

# Personal Hardship Assistance Program

## Emergency Relief Assistance

Emergency relief assistance payments are available to reduce personal hardship following an emergency, by helping to meet the immediate essential health, safety and wellbeing needs of affected Victorians.

### Eligibility

You may be eligible for emergency relief assistance if you have suffered (or are likely to suffer) hardship in providing members of your household with shelter, food, clothing, personal items or specific transport needs – all as a result of an emergency.

Emergency relief assistance is provided on a needs assessment basis, and is available to assist households after house fires, and after the following natural emergency events:

- bushfires
- floods
- severe storms
- and earthquakes.

### Applying for assistance

To apply you must complete an assessment interview with an officer from the Department of Human Services.

You will need to provide personal documents to prove your identity and place of residence.

Any of the following (current) documents are acceptable:

- driver's licence
- passport
- health care/concession card
- Medicare card
- bank account statements
- a recent property rates or utilities notice.

Provision can be made if you are unable to prove your identity.

### Assistance amounts

Your emergency relief assistance payment is based on fixed amounts for each member of your household (adults and children), up to a maximum household limit.

This amount will be paid to you once the Department of Human Services has confirmed your eligibility.

## **Assessment conditions**

Your application may be lodged and accepted up to seven days after the impact of the emergency – or longer at the discretion of the Director, Health and Human Services Emergency Management.

In most circumstances, the Department of Human Services will offer only one payment per household.

Please note that any applicant who provides false information will have to repay any assistance they receive, and may be liable for prosecution.

## **Other forms of assistance**

In some circumstances, the Victorian or Federal governments 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.

## **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 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 Human Services may be able to link you to the services and information you require.

### **Local Council**

Website: [www.dpcd.vic.gov.au/localgovernment](http://www.dpcd.vic.gov.au/localgovernment)

### **Department of Human Services**

Website: [www.dhs.vic.gov.au](http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au)

Follow us on Twitter: VicGovDHS

### **Emergency Services**

Police, Fire & Ambulance call: 000

### **Victoria State Emergency Services (SES)**

Emergency phone number: 132 500

To receive this document in an accessible format phone Health and Human Services Emergency Management on (03) 9096 8103 or email [emb@dhs.vic.gov.au](mailto:emb@dhs.vic.gov.au)

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