

23 March 2020

NAT 014/20

## State and Territory Government COVID-19 Stimulus Measures

### SUMMARY

Each state and territory government has announced a set of measures designed to stimulate activity in the face of the health crisis. This Advice provides an overview of the business elements in each package, together with links to further details.

### Western Australia

The WA Government announced several stimulus measures on 16 March. For further details see [here](#).

The measures include:

#### *Payroll tax relief*

- The already-announced lift in the payroll tax threshold will be brought forward by six months to July 1, 2020.
- A one-off grant of \$17,500 will be available for employers, whose annual Australian taxable wages are more than \$1 million and up to \$4 million (assessed on a business group basis).
- Businesses that pay \$7.5 million or less in Australian taxable wages may be eligible for a deferral of current WA payroll tax liabilities (for 2019-20) until 21 July 2020 if they are directly or indirectly affected by COVID-19.

For further information see [here](#).

### Queensland

The Queensland Government announced measures to support industry and the economy in confronting the impacts of COVID-19. For more information see [here](#).

#### *Payroll tax measure*

All businesses adversely affected by the Coronavirus COVID-19, can apply to defer payments of payroll tax in respect of the 2019-20 year until 3 August 2020. Read more about this measures and apply for deferral [here](#).

#### *Small business loans*

The Government also announced a \$500 million concessional loan facility that will include low interest loans of up to \$250,000 for carry on finance with an initial 12-month interest free period for businesses to retain staff.

The details are not yet available although the Queensland Rural and Industry Development Authority (QRIDA) which is responsible for the administration of the concessional loans is currently taking expressions of interest in the lead up to rolling these loans out as soon as possible.

For more information on this loan program see [here](#).

#### *Other programs*

The Queensland Government is, in addition, ensuring that a range of existing programs will be administered in ways that extend support to businesses. See [here](#) for further details.

## New South Wales

The NSW Government has announced a package of measures to protect communities and jobs in the face of the COVID-19 outbreak over the next six months.

### *Payroll tax measures*

- Payroll tax liabilities will be waived for the remainder of 2019-20 for businesses with payrolls of up to \$10 million.
- The already announced increase in the payroll tax threshold to \$1 million will be brought forward to 2020-21.

### *Fees and charges on some businesses*

- A range of fees and charges will be waived for small businesses including bars, cafes, restaurants and tradies.

### *Additional public sector spending*

The NSW Government has announced that it will:

- Bring forward capital works and maintenance spending totalling \$750 million including on public assets including social housing and crown land fencing.
- Employ additional cleaners of public infrastructure such as transport assets, schools and other public buildings.

More information about the NSW measures can be found [here](#).

## South Australia

On 11 March the South Australian Government announced the following initiatives.

- Undertake major infrastructure maintenance projects including road and hospital upgrades.
- Invest in new tourism infrastructure.
- Expand the Business Growth Fund to support local industry.

These measures are in addition to an earlier injection in nature-based tourism infrastructure to boost employment and the long-term visitor economy in regions hit hard by the summer's bushfires.

The full announcement is available [here](#).

## Tasmania

The Tasmanian Government has announced several measures to support industry and employment in the wake of the COVID-19 outbreak.

### *Payroll tax measures*

- Payroll tax liabilities will be waived for hospitality, tourism and seafood industry businesses for the last four months of 2019-20.
- Other businesses with payrolls of up to \$5 million will be able to apply, based on the impact of virus, to have their payroll tax waived for April to June 2020.
- In a Youth Employment measure a payroll tax rebate will be available for one year, for businesses that employ a person aged 24 and under between April and December 2020.

### *Assistance in employing apprentices and Trainees*

The already announced Small Business Grants Program to provide a \$5,000 grant for businesses that hire an apprentice or trainee in the tourism, hospitality, building and construction, and manufacturing industries has been brought forward.

### *Interest free loans for small business*

Businesses with a turnover of less than \$5 million in the hospitality, tourism, seafood production, and exports sectors will be able to apply for interest-free loans to assist them purchase equipment or restructure their operations.

### *Small business cash flow measures*

The Tasmanian Government has indicated that, subject to contractual commitments, it will reduce payment times to small businesses from 30 days to 14 days and extend payment terms for small businesses from 30 days to 90 days.

### *Maintenance programs*

Maintenance on public buildings will be fast tracked over the next 12 months. This will provide an injection into local trades around the state and continue to support confidence in local communities.

### *Waiving or reducing a range of fees and charges*

Waive application fees for liquor licensing and reduce ongoing liquor licensing fees by 50 per cent for calendar 2020.

Waive a number of leases, license and parks' entry fees for tourism operators for the period from 1 April to 30 June.

Annual Fisheries fees levies for the rock lobster, giant crab, fin fishers and for abalone divers, will be waived for 12 months.

## **Northern Territory**

On 19 March the Northern Territory Government announced a Business Improvement Scheme under which eligible businesses:

- Will be able to receive \$10,000 to spend on reinvigorating their premises.
- In addition, the Government will provide a further \$10,000 under the scheme to finance an upgrade with a total value of \$30,000 if the businessperson contributes \$10,000.

The Government is limiting the scheme to upgrades and purchases supplied by another Territory business and could include the purchase of new equipment and shop fitouts.

For further details see [here](#).

## **Australian Capital Territory**

On 20 March the ACT Government announced its "initial" stimulus measures including the following measures for small and medium-sized businesses:

- An interest free deferral of payroll tax liabilities for the period commencing 1 July 2020 for businesses with a payroll level of \$10 million.
- A \$750 rebate for small business owners to help with power bills.
- A six-month waiver on payroll tax for hospitality, creative arts and entertainment industries.

- A rebate on the fixed charge for 2019-20 on commercial rates for small businesses.
- A waiver of fees for food business registration and liquor licensing fees (excluding off-license) and outdoor dining fees.

The Government also indicated it would set up a business liaison team to assist local businesses access these measures.

More information about the ACT measures is available [here](#).

## **Victoria**

The Victorian Government has announced a set of measures to support businesses and employees.

The package includes full payroll tax refunds for the 2019-20 financial year to small and medium-sized businesses with payroll of less than \$3 million. Payments will begin in the week commencing 23 March.

Businesses of this size will also be able to defer until 1 January 2021, any payroll tax for the first three months of the 2020/21 financial year.

Commercial tenants in government buildings can apply for rent relief with private landlords encouraged to replicate.

Land tax payments for 2020 will be deferred for eligible small businesses.

The Government will accelerate payment of outstanding supplier invoices within five business days and is encouraging private sector businesses to do the same to the extent possible.

Liquor licensing fees for 2020 for affected venues will be waived.

The Victorian Government has established a *Business Support Fund to support the hardest hit sectors* (including but not limited to hospitality, tourism, accommodation, arts and entertainment, and retail). Ai Group, the Victorian Chamber and the Australian Hotels Association have been asked to help guide the administration of the fund.)

The Government has also established a *Working for Victoria Fund* to assist workers who have lost their jobs find new opportunities and to facilitate job matching to help Victorians find short-term or casual roles.

The full announcement is available [here](#).

**Do you require further advice?**

Ai Group has set up a [special section on our website](#) to provide access to Ai Group advice and assistance relating to the COVID-19 pandemic.

For information or assistance, please contact the **Ai Group Workplace Advice Line** on 1300 55 66 77.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Peter Burn', written in a cursive style.

**Peter Burn**  
**Head of Influence and Policy**