

Further information

If you need further information about your eligibility for emergency relief assistance, please contact the Victorian Emergency Recovery Information Line on **1300 799 232**.

Emergency contacts

Victoria's Department of Health & Human Services is responsible for coordinating statewide recovery services. If you can't find what you need through your municipal council, your regional office of the Department of Health & Human Services may be able to link you to the services and information you require.

Local Council

Website: www.localgovernment.vic.gov.au

Department of Health & Human Services

Website: www.dhs.vic.gov.au

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Emergency Services

Police, Fire & Ambulance call: **000**

Victoria State Emergency Services (SES)

Emergency phone number: **132 500**

Emergency Relief & Recovery Victoria website

Website: www.recovery.vic.gov.au

Personal Hardship Assistance Program

Emergency Re-establishment Assistance

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If you are affected by an emergency event then the Victorian Government's emergency re-establishment assistance payment could help you return to and re-establish your home – if your own resources are inadequate, or if your re-establishment needs are not met by insurance or other assistance.

The payment can also assist people whose homes have become inaccessible for more than seven days as a result of an emergency event, such as a fire or flood.

The availability of emergency re-establishment assistance is subject to approval by the Premier or the Minister for Emergency Services. Once approved, the Department of Health & Human Services then administers this payment.

Eligibility

As a householder, your eligibility for assistance depends on whether your principal place of residence has been destroyed, rendered uninhabitable (unfit to live in), or made inaccessible for more than seven days – all as a result of an eligible natural emergency event.

To be eligible for assistance, your application must meet an income test, with income limits based on:

- your gross weekly family income for PAYE taxpayers
- or your gross weekly income, minus your gross weekly expenditure, if you are self-employed.

Your eligibility is established only where losses are not being met by insurance, compensation or some other assistance.

Specific eligibility rules

If you are eligible, the emergency re-establishment assistance payment is paid to meet any of the following needs:

- the repair or replacement of essential household items
- essential repairs to housing (to restore housing to a habitable condition)
- demolition or rebuilding works (to restore housing to a habitable condition)
- removal of debris from residential properties
- or to cover alternative accommodation.

A Personal Hardship Assistance Program Officer will meet with you to guide you through the application process.

Initial payment

If you are unable to prove your identity due to the destruction of personal papers that prove your identity, your income, the impact or damage to your property, or your insurance coverage, then you may be eligible for a one-off initial payment. This initial payment is available in the first month after an emergency.

Please note that you must be able to demonstrate your need for the payment, including any needs arising from not being able to access your home, and provide receipts and quotes where reasonable.

Further payment

To apply for a further payment you will need to provide quotes and invoices for any eligible expenses. You will also need to provide:

- proof of your identity
- proof of your residency at the affected property (as your principal place of residence)
- evidence of the impact on your property
- evidence of your insurance situation.

You must demonstrate a genuine need for this payment.

Other forms of assistance

In some circumstances the Australian Government may offer other personal hardship assistance. To facilitate this, you will be asked if your contact details can be forwarded to other organisations that may also provide assistance.