

# BUSINESS SUPPORT

## AUSTRALIA – 29 JULY 2021



### THE REAL MEDIA COLLECTIVE BUSINESS SUPPORT SUMMARY – AUSTRALIA COVID-19 DISASTER PAYMENT – INDIVIDUAL AND BUSINESS SUPPORT

#### INTRODUCTION

Prime Minister, Scott Morrison has announced a further increase in Commonwealth payments to individuals and businesses across New South Wales from announcement and Commonwealth declaration of a hot-spot leading to a lockdown. This is part of the newly announced shared effort across Commonwealth, States and Territories when a lockdown occurs.

#### **UPDATED 28 JULY - NSW lockdown extended + additional support measures announced**

The NSW government announced that effective 31 July and due to the ongoing and high numbers of new COVID infection cases within the Greater Sydney region (including the Central Coast, Blue Mountains, Wollongong and Shellharbour regions), the current lockdown conditions will be extended by four (4) weeks, until 28 August 2021.

Additionally, the local government areas that are currently under additional restrictions (Fairfield, Canterbury-Bankstown, Blacktown, Liverpool and Cumberland LGA's) has been expanded so that from midnight 28 July 2021 the Parramatta, Georges River and Campbelltown LGA's are also be included. As previously advised, only authorised employees in those eight LGA's are permitted to leave their LGA for work.

#### **Workplace related issues**

In addition to the current workplace restrictions and requirements, from Saturday 31 July 2021:

- > All authorised workers who reside in the Canterbury-Bankstown LGA and leave those LGA's for work purposes, will be required to undertake a COVID surveillance test every three (3) days. Although enforceable from 31 July, impacted workers will have from 28 July to get their first test.
- > Direction regarding surveillance testing has been clarified with NSW Health. For our industry sector workers, i.e. not health and aged care workers, no three (3)-day testing is required for those from the other LGAs with tighter restrictions from 31 July. These LGAs include: Fairfield, Liverpool, Cumberland, Parramatta, Georges River and Campbelltown.

#### **Additional funding for businesses**

The NSW Treasurer has announced several expansions to the JobSaver business support payment scheme. Backdated to Monday this week (26 July 2021):

- > The current aggregated turnover threshold limit will be expanded from \$50M to \$250M, for those businesses that have experienced a turnover decline of 30% or more.
- > The maximum weekly payment has also been increased, with employing businesses that maintain their employee headcount now able receive between \$1,500 and \$100,000 per week, up from \$10,000, with payments based on 40 per cent of their weekly NSW payroll.
- > Non-employing businesses remain eligible for a maximum of \$1,000 per week.

Applications for this support are made at [Service NSW](https://www.service.nsw.gov.au)

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### Key points to additional individual support announced 28 July:

Further to the announcement made by the NSW government, the Prime Minister has also announced an expansion and additional measures to the individual COVID-19 Disaster Payment scheme for impacted residents. Payments to eligible impacted employees will increase:

- > From \$600 per week to \$750 per week for those who have lost 20 or more hours work per week; and
- > From \$375 per week to \$450 per week for those who have lost between 8 hours but less than 20 hours work per week.

Please point your impacted employees to the appropriate federal government links – [Services Australia / NSW](#).

Liquid assets tests, fortnightly delays and other eligibility criteria has been waived which provides greater opportunity for all impacted. It sets payment arrangements to the same level as they were for JobKeeper in December last year.

### COMMONWEALTH SUPPORT

The Commonwealth has announced it will enhance and expand the support available to States impacted and that experience an extended lockdown beyond three weeks.

Specifically, the Commonwealth will:

- > From implementation of a lockdown because of a Commonwealth declared hotspot, the COVID-19 Disaster Payment will increase from \$600 to \$750 each week if a person has lost 20 hours or more of work a week or \$375 to \$450 each week if a person has lost between 8 and 20 hours of work.
- > Commonwealth payments to impacted individuals will be triggered by hotspot declarations made by the federal Chief Medical Officer.
- > Make the COVID-19 Disaster Payment a recurring payment for approved recipients for as long as the Commonwealth declared hotspot and lockdown restrictions remain in place. This will remove the need for recipients to re-claim for each seven-day period of a lockdown.
- > Amend the COVID-19 Disaster Payment so that a person would be eligible for the payment, including where they are still working, provided they have lost more than 8 hours or a full day of work.

From 29 July 2021 the COVID-19 Disaster Payment has been available to those outside Commonwealth declared hotspots in NSW and other States that meet the criteria for the payment.

This arrangement is available to other States and Territories for future lockdowns caused as a result of a Commonwealth declared hotspot.

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Information about how to apply for COVID-19 Disaster Payment can be found on the Services Australia website at [COVID-19 Disaster Payment](#).

## **NEW SOUTH WALES, SOUTH AUSTRALIA AND VICTORIAN GOVERNMENTS**

The NSW, SA and VIC Governments have announced they will fund any individual payments outside a Commonwealth declared hotspot across their States that are impacted, with the Commonwealth continuing to fund payments to recipients in a Commonwealth declared hotspot.

## **SMALL AND MEDIUM BUSINESS SUPPORT PAYMENTS**

From week two of the lockdown, the Commonwealth will fund 50 per cent of the cost of a new small and medium business support payment to be implemented and administered by Service NSW.

Eligible entities will receive 40 per cent of their payroll payments, at a minimum of \$1500 and a maximum of \$10,000 per week.

Entities will be eligible if their turnover is **30 per cent lower than an equivalent two-week period in 2019**.

The new small to medium business support payment will be available to non-employing and employing entities, including not for profits, with an annual turnover between \$75,000 and \$50 million.

To receive the payment, entities will be required to maintain their full time, part time and long-term casual staffing level as of 13 July 2021.

For non-employing businesses, such as sole traders, the payment will be set at \$1,000 per week.

Businesses can register their interest from 14 July 2021 at [Service NSW](#)

The assistance will cease when current lockdown restrictions are eased or when the Commonwealth hotspot declaration is removed.

## **JOBMAKER HIRING CREDIT**

Registrations for the JobMaker Hiring Credit remain open until 6 October 2021. Eligible businesses can register using the Australian Taxation Office (ATO) online services, the Business Portal, or through your registered tax or BAS agent, at any time until the program closes. This scheme is an incentive for businesses to employ additional jobseekers aged between 16 – 35 years of age.

Eligible employers will receive payments of:

- > up to \$200 a week – for each eligible employee aged 16 to 29 years old
- > up to \$100 a week – for each eligible employee aged 30 to 35 years old

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Not-for-profit organisations can receive payments for new positions they create between 7 October 2020 and 6 October 2021, provided both the employer and employee meet eligibility criteria.

The positions must increase both the organisation's:

- > total employee headcount from 30 September 2020, and
- > payroll for the reporting period, compared to the three months to 6 October 2020.

The amount of JobMaker Hiring Credit claimed cannot exceed the amount that the organisation's payroll increases for the reporting period.

Where all employer and employee eligibility criteria are met, new employees taken on until 6 October 2021 will attract the JobMaker Hiring Credit for up to 12 months from their employment start date. Claims can be made every three months from 1 February 2021.

Employers cannot receive the JobMaker Hiring Credit and JobKeeper payments at the same time. If you're receiving a wage subsidy under another Commonwealth program for an employee, you cannot claim the JobMaker Hiring Credit for that employee.

### COMMONWEALTH BUSINESS TAX RELIEF

The Commonwealth will also provide additional support through the tax system, by:

- > Making state small business grants, including the new small business payments, tax exempt.
- > Providing administrative relief to State taxpayers facing hardship, including reduced payment plans, no interest charged on late payments and varying instalments on request.
- > Continuing programs across the Jobmaker Hiring Credit scheme.
- > HomeBuilder, expanded instant asset write-off, additional support for retaining and training apprentices as well as record support for mental health and women's safety announced in the recent Budget.

### HELP FOR INDIVIDUALS AND HOUSEHOLDS

Businesses with impacted employees can direct them to the following government websites to apply for individual benefits:

- > [Services Australia](#)

Businesses may also wish to discuss with employees the potential for making an agreed arrangement to take accrued annual leave or long service if eligible to cover any lost income due to the reduced hours of work. As usual, such agreements should be formalised in writing and appropriate records kept.

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### NEW SOUTH WALES

The NSW Government has announced it will provide financial assistance, support measures and tax relief to help businesses and people across the state impacted by the current COVID-19 restrictions.

### COVID-19 BUSINESS GRANTS

A one-off payment to help businesses with cashflow support for the first 3 weeks of lockdown.

- > \$7,500 to \$15,000 depending on the decline in turnover

#### Eligibility

- > A revenue decline of 30% or more
- > Annual turnover above \$75,000
- > Payroll up to \$10 million

**Applications are now open - [Register your interest with Service NSW](#)**

### JOBSAVER

Fortnightly payments to help maintain employee headcount (as at 13 July) and provide cashflow support to businesses

- > Employing businesses: 40% of weekly payroll, with a minimum payment of \$1,500 per week and a maximum payment of \$100,000 per week
- > Non-employing business: \$1,000 per week

#### Eligibility

- > A revenue decline of 30% or more
- > Turnover between \$75,000 and \$250 million

**Applications are now open - [Register your interest with Service NSW](#)**

### COVID-19 MICRO BUSINESS GRANTS

A fortnightly payment for businesses with a turnover between \$30,000 and \$75,000

- > \$1,500 per fortnight

#### Eligibility

- > A turnover between \$30k and \$75k

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- > A revenue decline of 30% or more
- > Businesses that provide the primary income source for a person associated with the business.

**Applications are now open - [Register your interest with Service NSW](#)**

### **PAYROLL TAX DEFERRALS**

Businesses can opt in to defer payments on the 2020-21 annual reconciliation return and wages paid in July and August. Interest free repayment plans for up to 12 months will be available.

- > Deferral of 2020-21 reconciliation (due 28 July) and payments due on 7 August and 7 September until 7 October 2021.

#### **Eligibility**

Any business paying payroll tax - **For more information [visit Revenue NSW](#)**

### **PAYROLL TAX CONCESSIONS**

Concessions to help reduce overheads for eligible businesses with a 30% decline in turnover.

- > 25% reduction in 2021-22 payroll tax where there is a 30% decline in turnover

#### **Eligibility**

- > A revenue decline of 30%
- > For NSW businesses with Australian wages up to \$10 million

**For more information [visit Revenue NSW](#)**

### **TENANTS IN COMMERCIAL OR RETAIL PREMISES**

Protection will be offered for impacted tenants in commercial and retail tenancies in NSW.

Landlords will not be able to lock out or evict impacted tenants without first going to mediation.

#### **Eligibility**

- > Tenants must have an annual turnover of \$50 million or less
- > Tenants must be eligible for either the Micro-business COVID-19 Support Grant, the COVID-19 NSW Business Grant, or the JobSaver Scheme

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## **Contact the Small Business Commissioner**

### **LANDLORDS LEASING COMMERCIAL PROPERTIES**

For landlords with tenants in financial distress. Landlords with commercial properties may be eligible for a land tax concession if they provide rent reductions to their tenants.

- > Payment up to 100% of 2021 land tax

#### **Eligibility**

- > For landlords who provide at least that much rental relief to tenants who are eligible for the
  - Micro-business COVID-19 Support Grant
  - 2021 COVID-19 NSW Business Grant and/or
  - JobSaver scheme
- > Available for rent reductions made from now until 31 December 2021

**For more information visit Revenue NSW**

### **LANDLORDS LEASING RESIDENTIAL PROPERTIES**

For landlords with tenants in financial distress. Landlords with eligible properties may be eligible for a land tax concession if they provide rent reductions to their tenants.

Either

- > \$1500 grant to residential landowners to pass onto their tenants, or
- > Concession of up to 100% of 2021 land tax

#### **Eligibility**

- > For landlords who provide at least that much rental relief
- > Tenants must have lost 25% or more of their income
- > Available for rent reductions made from now until 31 December 2021

**For more information visit NSW Fair Trading**

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### HELP FOR INDIVIDUALS AND HOUSEHOLDS

NSW businesses with impacted employees can direct them to the following government websites for further information on related application processes:

- > [COVID-19 disaster payment](#)
- > [Pandemic leave disaster payment](#)
- > [Protection against eviction for residential tenants](#)

As discussed previously, businesses may also wish to discuss with employees the potential for making an agreed arrangement to take accrued annual leave or long service if eligible to cover any lost income due to the reduced hours of work. As usual, such agreements should be formalised in writing and appropriate records kept.

### MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT

The Commonwealth and NSW governments will deliver a \$17.35 million mental health support package for NSW including:

- > A boost for crisis and mental health services including for Lifeline, free 24-hour support via Sonder and counselling for perinatal depression and anxiety
- > Funding for mental health support for vulnerable and culturally and linguistically diverse communities
- > Assistance for young people through headspace, Kids Helpline and the Butterfly Foundation

We are also pointing all our Members to a wonderful organisation, [Man Anchor](#), who are providing information and useful information. The [COVID Lockdown blog](#) is full of ideas and we encourage our Members to share across their teams and networks during this time.



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### VICTORIA

The Prime Minister and Premier of Victoria, supported by their Treasurers, agreed to the new COVID Disaster Payment arrangements with a further enhancement that where a lockdown has been imposed by a State or Territory Government for a period of less than seven days, (as was originally announced by the Victorian Government in July 2021), the Commonwealth will provide income support through the COVID-19 Disaster Payment as follows:

1. A Commonwealth Hotspot has been declared by the Commonwealth Chief Medical Officer.
2. The Commonwealth Government will provide income support for those who work or live in the areas declared as a Commonwealth Hotspot. The provision of income support outside of these areas will be provided where requested and at the cost of the State or Territory Government.
3. Individuals will be eligible for the COVID-19 Disaster Payment if they have lost between 8 and less than 20 hours of work for a payment of \$375, and for 20 or more hours of work for a payment of \$600, during the period of the lockdown. There will be no liquid assets test applied to eligibility for these payments.
4. A commitment has been made by the State or Territory Government to provide significant economic support, for the same lockdown period, to ensure cost sharing between the Commonwealth and the State or Territory Government.

The outcome of this arrangement will have the following implications for the state-wide lockdown announced by the Premier of Victoria effective at 11.59pm this evening and the declaration by the Commonwealth Chief Medical Officer of Greater Melbourne, Moorabool Shire, City of Greater Geelong, Borough of Queenscliff and Surf Coast Shire as a COVID-19 Hotspot for the purposes of Commonwealth support, for an initial period of 5 days from 11.59pm 15 July 2021 until 11.59pm 20 July 2021.

#### Key information:

- > Eligibility for the COVID-19 Disaster Payment will be made available for the period of the Victorian lockdown as it applies to each area of the State.
- > The Commonwealth will fund the payment for those who live and/or work in the areas declared as a Commonwealth Hotspot and the State Government will fund payments provided to the balance of the State.
- > Payments will be made in arrears on application to Services Australia 7 days after the commencement of the lockdown (that is from Friday 23 July 2021).
- > Payments of \$600 will be made to Individuals that lose 20 hours or more of work during the period of the lockdown.

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- > Payments of \$375 will be made to Individuals that lose between 8 and up to 20 hours of work during the period of the lockdown (the next five days).
- > No liquid assets test will be applied to the payment at any time.
- > Information about the [COVID-19 Disaster Payment](#) can be found on the Services Australia website.
- > In addition, the Victorian Government has agreed to provide significant additional economic support to businesses, from day one of this lockdown period, satisfying the Commonwealth's cost sharing requirements for this arrangement.
- > Should the Victorian lockdown be extended, the additional features of the upgraded and revised economic support arrangements proposed by the Commonwealth will be activated by agreement.

As discussed previously, businesses may also wish to discuss with employees the potential for making an agreed arrangement to take accrued annual leave or long service if eligible to cover any lost income due to the reduced hours of work. As usual, such agreements should be formalised in writing and appropriate records kept.

### **VICTORIAN STATE GOVERNMENT BUSINESS SUPPORT PACKAGE ROUND 2.1**

The Victorian government Business Costs Assistance Program is being reinstated and expanded. Round Two was issued in the May Lockdown and provides the framework for the program being offered for this lockdown period. This new program round will offer a \$2000 grant to eligible businesses.

A final notice from government is pending, however automatic payments are being prepared for those previously successful in receiving a grant.

For those who did not receive payment from the May Lockdown, you can re-apply and consider the previous eligibility criteria while we await notice from the government. Previous eligibility criteria includes:

- > Be located within Victoria; and
- > Be registered as operating in an eligible industry sector identified in the List of Eligible ANZSIC classes (as defined by the ANZSIC class linked to the business' ABN); and
- > Have incurred direct costs as a result of the circuit breaker action and the business cannot predominantly operate remotely; and
- > Have an annual Victorian payroll of up to \$10 million in 2019-20 on an ungrouped basis; and
- > Be registered for Goods and Services Tax (GST) on 27 May 2021; and
- > Hold an Australian Business Number (ABN) and have held that ABN at 27 May 2021.

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Unfortunately, and according to the Victorian government's eligibility criteria, those **businesses that are continuing to operate during the restrictions are not eligible to apply for the grant**. This may include many members of our industry sectors. However, those businesses in eligible sectors continuing to operate but unable to carry out their usual business activity can apply and may be eligible for a grant. We therefore recommend checking your four-digit ANZSIC class code to determine if you fall into the list of potentially eligible and impacted businesses.

If you were successful historically please look out for your automated payment, if you wish to make an application, or if you do not receive contact: [Business Victoria](#) or review the current status of your application via the Business [Victoria Grants Portal](#).

### COMMERCIAL TENANCIES RELIEF SCHEME

The Victorian government is looking to reinstate the Commercial Tenancy Relief Scheme, which was in place throughout 2020. The details of this reinstatement has not yet been released, however TRMC will advise once Victorian government has finalised.

### COVIDSafe Deep Cleaning Rebate

- > The COVIDSafe Deep Cleaning Rebate is available for small and medium-sized businesses, where anyone suspected or confirmed to have coronavirus (COVID-19) has been on the premises or worksite when they may have been infectious.
- > The rebate will help eligible businesses cover the cost of hiring professional cleaning services to conduct a 'deep clean' or 'decontamination clean' of their premises or worksite. This will help businesses prevent further transmission of coronavirus (COVID-19), and reduce their out-of-pocket cleaning expenses.
- > The rebate will cover up to 80 per cent of the cleaning costs at each worksite, capped at a grant of \$10,000 (for a total cleaning cost of \$12,500).
- > Businesses that have received funding from other initiatives under the Victorian Government's Economic Survival Package and Business Support Package are also eligible to apply for this program.

Eligibility for the rebate:

- > Operate from a worksite or premises in Victoria where a person suspected or confirmed to have COVID-19
- > Have undertaken a 'deep clean' or 'decontamination clean' of the affected worksite
- > Have evidence of the expenditure

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- > Hold a valid ABN
- > Be registered as a trading business with the responsible federal or state regulator
- > Have an annual payroll of less than \$3 million in 2019-2020 on an ungrouped basis
- > Be registered with WorkSafe if employing people

The full list of eligibility and evidence requirements for this rebate can be found on the [Business Victoria](#) website.

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### SOUTH AUSTRALIA

#### Business support grants

Given the current seven-day lockdown in place across South Australia from Tuesday, 20 July 2021, the South Australian Government has announced a \$100 million support package for business during the state's lockdown. \$3,000 cash grants will be available to small and medium businesses that suffer significant loss of income and small businesses can apply for a \$1,000 grant. To be eligible for the one-off \$3,000 emergency cash grant, a business must, as at 12:01am Tuesday 20 July 2021:

- > Be located within South Australia
- > Have an annual turnover of \$75,000 or more in 2020/1 or 2019/0, and be registered for GST
- > Employ people in South Australia
- > Have an Australia-wide payroll of less than \$10 million in 2019-20
- > Have a valid Australian Business Number (ABN)
- > Experienced at least a 30 per cent reduction (compared to the week prior) in turnover due to the restricted trading conditions

To be eligible for the one-off \$1,000 emergency cash grant, a non-employing business must meet the criteria listed above excluding the requirement to employ people.

Registration of interest for these Business Support Grants can be made at the [SA Treasury](#) website and we understand applications open within the next two weeks.

### INDIVIDUAL ASSISTANCE

#### Federal COVID-19 Disaster Payment

The Australian Government has announced extra support for people affected by South Australian COVID-19 hotspots and restrictions. Claims for the federal Government COVID Disaster Payments in South Australia will open on 28 July 2021 and can be made through the federal [MyGov](#) website.

#### Impacted individuals outside declared hotspots in SA

The South Australian Government has also announced fully-funded income support payments of up to \$600 per week for eligible workers in **regional SA**, who live or work **outside of the Commonwealth-declared 'Hotspot'** local government areas (and, therefore, not entitled to the Federal Government's \$375 or \$600 per week support payments). The details of this assistance will be available on the SA Treasury website in the coming days.

#### COVID related business support in other states and territories

The Commonwealth government support packages will, as and when necessary, be made available for other states and territories. However, we provide the following insights into current business support programs available in those other states and territories.

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### QUEENSLAND

The Queensland Department of Employment, Small Business and Training administers grants and programs to help Queensland small business continue to recover by committing grant funds for businesses to increase key capabilities, embrace innovation, and assist high-growth businesses to capitalise on opportunities.

Current opportunities available under this scheme:

#### The Business Boost Grants Program

The Business Boost grants program provides support to businesses to advance improvements in their efficiency and productivity. This support includes funded activities in **3 project areas**:

1. Future planning
2. Specialised and automated software
3. Staff management, development and planning

Eligible grant recipients may receive a grant of up to \$15,000 on completing a proposed agreement. Successful applicants must co-contribute at least 30% of the total project costs. Grant funding will be paid only after compliant acquittal documentation is received.

Potential projects eligible for the funding include those relating to implanting specialised and automated software, compliance and employee management, development and planning. Applications open on Friday, 30 July 2021, and further information can be accessed via the [Business QLD](#) website.

#### Small Business COVID-19 Adaption Grant Program – Regional Queensland

This program is still accepting applications from regional Queensland businesses. The objective of this program is to support small businesses subject to closure or highly impacted by COVID-19 shutdown restrictions announced by the Queensland Government. To be a 'regional business', your principal place of business must be in a local government area within Queensland that is not identified as a South East Queensland.

The program aims to see small and micro businesses:

- > prepare for the safe resumption of trading in the post COVID-19 recovery continue to meet operating costs,
- > access digital technologies to rebuild business operations and transition to a new way of doing business,
- > respond to online opportunities, where possible, to sustain employment and maintain potential for longer-term growth,

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- > upskill and reskill business owners and staff to benefit from new technologies or business models,
- > embrace business diversification to adapt and sustain operations, and
- > create or retain employment.

The available grant amount is a minimum of \$2,000 and up to a maximum of \$10,000 per eligible small or micro business.

Applications remain open at this time, and further eligibility requirements and application process can be found at the [Business Qld](#) website.

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### OTHER STATES AND TERRITORIES LESS IMPACTED

#### WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Nothing notable at this time.

#### TASMANIA

Nothing notable at this time.

#### ACT

Currently the ACT Government Office of Revenue are not offering any specific business support package, however certain deferral and exemptions may be available.

#### Apprentice wages

Wages paid to apprentices or trainees employed after 1 August 2020 are exempt from payroll tax for the period from the start of the employment until 30 June 2022.

To ensure this applies only to new employees, the apprentice or trainee cannot have been employed by the business (or another business within the payroll tax group) at any time during the previous month from when the employment commenced. This measure was originally until 30 June 2021 but has been extended for another year. Businesses are expected to self-assess their eligibility for these exemptions and lodge their payroll tax returns accordingly.

#### Payroll tax deferrals

If part of a group all ACT businesses with group Australia-wide wages of up to \$10 million can defer their 2020-21 payroll tax, interest free until 1 July 2022. All ACT businesses that are not part of a group with Australia-wide wages of up to \$10 million can defer their 2020-21 payroll tax, interest free until 1 July 2022.

More information on these schemes can be found at the [ACT Revenue Office](#) website and you should speak with your financial accountant on your possible eligibility.

#### NORTHERN TERRITORY

Nothing notable at this time.

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#### IMPORTANT TO NOTE:

It must be noted this information is current as at 29 July 2021. Information across criteria, funding, grants and other opportunities for businesses is continually evolving and being confirmed across State and Commonwealth governments. At each release this document will be updated and re-released. Continue to register or keep aware of government websites for information for your business:

[Commonwealth](#) / [New South Wales](#) / [Victoria](#)

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### CONTACT

Members with any related queries can contact The Real Media Collective:

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NOTE: The information in this Advisory is general and was correct at the time of writing. However, this information can change quickly and further travel related restrictions may be imposed. TRMC recommends members ensure any related decisions are made on current and up to date information. The Real Media Collective, 14<sup>th</sup> July, 2021.

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