



Victorian
Small Business
Commission

Issues for Small Business and their Lawyers

Judy O'Connell

Victorian Small Business Commissioner



Small businesses in Victoria

- Over 600,000
- Over 27,000 net new small businesses in the last year
- 26% regional
- 4.8% growth rate – the highest of any state or territory



Source: ABS Cat. 8165.0 Counts of Australian Businesses including Entries and Exits, June 2018

Economic response to coronavirus

Victorian State Government

The Victorian Government has announced an economic survival and jobs package. This includes:

- payroll tax refunds
- deferral of payroll tax
- rent relief for commercial tenants in government buildings
- deferral of land tax payments for eligible small businesses
- payment of all outstanding supplier invoices
- waiving of liquor licensing fees for 2020
- establishing a *Business Support Fund* for the hardest hit sectors
- establishing a *Working for Victoria Fund* to help workers who have lost their jobs find new opportunities
- www.premier.vic.gov.au/economic-survival-package-to-support-businesses-and-jobs/

Economic response to coronavirus

- **Federal Australian Government**

The Australian Government has announced a small business package. This includes delivering support for business investment, cash flow assistance for employers, stimulus payments to households to support growth. For further information go to www.treasury.gov.au/coronavirus

- **Information for employers**

The Fair Work Ombudsman has answers to frequently asked questions for employers. What if an employee is stuck overseas or required to be quarantined? What if I need to reduce hours? Access FAQs here www.fairwork.gov.au/about-us/news-and-media-releases/website-news/coronavirus-and-australian-workplace-laws

- **ATO supports businesses in times of crisis**

The Australian Tax Office (ATO) is implementing a series of relief options. Access further information here www.ato.gov.au/Individuals/Dealing-with-disasters/In-detail/Specific-disasters/COVID-19

Dealing with coronavirus

- **Consumer rights information around COVID-19 concerns**

If you have to cancel your event, what are consumers entitled to? And what are consumer rights when it comes to cancelled travel? The Australian Competition and Consumer Commission is answering these questions and more for consumers here www.accc.gov.au/consumers/consumer-rights-guarantees/covid-19-coronavirus-information-for-consumers

- **Keep your employees safe during a pandemic**

Worksafe has a downloadable guide, which provides information to employers on managing the OHS risks associated with an infectious (communicable) disease pandemic. Access at www.worksafe.vic.gov.au/resources/preparing-pandemic-guide-employers

- **COVID-19 health advice from DHHS**

The Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) has COVID-19 health advice for Victorians. Access advice here www.dhhs.vic.gov.au/coronavirus

Dealing with coronavirus

- **Banks help small businesses financially affected by coronavirus**

The Australian Banking Association is urging small businesses financially impacted by the spread of COVID-19 to contact their bank to access assistance on offer which can include deferred payments, waiving fees and restructuring loans - www.ausbanking.org.au/coronavirus-statement-from-the-aba/

- **Rent relief for retail businesses**

If you have any questions on your retail lease during this time, please call the Victorian Small Business Commission on 13 VSBC (13 8722) or enquiries@vsbc.vic.gov.au.

- **Network with Victorian business owners**

Looking for a place to network with other Victorian small business owners while you work virtually and socially distance? Join the community here www.facebook.com/groups/businessvic/