

FACT SHEET

2021 Flood/Storm Recovery Resources

Issued/Updated: 15th June 2021

The following Fact Sheet has been prepared to assist members navigate the various sources of assistance that we are currently aware of in relation to the Victorian Flood/Storm event of June 2021. Information concerning relief and recovery assistance is very dynamic and frequently being updated. This update provides a snapshot of current resources available to assist with member enquiries.

Flood, Storm, Tsunami and Earthquake Emergency

132 500

For life-threatening emergencies call Triple Zero (000)

For non emergency incidents call the Police Assistance line 131 444

GENERAL

The Victorian Government has announced Personal Hardship Assistance Program emergency relief payments are available to help meet immediate needs, including emergency food, shelter, clothing and personal items. Information on how to access the relief payments, along with other recovery information can be found on the Vic Emergency website www.emergency.vic.gov.au/relief

VicEmergency Hotline free call 1800 226 226 for warnings and recovery information, including emergency relief assistance grants for hardship.

VicEmergency app or www.emergency.vic.gov.au

Road Closures - Visit VicTraffic at traffic.vicroads.vic.gov.au for main road closures. For urgent road hazards call **13 11 70**.

Assistance may be available in the following local Government areas:

Ballarat	Bass Coast	Baw Baw	Bayside
Bendigo	Boroondara	Campaspe	Cardinia
Casey	Central Goldfields	Dandenong	East Gippsland
Frankston	Glen Eira	Hepburn	Hume
Kingston	Knox	Latrobe	Loddon
Macedon Ranges	Manningham	Maroondah	Mitchell
Monash	Mornington Peninsula	Mount Alexander	Murrindindi
Nillumbik	Port Phillip	South Gippsland	Stonnington
Wangaratta	Wellington	Whitehorse	Whittlesea
Yarra Ranges			

VICTORIAN GOVERNMENT RELIEF AND RECOVERY ADVICE

Emergency Relief and Recovery Victoria – Information regarding State level support services and programs to assist families, businesses and farmers affected by emergencies across Victoria.

www.emergency.vic.gov.au/relief

Department of Health & Human Services (DHHS) Victoria - Financial Crisis Support – provides links to immediate assistance for individuals, including accommodation, food and clothing as well as the Personal Hardship Assistance Program (PHAP) services.dhhs.vic.gov.au/financial-crisis-support

Department of Human Services (DHS)/Centrelink – Commonwealth - Provides information on support and services that may be available if you are experiencing severe financial hardship, recovering from a disaster, or in need of special assistance. humanservices.gov.au/customer/subjects/crisis-and-special-help

DISASTER RECOVERY FUNDING ARRANGEMENTS (ARFA)

The joint Australian, state and territory government Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements (DRFA) provide a range of financial assistance to the natural disaster-declared areas in each state or territory.

For the storms and floods which impacted central and eastern Victoria, the available assistance measures include:

- personal hardship and distress
- personal and financial counselling
- counter disaster operations
- removal of debris from residential properties
- restoration of damaged essential public assets.

For information on available recovery assistance, visit the [VIC Emergency](#) website.

For further information on recovery arrangements, visit the [Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements 2018](#) page. (These are the arrangements in place since 2018)

The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade will replace passports that have been lost or damaged in declared natural disasters free of charge, visit the [Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade](#) website.

DISASTER RECOVERY ALLOWANCE (DRA)

The Disaster Recovery Allowance (DRA) is a short-term income support payment to assist individuals who can demonstrate that their income has been affected as a direct result of a disaster.

The DRA assists employees, small business persons and farmers who experience a loss of income as a direct result of a major disaster.

You might be eligible for a maximum of 13 weeks payment from the date you have or will have a loss of income as a direct result of a disaster. The DRA is taxable.

For further information regarding DRA and eligibility requirements visit [Services Australia](#).

Australian Securities & Investment Commission (ASIC) - Fee Relief – in the case of natural disaster, ASIC can review late lodgement and late payment fees incurred as a result of matters outside your control and waive them in some circumstances.

asic.gov.au/for-business/payments-fees-and-invoices/fee-waivers/

Australian Tax Office (ATO) - Dealing with disasters – an ATO portal linking to information regarding ways that individuals and businesses can manage tax obligations following a disaster.

ato.gov.au/Individuals/Dealing-with-disasters

GIPPSLAND EMERGENCY RELIEF FUND (GERF)

Gippsland Emergency Relief Fund provides immediate financial assistance to residents who suffer loss or hardship as a direct result of an emergency that occurs within the Gippsland region.

The fund focuses on providing for personal losses such as people's immediate requirements for food, shelter, clothing, utensils, furniture, bedding, children's educational needs, etc, as distinct from capital items covered by insurance or government grants.

Help and assistance by GERF is provided to people in need as a result of bushfire, flood or other acts of nature that affect their principal place of residence.

- Residents affected by the floods should **contact their local Council Municipal Recovery Manager**, who will assess the applicant's situation and make a referral to GERF where applicable **or visit** Website: www.reliefund.org.au

Affected Council contact numbers are listed below.

- East Gippsland Shire Council: (03) 5153 9500
- Wellington Shire Council: 1300 137 218 (Recovery Office line)
- Latrobe City Council: 1300 367 700
- Baw Baw Shire Council: 03 5624 2411

YARRA RANGES

Urgent relief needs including food & alternate accommodation Call Council on **1300 368 333**

- **Local roads** (If you know a request hasn't been made)
Call Council [1300 368 333](tel:1300368333)
- **Main Roads**
Call VicRoads on [13 11 70](tel:131170)
- **On power lines**
Call AusNet Services on [13 17 99](tel:131799)
- **Livestock issues**
Contact DELWP on [136 186](tel:136186)
- **Flood or Storm assistance**
Contact SES on [132 500](tel:132500)
- **Hardship assistance & financial support**
Contact Department Families, Fairness & Housing on [1300 475 170](tel:1300475) | EmergencyHardshipPayments@dffh.vic.gov.au

TELSTRA DISASTER ASSISTANCE PACKAGE

Assistance packages are offered based on impacted locations. If you have a mobile service with Telstra, you'll receive an SMS advising you of your eligibility. Announcements are also made locally in impacted areas. When a disaster assistance package is announced, it can include the following:

For a short-term impact, such as temporary evacuation of your home or business or a temporary fault:

- Free use of Telstra public payphones in the affected areas
- Free use of Telstra Air payphone Wi-Fi hotspots in the affected areas
- Free call diversion from an affected fixed home or business phone service to another fixed or mobile service, regardless of the carrier
- Extra mobile data for eligible post-paid mobile customers & Extra pre-paid data and free calls

For a long-term impact, such as severe damage to or loss of your home or business:

- Free call diversion from your fixed phone service to another Australian fixed or mobile service, regardless of the carrier. This offer applies for up to 6 months from the date of the disaster event
- A one-off credit up to the value of \$500 incl. GST to your Telstra fixed phone account to help cover the costs of the following, if required:
 - Connection of a Telstra fixed phone service at a temporary address
 - Re-connection of a Telstra fixed phone service at your original address

PERSONAL HARDSHIP ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

The Personal Hardship Assistance Program (PHAP) assists people experiencing financial hardship because of a single house fire or a natural disaster related emergency such as bushfire, flood, severe storm, or earthquake.

Emergency relief assistance may be available for up to 7 days after the emergency event. A one-off payment is provided to help meet immediate needs, including emergency food, shelter, clothing, medication and accommodation.

A needs assessment is carried out by a Personal Hardship Assistance Officer to determine eligibility.

- Payments are up to \$560 per adult and \$280 per child (up to a maximum of \$1960 per eligible family) and are distributed via a prepaid debit card that could be used to make purchases via EFTPOS or withdraw cash from bank ATMs.
- Personal hardship assistance payments are available to people whose homes are damaged or destroyed and are uninhabitable.
- Contact your council or email EmergencyHardshipPayments@dffh.vic.gov.au for more information. In your email please include how you would like to be contacted i.e. include your mobile number or landline phone number.

Relief payments were **NOT** available for:

- the costs of cleaning up fallen trees or branches in people's yards
- the cost of repairing fences from fallen trees. If a tree has fallen on your house, please call the SES or your local council for more information.
- business losses or compensation for the loss of income
- the replacement of fencing
- motor vehicle repairs or towing
- paying insurance excess

EMERGENCY RE-ESTABLISHMENT PAYMENTS

- Emergency re-establishment assistance is available for people who's principal place of residence (your home) is uninhabitable for more than seven days because the Victorian floods or storm damage.
- If you think you may be eligible for a re-establishment payment, please email EmergencyHardshipPayments@dffh.vic.gov.au
- In your email please include how you would like to be contacted i.e. include you mobile number or landline phone number.
- The assistance will be available for clean-up, emergency accommodation, repairs, rebuilding (a principal place of residence), and replacing some damaged contents.
- Re-establishment assistance is available to individuals or families who do not have building (home) insurance or contents insurance.
- The purpose of these payments is to assist people in the community who do not have the financial means to re-establish their lives after a disaster. The payments are a helping hand and should not be considered a replacement for insurance.
- Assistance is being provided through the jointly funded Commonwealth-State Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements.

Emergency re-establishment payments and insurance

- Re-establishment assistance is available to individuals or families who do not have building (home) insurance or contents insurance.
- If an applicant has contents insurance only, re-establishment assistance may be available to assist with structural repairs to the home, rebuilding, clean-up tasks and reconnecting or undertaking safety checks on essential services such as gas, water or electricity. Assistance would not be available to replace or repair any household contents.
- If an applicant has building (home) insurance but no contents insurance, re-establishment assistance may be available to repair or replace essential household items. Assistance would not be available to undertake structural repairs, clean-up or rebuilding tasks that fall within the scope of the applicant's insurance.
- Applicants with both building (home) insurance and contents insurance are not eligible for re-establishment assistance

VFBV WELFARE FUND

Operating since 1913, the Volunteer Fire Brigades Victoria welfare Fund provides fast small grants to CFA volunteers, long serving former volunteers and their families, who are experiencing significant financial hardship. Typical cases involve prolonged illness, bereavement, loss of earnings, or the accommodation and travel costs associated with supporting a relative in hospital.



The Welfare Fund is run under Australian Tax Office rules, independently audited, and grant decisions are made by a committee of long serving CFA volunteers. The Fund has helped close to 1,200 volunteers, with more than \$1.8 million in grants made over the years.

- Grants up to \$5,000
- Available to all members and long serving ex-members and their families of subscribing Brigades
- Contact the VFBV Welfare Fund Secretary on (03) 9886 1141 vfbv@vfbv.com.au or your VFBV Support Officer or State Councillor to discuss eligibility and application process.

CFA MEMBER WELFARE AND SUPPORT

Support services are available to all members and their immediate families:

CFA WELLBEING SUPPORT LINE
1800 959 232
Providing CFA members and their immediate family access to 24 hour support 7 days a week. Psychologists – Counsellors – Peer Support - Chaplains

Lifeline: 13 11 14 - provides crisis support 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Beyond Blue: 1300 22 4636 - to talk with a trained mental health professional.