

## Support for Victorian businesses and employees

Victorian companies and their employees can access a range of support services as they deal with the increased number of COVID-19 infections and level of restrictions being applied to businesses, reports Service Australia.

Employees who don't have any income because they have been directed to self-isolate or quarantine at home by the Victorian Department of Health and Human Services, and don't have appropriate leave entitlements, may be eligible for the [new Pandemic Leave Disaster Payment](#). To claim this payment phone Services Australia on 180 22 66, 8am to 8pm weekdays and 9am to 5pm at weekends.

Businesses affected by COVID-19 may be eligible to access the JobKeeper payment to help continue paying employees. The Australian Taxation Office pays JobKeeper wage subsidy directly to eligible employers. The payment has recently been extended six months to 28 March 2021. There will be changes to eligibility and payment rates starting from 28 September. For more information, visit [ato.gov.au/jobkeeper](https://ato.gov.au/jobkeeper)

If JobKeeper payments are already being accessed, Services Australia advises employers start having conversations with their employees about how changes from September may affect them, says general manager Hank Jongen.

After JobKeeper payment rates change, employees may become eligible to claim other income support. The Service Australia [payment guide](#) advises payments that might apply in individual situations and step people through how to claim.

For people who may become eligible to JobSeeker Payment in the coming months, they can [lodge a JobSeeker claim](#) up to 13 weeks before their circumstances change. Services Australia will process claims once circumstances change. Staff can also refer people to the national employment services program, [jobactive](#). "Retrenched workers and their partners can get job search support, regardless of their location or the company from which they were retrenched," Mr Jongen says.

[What's Next?](#) also provides an online self-help resource for employers and retrenched workers. It contains a range of information, including a Redundancy Information Statement that outlines a retrenched worker's rights and entitlements.

Services Australia also provides a free and confidential Financial Information Service (FIS). "A FIS Officer can give your employees information that's relevant to their personal situation," he says. Contact FIS on 132 300 and say 'Financial Information Service' when prompted.

For more information visit [servicesaustralia.gov.au/covidvic](https://servicesaustralia.gov.au/covidvic).