

GUIDELINES

Business Concierge Program Round 2

Program Summary

The COVIDSafe Business Fund has allocated an additional \$3.54 million to extend the Local Government Business Concierge and Hospitality Support Program.

The Program specifically targets COVIDSafe practice awareness within the business and wider communities through direct funding to local governments to ensure they can actively engage on COVIDSafe practices and requirements with community venues, hospitality businesses and services such as hairdressing.

1 Eligibility

- 1.1 All Victorian councils (excluding City of Melbourne) are eligible for funding under this Program.

2 Available funding

- 2.1 The following funding is available:

- the 30 metropolitan councils (excluding City of Melbourne) and the 10 regional cities can each receive funding of \$60,000 per council excluding GST (\$2.40 million in total).
- the 38 rural councils can each receive additional funding of \$30,000 per council excluding GST (\$1.14 million in total).

3 Permitted Expenditure

- 3.1 Under the Program, councils will be eligible for funding for the following activities aimed at supporting businesses, particularly hospitality businesses, to comply with the Chief Health Officer's COVID-19 Directions:

- extending or employing a COVID Business Support Officer for three months to continue to support Victorian businesses to establish and maintain COVIDSafe practices
- supporting high density/risk locations such as markets and shopping strips to transition to a vaccinated economy by providing information on checking-in for customers, physical distancing, face masks, cleaning and sanitising
- actively engaging with hospitality businesses, community venues and small retail (hairdressers, butchers, milk bars etc) in high street and shopping strips businesses on COVIDSafe practices, including restriction requirements
- supporting businesses to ensure they understand:
 - their responsibilities to comply with CHO directions and measures such as checking the vaccination status of customers and staff
 - the importance of check-in processes for customers and staff to ensure optimal contact tracing in case of outbreaks

- providing information to the community, particularly hard to reach community members, on the importance of complying with COVIDSafe practices, including:
 - information in community languages
 - advice on where to obtain further information
 - advice on how to make a business COVIDSafe
- providing intelligence and information to State Government agencies on areas of non-compliance and other issues.

4 Conditions of Funding

- 4.1 Councils will be required to enter into agreements in the form of the Victorian Common Funding Agreement with the Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions (the **Department**) setting out the terms of the funding including the council's commitments and obligations (**VCFA**).
- 4.2 Funding under this Program will be released upon the Department's execution of the VCFA in accordance with its terms and will be required to be committed by 28 February and expended by 30 July 2022.
- 4.3 Councils can use funds from the Program for permitted activities (Section 3.1) undertaken from the date the Program was announced, being 29 July 2020.
- 4.4 Councils must ensure that all activities undertaken as part of any project under this Program comply with the Victorian Chief Health Officer's directions applicable at the time of any activation (available at <https://www.dhhs.vic.gov.au/business-sector-coronavirus-disease-covid-19> and amended from time to time).
- 4.5 Councils will be required to complete and submit to the Department an acquittal form in respect of the funding (to be provided by the Department). Such evidence may include but not be limited to:
 - (a) an acquittal of funding provided under the Program;
 - (b) a report setting out the activities undertaken as part of the Program, including any data gathered in respect of those activities such as the number of COVID Business Support Officers employed, participation in engagement activities, success of the advice provided on COVIDSafe Plans or information on how to make a business COVIDSafe, any issues or problems encountered.
- 4.6 Councils may also be required to provide further acquittal information at the Department's discretion.
- 4.7 If any portion of the funding has not been fully expended by 30 July 2022 in accordance with these Guidelines and the VCFA, councils will be required to return those funds to the Department.

5 Evaluation

- 5.1 Councils will be required to report on the outcomes of their funding and provide information to the Department when required for the evaluation of the program.

6 Compliance and Audit

- 6.1 Councils may be subject to audit by the Victorian Government or its representatives and be required to produce further evidence to demonstrate that the funding has been used in accordance with these guidelines and the VCFA between the council and Department.
- 6.2 Councils acknowledge and agree that, as part of entering into a funding agreement for this Program and any audit process undertaken in administering this Program, the Department may collect and disclose information to relevant Victorian Government agencies and departments and third parties, for the purposes of verifying particulars of a council's application and use of funding under this Program.

7 Acknowledgement

- 7.1 Councils must acknowledge the Victorian Government's support for any activities undertaken as part of the Program through, for instance, activity-related publications, media releases and promotional material in accordance with the VCFA.

8 Privacy

- 8.1 Any personal information provided as part of the application process and/or the VCFA about a council's employees, representatives or a third party will be collected by the Department for the purpose of grant administration and will be held, managed, used, disclosed or transferred in accordance with the provisions of the *Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014 (Vic)*, and other applicable laws. For further information, please email: privacy@ecodev.vic.gov.au or refer to the Department's Privacy Policy available from <https://djpr.vic.gov.au/privacy>. The council must ensure that it has the requisite consent of any individual whose personal information it has provided to the Department for the purposes of administering this Program.

9 Other information

- 9.1 The Department reserves the right to amend these guidelines and application terms at any time as it deems appropriate.

10 How to apply

- 10.1 Each council will be sent a funding agreement for the designated amount (see 2.1) and by signing the funding agreement will accept the offer of funding.
- 10.2 For further information, please contact the DJPR Business Concierge Team at business.concierge@ecodev.vic.gov.au.