#).

Available support services for small businesses affected by coronavirus restrictions

Coronavirus (COVID-19) business information: Information on restrictions and support to help your workplace plan and respond to coronavirus (COVID-19), visit coronavirus.vic.gov.au

Business Support Package - Support to help businesses and workers through to the other side of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, visit business.vic.gov.au/supportpackage

Wellbeing and Mental Health Support for Victorian Small Businesses: Victorians dealing with the challenges of running a small business can get the mental health support they need to navigate through the impacts of coronavirus (COVID-19). For more info, visit business.vic.gov.au/wellbeingsupport

Coronavirus (COVID-19): For the latest advice, information and resources, see the [DHHS coronavirus \(COVID-19\) page](#)

Business Resilience Package: Helping businesses impacted by restrictions and prepare for COVID Normal business. Visit: business.vic.gov.au/resiliencepackage

business.vic.gov.au/bushfire-recovery

