



Public Accounts and Estimates Committee Round 3 – COVID-19 Inquiry Hearing

The Hon Jill Hennessy MP

Attorney-General
Minister for the Coordination of Justice and Community Safety:
COVID-19

Tuesday 15 December 2020



Funding in response to COVID-19 impacts

Funding has been announced for the following initiatives to respond to **COVID-19** impacts:



\$103.6 million
for Corrections and
Youth Justice
COVID-19 response



\$43.6 million
in output

AND
\$2.5 million in asset for
Addressing COVID-19
related delays across
the justice system



\$20.8 million
in output

AND
\$9 million
in asset for the whole
of government Building
stimulus package

\$10.5 million
in output



AND
\$10.6 million asset funding for the upgrade of
the temporary community residential facility
in Maribyrnong to provide short-term
accommodation for men exiting the prison system.



\$17.5 million for
additional legal
assistance services
and ICT investment
(state component).

Funding in response to COVID-19 impacts

Funding has been announced for the following initiatives to respond to **COVID-19** impacts:



\$6.0 million

for Operating the Residential Tenancies Dispute Resolution Scheme and the Residential Tenancy Relief



\$2.5 million

to support for Victoria's Aboriginal community



\$2.5 million

to support Victoria's multicultural and faith communities



\$2.0 million

for Commercial and Residential Tenancies



\$14.9 million

for a Bushfire Mental Health package



\$0.4 million

for financial counselling to support mental health & wellbeing.

Supporting Justice Sector Response and Recovery

All courts and VCAT have remained open and operational during **COVID-19**. Rapid response to enable continuation of justice services include:



Legislative reforms



Emergency Case Management Protocol



Trial of remote bail justice hearings



Funding for front line legal assistance services in response to COVID-19



Funding to OPA to address critical risk to Victorians with disability during COVID-19



Rapid uplift in technology solutions including AVL

Support for victims of crime during COVID-19



Victims of Crime Helpline and the **Victims Assistance Program** have continued to support victims of crime



Child Witness Service (CWS) and the **Intermediary Pilot Program (IPP)** also continue to support child victims, family members and other vulnerable witnesses



Youth Justice and Corrections

Safely easing restrictions across all custodial settings, including:



Youth

- return to face-to-face mental health service provision, criminogenic and psychosocial programs
- face-to-face delivery of education from Term 4
- increased in-person personal and professional visits and temporary leave arrangements available
- Additional supports for Aboriginal children and young people in custody to support them to remain connected to their families, community and culture



Adult

- A Roadmap to COVID Normal in adult prisons has been approved which includes:
 - resumption of personal visits
 - COVID Safe plans with service providers
- Primary and mental health services have continued operating
- Virtual interactions with family and friends have occurred at each prison

Supporting rental fairness and Victorian businesses to reopen and rebound



Temporary laws introduced to protect Victorian tenants, landlords and the rental market

Ongoing relief measures including fee waivers and refunds

Delays in charges and significant gaming machine tax payments help support the liquor and gaming industry during closures

Targeted packages and measures for the hospitality industry, to help licensed venues reopen safely

Workplace Safety during the COVID-19 pandemic



624 notices

related to COVID-19 safety
issued by WorkSafe



3,750

mandatory incident notifications from
employers received regarding positive
cases of COVID-19 in the workplace



11,594

related physical inspections

AND

6,715

and virtual enquiries
relating to COVID-19



648

COVID-19 claims

AND

306

COVID-19 related claims have
been accepted

Workplace Safety during the COVID-19 pandemic



Implementation of additional workplace safety measures to support the **COVID-19 pandemic response**, including:

- extending termination notice periods for long-term injured workers.
- recognising COVID-19 as an immediate risk for the purposes of certain compliance and enforcement actions under the OHS Act
- appointing WorkSafe Inspectors as Authorised Officers
- establishing the High Risk Industries Engagement and Enforcement Operation

COVID-19 Accommodation Services



DJCS assumed responsibility
for **COVID-19** related
accommodation programs
in July and August 2020.
Since then:

222 people have entered mandatory quarantine

0 returned travellers have tested positive
for COVID-19

684 frontline workers have been supported in the
Frontline Worker Accommodation program

335 Victorians have accessed Emergency Accommodation
so they could safely isolate outside their home