



Friday, 3 April 2020
Issue 10.0

As we approach the end of the second week of Coronavirus restrictions, we can reflect on the incredible amount of work being undertaken by government, its agencies and industry associations such as VACC.

I would like to thank all VACC staff for the work they are contributing to support members, and in particular, our Industrial Relations department who have been working tirelessly to ensure you have access to employment information and advice during this unprecedented and stressful time.

I would also like to announce that in response to the high volume of queries from members regarding the COVID-19 support programs, VACC has engaged Ms Andrea Chwalko, to work alongside the IR team to triage and answer questions on key funding programs such as JobKeeper and JobSeeker. Andrea will commence on Monday, 6 April.

As always please contact VACC with any concerns. We are here to help.

Industrial Relations: 03 9829 1123

OHSE: 1300 585 136

1. INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS

JobKeeper Payment Guide – Edition 2

A JobKeeper payment guide was circulated in yesterday's Update to help inform members of what the package entails in light of available information.

Today we have attached an updated version: [Edition 2](#). **There is also a marked up copy where members can see the additional changes available [HERE](#).**

The second edition includes new information out from Treasury around meeting the eligibility requirements, as well as new issues that have come to light – such as the interaction with the apprenticeship and trainee subsidy and genuine redundancy with rehires.

2. MEMBER SERVICES

To help members find the support available during the Coronavirus situation, VACC has developed a summary of government initiatives complete with summaries and helpful links.

Members are encouraged to read through this extensive list and investigate their options carefully.

The document covers Federal and State (Victoria and Tasmania) initiatives, including (but not limited to):

- JobKeeper Payment
- Boosting cash flow for employers
- Early access to superannuation
- A hold on evictions for renters
- Increased instant asset write off
- Backing Business Investment (BBI)

- Increased and accelerated income support
- SME Guarantee Scheme
- Assistance to help pay the wages of apprentices or trainees.

To access the document click [HERE](#)



Federal and State Government Assistance Available to Business

Assistance	Description	Link
JobKeeper payment package	Under the JobKeeper Payment, businesses impacted by the coronavirus will be able to access a subsidy from the Government to continue paying their employees. Affected employers will be able to claim a fortnightly payment of \$1,500 per eligible employee from 30 March 2020, for a maximum period of 6 months. Legislation is yet to pass parliament.	
Boosting cash flow for employers	Employers will receive a payment equal to 100 per cent of their salary and wages withheld (up from 50 per cent), with the maximum payment being increased from \$25,000 to \$50,000 and the minimum payment increased from \$2,000 to \$10,000. An additional payment is also being introduced equal to the total of all of the Boosting Cash Flow for Employers payments received. This means that eligible businesses will receive at least \$20,000 up to a total of \$100,000 under both payments. Not-for-profit entities will also be eligible.	
Early access to superannuation	You can access up to \$10,000 of your superannuation in 2019-20 and a further \$10,000 in 2020-21. You will be able to apply for early release of your superannuation from mid-April 2020.	
A hold on evictions for renters	The Prime Minister has announced new measures to help renters. Evictions will be put on hold over the next 6 months for commercial and residential tenancies in financial distress, who are unable to meet their commitments due to the impact of the coronavirus.	

Coronavirus: Posters for premises

VACC has created three posters especially for members, designed to remind your employees and customers to follow social distancing guidelines. There is also a poster showing automotive businesses are still open as pictured below.

VACC will be posting hard copies of these posters to all members to be displayed in prominent areas on the business premises, including communal areas such as the lunchroom, reception and/or waiting area.

Access further information and downloads [HERE](#).



Coronavirus: Online learning platform available for members

VACC appreciates that members are all at different operational stages. Some businesses are still open, while others have slowed or decided to close their doors for the time being.

During this challenging time, VACC offers members the use of the Chamber's internal online learning platform. The simple-to-use system allows members and their staff to refresh current competencies or upskill with key short learning programs. Available modules cover core business skills including:

- Customer Service
- Communication & personal
- OHS
- Computer skills

Members interested in using the platform need to email an expression of interest to [VACC People & Culture](#).

VACC can provide up to two user licenses (equates to two people at a time) per business for a two-week period.

After that time, the license(s) will be disabled, so the platform can be made available to another member.

For further details click [HERE](#).

3. FRANCHISING

What effect does COVID-19 have on your franchising business?

VACC members who are currently operating under a franchise or dealership agreement should make themselves familiar with this article prepared by HWL Ebsworth Lawyers.

The document outlines a number of key issues experienced by franchisors grappling with the COVID-19 pandemic, and also provide links to a range of articles prepared by their firm that are likely to be relevant to franchisors as they continue to navigate the COVID-19 landscape.

You can access the resources [HERE](#).

4. GENERAL

Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) guidance for small businesses affected by COVID-19

The ACCC has released a guide for small businesses affected by COVID-19.

The Guide provides useful information about small business rights and obligations relating to issues such as:

- cancelled functions and events
- pricing of goods and services
- charging subscription and membership fees when a business is not operating.

This Guide will be regularly updated and can be accessed [HERE](#)

VACC Member in the news

VACC Member Nick Strauss, Managing Director, Berwick Motor Group appeared on Channel 7 News to provide an update on the current market conditions affecting the automotive retail sector in light of COVID-19.



Managing WHS risks from COVID-19: What questions should boards be asking?

The Australian Institute of Company Directors (AICD) has published information for boards to ask their management regarding WHS obligations.

These include:

- What steps are being taken to ensure workers are regularly informed about COVID-19 and ways to minimise health risks?
- What steps are being taken to ensure the health and safety of those workers who can't work from home (e.g. front-line staff)? Do you have a policy for workers who are more vulnerable to COVID-19 (e.g. immunocompromised or pregnant staff)?
- How is the organisation ensuring the health and safety of workers while they work from home?
- What measures are being taken to minimise physical and psychosocial risks when workers are working from home? For example, are workers being provided with checklists for how to set up a work station? Are workers being provided with the right equipment? Do employees have access to employee assistance programs?
- What steps are being taken to ensure workers feel supported during this challenging time? Have workers who may be more at risk been identified and is the team ensuring that they receive adequate support?

View the full article [HERE](#).

Coronavirus rules and restrictions explained

[ABC News has published a comprehensive article](#) detailing the dos and don'ts of current government restrictions.

Based on current information at hand, they cover questions such as:

- Can I visit my parents/grandparents or elderly relatives?
- Are picnics allowed?
- Can I go for a drive?
- Can I take the kids to the playground?
- Can I go fishing?
- Can I go to the dentist?

What will happen if I break the rules?

5. Previous Update Issues

- [Monday, 23 March 2020 - Issue 1](#)
- [Tuesday, 24 March 2020 - Issue 2](#)
- [Wednesday, 25 March 2020 - Issue 3](#)
- [Thursday, 26 March 2020 - Issue 4](#)
- [Friday, 27 March 2020 - Issue 5](#)
- [Monday, 30 March 2020 - Issue 6](#)
- [Tuesday, 31 March 2020 - Issue 7](#)
- [Wednesday, 1 April 2020 - Issue 8](#)
- [Thursday, 2 April 2020 - Issue 9](#)

Geoff Gwilym
Chief Executive Officer

Disclaimer: *The information gathered has been drawn from a number of sources and VACC strongly recommends that members revert to the primary source of information for any clarification.*