

[Home \(/\)](#) / [Ministers \(/ministers\)](#)

[/ The Hon Josh Frydenberg MP \(/ministers/josh-frydenberg-2018\)](#)

[/ Media releases \(/ministers/josh-frydenberg-2018/media-releases\)](#)

[/ Support for ACT businesses impacted by COVID-19](#)

[The Hon Josh Frydenberg MP \(/ministers/josh-frydenberg-2018\)](#)

[Biography \(/ministers/josh-frydenberg-2018/biography\)](#)

[Media releases \(/ministers/josh-frydenberg-2018/media-releases\)](#)

[Speeches \(/ministers/josh-frydenberg-2018/speeches\)](#)

[Transcripts \(/ministers/josh-frydenberg-2018/transcripts\)](#)

13 August 2021

Support for ACT businesses impacted by COVID-19

Joint media release with

The Hon Andrew Barr

ACT Chief Minister

Senator The Hon Zed Seselja

Senator for the Australian Capital Territory

A jointly funded package from the Commonwealth and the Australian Capital Territory (ACT) Governments will give support to small and medium businesses in the Territory who have been impacted by the lockdown measures introduced by the ACT Government today in response to positive cases in the community.

The ACT COVID-19 Business Support Grant will deliver grants of \$3,000 for employing businesses and \$1,000 for non-employing businesses where those businesses' turnover has declined by 30 per cent or more as a result of the COVID-19 health restrictions.

The package will be split on a 50/50 basis between the Commonwealth and the ACT Governments, with the Territory government to administer the program.

The grants will be available to local businesses that have experienced at least a 30 per cent reduction in turnover in the week defined as Friday 13 August - Friday 20 August 2021 (compared to the prior 7-day period) due to restricted trading conditions.

This is a similar arrangement that has been in place for businesses in other jurisdictions impacted by COVID-19 lockdowns.

Federal Treasurer Josh Frydenberg said the business support package builds on the \$2.1 billion the Morrison Government has delivered to households and businesses in the ACT.

“The ACT is facing its most challenging period this year, but it has shown remarkable resilience throughout the pandemic,” the Treasurer said.

“This package will help to keep businesses in business and people in jobs.”

“As we have done so throughout this crisis, we will continue to work with the ACT Government to ensure the ACT economy recovers from the impact of COVID-19.”

ACT Chief Minister Andrew Barr welcomed the Commonwealth support.

“We understand that this lockdown comes off the back of a period of slower economic activity as a result of outbreak of the virus in Sydney. ACT businesses have been supporting the Government’s efforts to respond to the pandemic in the Territory, but that has come at a cost”, Chief Minister Andrew Barr said.

“We want to protect jobs during this period, and it was important that the ACT and the Commonwealth were able to come together quickly and have this package ready for businesses that may be worried about their future as a result of this lockdown.”

“Should the lockdown in the ACT be extended beyond this seven day period, further jointly funded support programs will be considered.”

Senator for the ACT Zed Seselja said this package of measures would be a critical lifeline that would enable many businesses get through the current snap lockdown.

“I am pleased that we’ve been able to quickly deliver today’s package, to help meet the serious cash-flow needs of local businesses,” Senator Seselja said.

“Together with the COVID-19 Disaster Payment, we are ensuring that businesses can keep their staff and pay their bills through the lockdown.”

“I will continue to fight for Canberra businesses and their workers to ensure they are supported throughout the pandemic.”

The ACT Government will also open a COVID-19 Small Business Hardship Scheme, where eligible ACT businesses can apply for credits on the cost of eligible fees and charges of up to \$10,000 (inclusive of GST) per ABN.

This program will provide credits for payroll tax, utilities, rates and certain business licences for small to medium businesses that can demonstrate a 30 per cent revenue loss in revenue. Small businesses with a turnover between \$30,000 and \$10 million per annum can apply.

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