



Tuesday, 5 May 2020  
Issue 23.0

The recent Victorian Government announcement of an additional \$491million in tax relief will be welcome news to many members. The extended tax relief includes a range of measures: freezing various fees, charges and levies, and will likely have a positive impact on those accessing the JobKeeper package. This is in addition to the recently expanded Small Business Support Fund (announced last Friday, 1 May). Both support packages are covered in more detail in subsequent sections of this Update.

In terms of advocacy, VACC has been vocal in our request to have relief packages expanded to include more businesses - so the above is considered a win for members. I would also like to note my appreciation of the government's willingness to consistently engage with VACC – we will continue to communicate the issues experienced on the ground to all levels of government. On this front, members should be assured that we remain committed to working behind the scenes, lobbying the government on threshold exemptions for Land Tax and Commercial tenancy issues.

Finally, a reminder VACC is running a five week advertising campaign to support members and get the word out to motorists that 'Auto is open!' Our TV commercials will be launched tomorrow so keep a look out. You can learn more about the campaign and how you can get involved [HERE](#).

For more information or guidance on any part of this Update, please reach out to the VACC team.

## 1. INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS

### Update: JobKeeper

Professional Service firm Deloitte has released an updated [Tax Insights](#) document, which details several key updates to the JobKeeper program announced over the past 72 hours.

Broadly, the update relates to:

- **Group employers** - special purpose entities that employ staff, rather than staff being employed by the main operating entity.
- **A new notification requirement** – regardless of whether or not all original eligible employee declarations have been received by the Employer, there is a new requirement that all 'relevant employees' are notified of their enrolment once the Employer has enrolled. **Members should note: the new notification requirement must be actioned by this Friday, 8 May.** (Please see page 7 onwards of the attached for more detail of the new notification requirement.)
- **Requirements for employees aged between 16 and 17** – new tests around eligibility centre on the concept of 'independent' and not undertaking full time study.

The document also includes a number of Q &As to assist in addressing member questions.

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

As always, we encourage you to reach out to VACC or your professional service advisors (such as accountants) to work through these matters, which are becoming increasingly complex – particularly as they relate to group employers.

## 2. GOVERNMENT ANNOUNCEMENTS

### Victorian Government to provide an additional \$491 million in tax relief

The Victorian Government will provide a further \$491 million in tax relief and freeze a range of fees, charges and levies to reduce the financial burden on households.

- Businesses participating in the JobKeeper scheme in Victoria will be exempt from payroll tax and the WorkCover premium on payments to their employees if their staff are currently stood down.
- Staff receiving the JobKeeper payment will be free from all state government taxes and charges.
- Payments above a part-time employee's usual salary, due to JobKeeper being a minimum \$1500 fortnightly payment, will also be exempt from payroll tax and the WorkCover premium – meaning businesses are not paying more to keep their staff on due to the scheme.

Such recommendations were contained in VACC's submission '[The case for exemption from threshold criteria in COVID-19 Relief packages](#)', and we are pleased to have gained the support of government.

The Government will also freeze all fees and fines and some levies that were due to be increased in July at current levels – including:

- car registration
- traffic infringements
- Fire Services Property Levy
- Landfill Levy
- court-imposed penalties and;
- permit fees.

Read the Treasurer's Media Release [HERE](#) and further details in the VACC Bulletin sent out earlier today [HERE](#).

### Extension of time to enrol for the JobKeeper scheme

As previously advised, the Australian Commissioner of Taxation has extended the time to enrol for the initial JobKeeper periods, from 30 April 2020 until 31 May 2020.

### Changes to the Fair Work Act

The Fair Work Act has been amended to support the implementation and operation of the JobKeeper wage subsidy scheme in Australian workplaces. These changes are **temporary** and will end on 28 September 2020.

Learn more about the JobKeeper changes to the Fair Work Act [HERE](#).

### Tax relief for landlords

The State Revenue Office has advised that residential and commercial landlords who provide tenants impacted by coronavirus with rent relief and those unable to secure a tenant because of the pandemic may be eligible for a [25% reduction on the property's 2020 land tax via My Land Tax](#).

These landlords can also defer payment of their remaining 2020 land tax up to 31 March 2021 via My Land Tax, an online application that enables people to manage their land tax information quickly and easily.

For commercial landlords to be eligible, the property must be rented to a tenant with an annual turnover of up to \$50 million who is also eligible for the Commonwealth Government's JobKeeper Payment.

You can access a step-by-step guide [HERE](#).

Frequently Asked Questions are addressed [HERE](#).

You can read the original VACC Bulletin

Please be sure to advise your financial and taxation advisors of the SRO communication.

### **Expansion of the Small Business Support Fund**

The Victorian Government announced on 1 May it will be expanding the Small Business Support Fund to include businesses with a payroll tax threshold of less than \$650,000, an annual turnover of more than \$75,000 and who are participating in the Commonwealth JobKeeper program. Any automotive business that fits this criterion is now eligible for the \$10,000 government grant.

Please note, applications will close on Monday, 1 June 2020.

To apply or find out more, click [HERE](#).

To note: Applications for the expanded program will open in the coming days. Previous applicants who were ineligible based on their sector classification will be contacted and do not have to submit a new application.

### **IP Australia's extensions of time**

From 22 April 2020, customers impacted by COVID-19 can submit a request for free extension of time of up to three months through IP Australia's eServices. These arrangements will be in place until at least 31 May 2020.

## **3. MEMBER SERVICES**

### **Tax support for small business webinars**

The Australian Taxation Office (ATO) is running a free 60 minute webinar to find out how the Government's stimulus package can help your small business.

You can register [HERE](#).

### **Free mediation service from commercial tenancy disputes**

The Victorian Government has announced a mediation service to assist small and medium business tenants and landlords reach agreement in rent disputes arising from the coronavirus.

The services will be provided via the Victorian Small Business Commission (VSBC) as part of the Government's commercial tenancy relief scheme, which provides a six month moratorium on evictions for non-payment of rent for small businesses with an annual turnover of under \$50 million that are participating in JobKeeper.

Members are encouraged to visit the VSBC website [HERE](#) for more information.

Read the Government's Media Release [HERE](#).

### **Continuing your business during COVID-19**

Business.gov.au has online information and resources that covers:

- Reviewing your finances
- Business continuity plans
- Marketing your business
- Other ways to keep your business going during COVID-19.

You can read more [HERE](#).

## 4. TASMANIA

### North West COVID-19 safety measures lifted from 12.00am Monday 4th May

The Tasmanian Premier has recently announced the lifting of the additional COVID-19 safety measures applied to the North West. This will bring the North West's restrictions in line with other parts of Tasmania, meaning restrictions on personal movement and the operation of certain businesses will still apply.

A full list of statewide restrictions on public gatherings and business can be found at:  
[www.coronavirus.tas.gov.au](http://www.coronavirus.tas.gov.au).

Retail businesses that were required to close when the additional North West restrictions came into force three weeks ago, but were previously operating under the previous statewide restrictions will now be allowed to reopen.

This includes non-essential retail such as big box retailers, clothing and whitegood stores, hairdressers, bookstores, tobacconists and the like.

## 5. PREVIOUS UPDATE ISSUES

You can read previous Updates of COVID-19 [HERE](#).

**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.*