



## COVID-19 Update

Yesterday the Government passed historic legislation to protect the lives and livelihoods of Australians. The legislation that passed will bring the JobKeeper scheme into affect.

I spoke in Parliament about how the pandemic is changing our society and the amazing way people in our community are responding. You can see that speech by [clicking here](#).

As we head into the Easter long weekend, there is good reason to be encouraged.

Just a couple of weeks ago we were experiencing a 25 per cent growth rate in coronavirus cases every single day. A week ago it dropped down to 15 per cent and now the daily growth rate is well below 10 per cent.

This is a huge testament to the Australian people. Despite the inconvenience, people are abiding by social distancing measures that have been put into place by State and Territory Governments.

As the Prime Minister has stressed this week, we mustn't relax on these measures. **You must stay home this Easter long weekend or we will undo the progress we are making.**

It will be a very challenging Easter. My thoughts will be with those who cannot attend their religious services at this special time of year, as well as those who are separated from family or have had to cancel long-awaited holiday plans. Thank you for the sacrifices you are making.

This update brings you the latest announcements that have been made by the

Government, and links to direct you to additional information you may need.

**Please share this email with family and friends who may be interested.** Anyone who would like to be added to the distribution list can email [julian.leeser.mp@aph.gov.au](mailto:julian.leeser.mp@aph.gov.au) and ask to be added. You can also follow [JulianLeeserMP](#) on Facebook.

**My office will be closed over Easter. It will reopen on Tuesday 14 April and continue to be contactable by phone call and emails.** The office continues to be closed to drop-in visitors as a social distancing measure.

As I said in the last newsletter, we are currently experiencing an unprecedented volume of calls and correspondence so please be patient, but don't hesitate to contact me as I am here to help in any way I can.

Take care,

Julian Leeser

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## Updates regarding JobKeeper Payment

Last night, the JobKeeper package passed Parliament. The package is designed to keep Australians in their jobs and connected to their employers.

Payments of \$1,500 per fortnight will be provided to employers to retain an estimated six million workers. As of Tuesday, over 716,000 businesses had registered for that support.

- Businesses are eligible for the scheme if they have had a 30% loss in turnover compared to this time last year (or 50% loss of income if their turnover is over \$1 billion). However, businesses that have been operating for less than a year will be able to show their loss of income based on a different relevant time period.
- Similarly, business with a lumpy income will be able to provide additional information to the Tax Commissioner, who will have discretion to determine whether a 30% loss in turnover has occurred.

In the past week, changes have also been made to lower the threshold at which not-for-profits can claim the payment.

Charities that are registered with ACNC will be eligible for JobKeeper Payment if they have suffered a 15 per cent decline in turnover as a result of the coronavirus.

A reduced threshold at which a charity is considered to be substantially affected by the coronavirus will support a sector that greatly benefits the Australian community and which is expected to have a significant increase in demand for its services.

This FAQ document is a very helpful source of information regarding other questions you may have about the JobKeeper package.

## FAQ about JobKeeper

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### Updates regarding JobSeeker

The conditions for JobSeeker payments have been adjusted over the past few weeks, to support those who have lost their job as a result of the coronavirus.

Most recently, there has also been an adjustment to the partner income test, which sets a threshold for how much a person's partner can be earning, before their JobSeeker payments are stopped.

From 30 March 2020, the partner income test will be temporarily increased over the next 6 months to \$3,068 per fortnight.

This will ensure that an eligible person can receive the JobSeeker Payment and the associated Coronavirus Supplement providing their partner earns less than \$3,068.80 per fortnight (around \$79,762 per annum).

Over the past two weeks, more than 200,000 additional JobSeeker claims have been finalised.

Click the button below to find out more about the income support available for individuals

and households.

[Find out more here.](#)

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## **Jobs Hub launched**

If you are looking for work or need people for your business, can I encourage you to go on Jobs Hub. The Government launched Jobs Hub last week. Many businesses have had to close their doors, however there are others which have increased demand for workers. This website lists employers who have multiple job opportunities available at the moment. To go to Jobs Hub click the button below.

[Go to Jobs Hub](#)

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## **Commercial Tenancies**

National Cabinet agreed that a mandatory Code of Conduct (the Code) guided by certain principles be developed and legislated by State and Territory Governments.

The Code builds on the draft codes submitted by landlord and tenant representative bodies in the commercial property sector.

The purpose of the Code is to impose a set of good faith leasing principles for application to commercial tenancies (including retail, office and industrial) between owners/operators/other landlords and tenants, in circumstances where the tenant is a small-medium sized business (annual turnover of up to \$50 million) and is an eligible business for the purpose of the Commonwealth Government's JobKeeper programme.

National Cabinet also agreed that there would be a proportionality to rent reductions based on the tenant's decline in turnover to ensure that the burden is shared between landlords and tenants.

The Code provides a proportionate and measured burden share between the two parties while still allowing tenants and landlords to agree to tailored, bespoke and appropriate temporary arrangements that take account of their particular circumstances.

Australian and foreign banks along with other financial institutions operating in Australia are expected by National Cabinet to support landlords and tenants with appropriate flexibility as they work to implement the mandatory Code.

The Rent Relief Policy will include a mutual obligation requirement on the small and medium sized enterprises and not-for-profit tenants to continue to engage their employees through the JobKeeper initiative where eligible, and if applicable, provide rent relief to their subtenants.

[More information on the Mandatory Code](#)

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## Relief Package for Early Childhood Education

The funding arrangements for childcare have been altered for the next few months. The out-of-pocket costs families pay for childcare have been temporarily waived as many families are experiencing a significant loss in income, and many are not making use of childcare services during the pandemic.

This decision has been taken to:

- Ensure childcare centres remain open and available for parents who still need to get work and critical workers who need access to childcare.
- Keep childcare workers in jobs.
- Ensure parents aren't out of pocket if they choose not to send their children to childcare.

Parents who have terminated their child's enrolment since 17 February are encouraged to contact their centre and re-start arrangements. This will allow you to hold your place until things start to normalise.

For Early Childhood education and Care Centres experiencing viability challenges, there will be the potential to apply for additional funding. More information about how to do so is expected over the next couple of days.

Centres wanting more information, should look at the factsheets available by [clicking here](#).

The CCS Helpdesk is available to assist with information for childcare services to help them manage the impacts on their business. Please email the CCS Helpdesk on [ccshelpdesk@dese.gov.au](mailto:ccshelpdesk@dese.gov.au), or call 1300 667 276 between 9.00 am - 5.00 pm (AEST), Monday to Friday.

[Find out more here.](#)

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## Year 12 students

One group of Australians who are significantly impacted by the current pandemic are those completing Year 12.

I particularly want to acknowledge the schools and make a special note of Year 12s, many of whom will feel that they are missing out on a year they were looking forward to - the culmination of their education, a chance to lead and the bittersweet experience of doing things for the last time.

I want to say to those students, hard as it is to believe right now, there are opportunities in this that you never would have thought of. You have a chance to be creative and to lead in ways that no one else before you has done.

In the years ahead, you will tell the stories of this time, and you will see how it strengthened and shaped you.

In fact, I hope we all will.

On Tuesday, the Minister for Education, Hon Dan Tehan MP. announced that all states had agreed Year 12 students will get a leaving certificate for 2020. There will be no mass

repeating of Year 12.

There will be further consultation regarding whether ATAR scoring needs to be adjusted to account for students learning from home, or disadvantaged in some way by the pandemic.

The Commonwealth will work with the university and vocational education sector to look at this and hold further discussions with all the state in May.

Read Minister Tehan's message to Year 12 students by clicking on the button below.

[Message to Year 12 students](#)

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## Health Announcements

- **More hospital beds** will be available thanks to an agreement the Government has secured with the private hospital sector that will ensure over 30,000 hospital beds, and the sector's 105,000 skilled workforce is available alongside the public hospital sector.
- **Medicare-subsidised telehealth services have been expanded.** Services will include GP services and some consultation services provided by other medical specialists, nurse practitioners, mental health treatment, chronic disease management, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health assessments, service to people with eating disorders, pregnancy support counselling, services to patients in aged care facilities, children with autism and after-hours consultations. This will take the pressure off hospitals and emergency departments.
- **Changes to medicine regulation** to ensure Australians can continue to access the PBS medicines they need throughout the coronavirus outbreak:
  - Current dispensing arrangements for the ongoing PBS subsidised medicines will be supplied without a prescription will be extended to 30 June 2020
  - A home delivery service for PBS and RPBS medicines is now in place
  - Ongoing work is being done to allow medicine substitution by a pharmacist in the event of a shortage.

- Restrictions on the quantity of medicines that can be purchased to prevent the unnecessary medicine stockpiling.

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## Community Services providing assistance

There are numerous services such as grocery delivery that are helping provide for needs of people in our electorate.

### Food delivery services available in our electorate

Many organisations have delivery services available to people in our community, particularly those who are vulnerable. Below is a list of businesses that provide delivery with links to where you order or apply.

#### *Groceries*

- Woolworths - Must apply through Priority online register at <https://www.woolworths.com.au/shop/discover/priorityassistance>
- Coles - Priority Assistance available at <https://shop.coles.com.au/a/national/content/coles-online-access-form>
- Harris Farm - delivery can be requested at <https://www.harrisfarm.com.au/pages/delivery>

#### *Takeaway*

- Uber eats – [www.ubereats.com/au](http://www.ubereats.com/au)
- Menulog – [www.menulog.com.au](http://www.menulog.com.au)
- Deliveroo - <https://deliveroo.com.au/>

Many local businesses also have their own delivery services operating. You can call local businesses and ask what is available.

### Community organisations providing food assistance

- Meals on Wheels

Usually this service would only be available to people with a My Aged Care number however they are now extending the service to include anyone over 65 affected by the coronavirus restrictions.

Call the service below closest to you and a representative will ask a series of questions to determine your specific needs and provide assistance.

Hornsby 9482 2088, Hills Shire 9761 7600

- Hornsby Community Transport

Hornsby Community Transport can pick up and deliver goods; food, pharmaceuticals etc., if they are paid for and ready to pick up.

The number to call 9983 1611 (all messages will receive a call back so encourage that they leave a voicemail)

***If you are struggling to make ends meet, you may be able receive help from one of the following organisations (however this is not an exhaustive list of organisation assisting in our community):***

- Salvation Army

During these difficult and challenging times, where many people are experiencing economic hardship and uncertainty, the Salvation Army remains committed to assist vulnerable people with basic necessities as best we are able.

Through the generosity of Harris Farm, Pennant Hills and Baker's Delight, Berowra, the Salvation Army at Hornsby MAY BE able to assist with fruit, vegetables and bread. Please note that our supplies are limited.

If you require assistance, please contact the Salvation Army at Hornsby on 02 9477 1133 option "2" Monday to Friday between 10am-2pm.

- St Vincent de Paul

Call 9477 5022 to receive food parcels and food vouchers. They will soon have digital vouchers that can be used to order with supermarkets on-line.

- Hornsby Connect have changed the way they operate during COVID-19 but are still providing food to those who need it. You must be registered - you can

register online and they are providing food from 9am to 2pm on Wednesdays. Visit [hornsbyconnect.org.au](http://hornsbyconnect.org.au) for more information.

- Fusion and The Dish are providing free meals every week night from 5:45pm to those who need it. Meals can be picked up each night from 5 Jersey St, Hornsby. They can also be contacted on 9477 1110, if you are unable to pick up your meal please let them know and they may be able to arrange delivery.
- Other agencies you can call:
  - CatholicCare - 9488 2406
  - Mission Australia - 9480 2506
  - Lifeline Harbour to Hawkesbury - 9489 2757

### **Crisis support lines**

You matter. Your life matters. We will get through this together.

The Government has provided funding for crisis support lines to assist people at this time. If you are thinking about suicide or experiencing a personal crisis help is available. No one needs to face their problems alone. Speak to someone who will listen by calling:

Beyond Blue's coronavirus Mental Wellbeing Support Service on 1800 512 348

Lifeline on 13 11 14

Kids Helpline on 1800 55 1800

### **Domestic violence services**

At this time there are people who are more vulnerable to domestic violence because people are spending more time in their home. Despite many services not being open to walk-ins at the moment, domestic violence services are still available to assist and can be contactable by telephone or online.

Call 1800RESPECT if you are in this situation and you will be directed to a service that can help you.