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15 September 2021

Further support for ACT businesses impacted by COVID-19

Joint media release with

**Senator the Hon Zed Seselja
Senator for the Australian Capital Territory**

**The Hon Andrew Barr
ACT Chief Minister**

The Commonwealth and the Australian Capital Territory (ACT) Governments have worked together to expand the COVID-19 Business Support Grants and agree to an additional COVID-19 Tourism, Accommodation Provider, Arts and Events and Hospitality Grant.

COVID-19 Business Support Grants

The two Governments had already agreed to jointly fund ACT COVID-19 Business Support Grants which is delivering support in the form of one-off grants of up to \$20,000 for employing businesses and \$7,500 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.

As part of this extension there will be an additional ACT COVID-19 Business Grant Extension payment of \$10,000 for all employing businesses and \$3,750 for non-employing businesses, it will be paid to all businesses who were eligible for the COVID-19 Business Support Grant in industries still significantly impacted by the health restrictions.

Additional one-off top-up payments will also be made for larger businesses at the following rates:

- \$10,000 for employing businesses with a turnover greater than \$2 million and less than \$5 million

- \$20,000 for employing businesses with a turnover greater than \$5 million and less than \$10 million
- \$30,000 for employing businesses with a turnover greater than \$10 million

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.

Both Governments have agreed to discuss any additional extensions under the COVID-19 Business Support Grant program at the checkpoint on 1 October.

Businesses that have already applied will not need to reapply. The extension payments will be automatically applied if you are eligible. Businesses that have already been paid also do not need to reapply, those that are eligible will automatically receive the extension payment.

Businesses must be registered in the ACT and able to demonstrate their primary operation in the ACT, have an annual turnover of more than \$75,000, be registered for GST and have a total payroll of less than \$10 million. They will also need to provide evidence of a 30 per cent reduction in their turnover.

Applications are still open (<https://www.act.gov.au/business/business-support/covid-19-economic-support-for-business>).

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

Businesses can find further information and apply for the grants on the ACT Government's website (<https://www.act.gov.au/business/business-support/covid-19-economic-support-for-business>). This information is being updated through the day to account for the increased grant payment size and additional top-up payments for larger businesses.

COVID-19 Tourism, Accommodation Provider, Arts and Events and Hospitality Grant

Our Governments agree that businesses in the Tourism, Accommodation Provider, Arts and Events and Hospitality industries have been particularly hard hit by not only the current restrictions in the ACT but before the lockdown in the ACT the health restrictions in NSW and Victoria.

Reflecting these impacts, further one-off grants to businesses in the Tourism, Accommodation Provider, Arts and Events and Hospitality industries will be provided at the following rates:

- \$1,000 for non-employing businesses
- \$3,000 for employing businesses with turnover less than \$2 million
- \$10,000 for employing businesses with turnover greater than \$2 million and less than \$5 million
- \$20,000 for employing businesses with turnover greater than \$5 million

The eligibility criteria will match the eligibility criteria for the COVID-19 Business Support Grant.

We estimate that approximately 2,000 businesses could be eligible for this additional one-off grant.

The ACT Government will be responsible for delivery of this grant. Details are still being finalised. These payments will not be administered until October as we progress the assessment of the COVID-19 Business Support Grants.

The Treasurer Josh Frydenberg said this package comes on top of the Morrison Government's more than \$2 billion in direct economic support to ACT households and businesses since the start of the pandemic.

"The Morrison Government understands the significant impact extended lockdowns have on individuals and businesses in the ACT.

"That's why the Morrison Government is increasing support to businesses and industries that need it most.

"Already the Commonwealth, in partnership with the ACT Government, has committed more than \$120 million to small and medium sized businesses.

"The Morrison Government has also provided over \$150 million of support through the COVID-19 Disaster payment, to more than 60,000 individuals in the ACT who have been impacted by this lockdown.

"But there is light at the end of the tunnel. By sticking to the National Plan, agreed to by State and Territory leaders, we can safely ease restrictions and open up our economy.

"And as we progress towards our vaccinations targets of 70 to 80 per cent, the Morrison Government will continue to work closely with the ACT Government to support businesses through this challenging time.

"We will continue to work with the Territory Government to ensure the ACT economy bounces back."

Chief Minister Andrew Barr said the expanded COVID-19 Business Support Grants are vital to help local businesses who have been particularly hard hit.

"The COVID-19 Business Support Grant program has already delivered over \$17 million dollars to businesses suffering from significantly reduced turnover, and tens of millions more will be paid out as we work through applications." the Chief Minister said.

"The ACT Government continues to work constructively with the Commonwealth Government, I thank the Federal Treasurer and his office for their engagement to date, as we try to help Canberra businesses in these tough times."

Senator for the ACT, Zed Seselja, said the Commonwealth has been fully committed to supporting the needs of Canberra businesses throughout this lockdown.

"Additional top-up payments for businesses as well as the dedicated hospitality package will ensure more businesses and jobs survive the extended lockdown, and will support a quicker recovery once lockdown ends."

“I have worked tirelessly to ensure the needs of Canberra businesses were being considered and I am pleased the Morrison Government is supporting these expanded support measures today,” Senator Seselja said today.

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