

The Hon Paul Edbrooke MP
Minister for Cost of Living

Cost of Living

Public Accounts and Estimates Committee

22 MAY 2026



Government
Services

Cost of Living priorities

The Cost of Living portfolio is focused on making sure Victorians can access practical help, fairer systems, and support when they need it most.

- There are multiple compounding drivers causing today's cost of living pressures, including global factors, housing costs, interest rates and inflation.
- We are responding to cost of living drivers and doing what we can to ease pressure on household budgets.
- This includes a focus on housing, renting, motoring, school costs, healthcare, transport and utilities.
- The 2026 - 2027 State Budget has allocated funding across critical portfolios to make life easier and more affordable for every Victorian today and into the future.

In 2026-27 the Victorian Government invested over \$2.5 billion in initiatives to help reduce the cost of living pressures.

Making housing and renting more affordable

Housing affordability directly affects cost of living
Rent and mortgage repayments are usually the largest household expense.

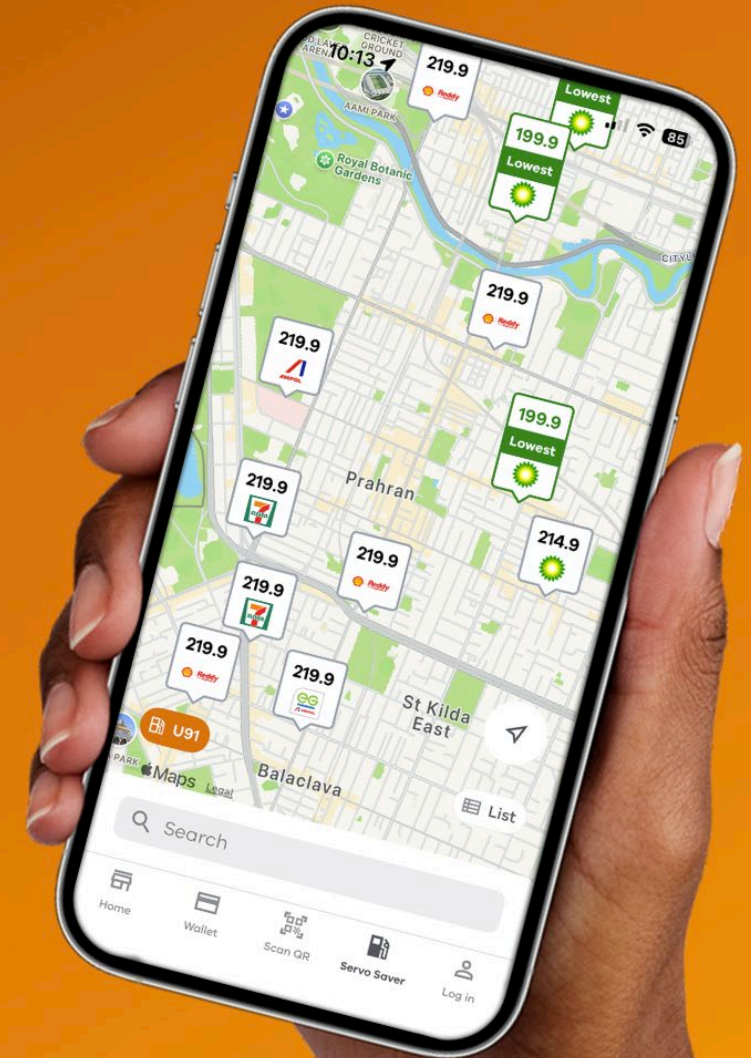
- \$860 million into the **Social Housing Growth Fund** .
- \$207 million to support better and more **affordable housing** .
- \$98.74 million over 5 years for the new **Victorian Renter Rights program** .
- \$4 million over four years, for home loan stress support through **Mortgage Stress Victoria** .
- The **Portable Rental Bond Scheme** will help renters avoid the financial pressure of paying a double bond.
- **Rental Dispute Resolution Victoria** is making residential disputes faster and more cost -effective.



More affordable transport options

We are helping to ease the cost of commuting and motoring because transport is a major unavoidable expense for many households, particularly in outer suburbs and regional areas.

- **\$1.2 billion** total invested to ease transport costs for Victorians, which includes:
 - **\$481 million** for regional transport services.
 - **20% rego rebate** for light vehicles through the Service Victoria app.
 - **Free and half-price public transport** in 2026.
 - **Free public transport for children** under 18.
 - **Capping V/Line and regional train fares** to the cost of a daily metropolitan fare.
- **\$5 million** to continue delivering the **Fair Fuel Plan** including:
 - Supporting compliance and enforcement activities through a Fair Fuel Taskforce.
 - Adding additional enhancements to the **Servo Saver app**



Reducing the cost of household bills

When costs like energy, water, insurance, groceries, internet, and council rates rise at the same time, financial pressure builds quickly. Pressure on households is being reduced through targeted programs.

- **\$90 million** for the transition to renewable and more affordable energy includes:
 - **Utility Relief Grant Scheme.**
 - **Expanded Energy Upgrades program**
- **\$120 million** in continued support for families with children includes:
 - **Free Kinder** is saving families up to \$2,600 per child.
 - **The School Breakfast Clubs** program supports students at more than 1,200 schools.
- **\$2.4 million** for more place-based community information and support services, including **Bring Your Bills Days** events.
- **Savings Finder** on the Service Victoria app helps Victorians quickly and simply understand the rebates, discounts and savings that are available.

