

Emergency relief assistance payments

Personal Hardship Assistance Program

The aftermath of a natural disaster can place a direct financial burden on you, as well as an emotional one.

Emergency relief assistance can help support you if you are experiencing financial hardship because of a single house fire or a natural disaster related emergency such as bushfire, flood, severe storm or earthquake. This assistance is made available by the Victorian Government to help meet your immediate health, safety and wellbeing needs.

Key points

- A relief payment can help to pay for immediate needs, including emergency food, shelter, clothing, medication and accommodation.
- Payments are needs tested and not income tested.
- You can choose to receive payment via direct deposit or prepaid debit card.
- You can lodge an application up to seven days after a disaster.

Eligibility

Emergency relief assistance payments are available for seven days after an emergency event to assist you if you have suffered hardship, or are likely to suffer hardship, as a result of an emergency.

The payment can be used to provide your household with shelter, food, clothing or personal items if you are unable to live in your home for a short period as the result of a disaster, such as:

- bushfire
- flood
- severe storm
- earthquake
- house fire.

Relief payments are **not** available for:

- damage caused by construction or building works
- business losses
- motor vehicle repairs or towing
- compensation for the loss of income
- paying insurance excess
- loss resulting from power outages.

Applying for assistance

If emergency relief payments are activated, you can find information about how to apply by visiting www.emergency.vic.gov.au/relief or services.dffh.vic.gov.au/personal-hardship-assistance-program

If you need help completing the online form, or if you require an interpreter, relay service, or other assistance, you can complete a call back form.

To complete the online application form, you must provide:

- An email address
- Evidence of your identity and place of residence, using any of the following:
 - driver's licence
 - passport
 - health care / concession card
 - Medicare card
 - birth certificate
- Bank details to receive payment via direct deposit. Payment can be made via physical card or cheque, but this must be arranged by completing a call back form.

If you are not able to provide an email address or any of the identification documents, please contact the department by completing a call back form.

Assistance amounts

Emergency relief assistance is based on a fixed amount for each member of your household (adults and children). Payments are \$580 per adult and \$290 per child (up to a maximum of \$2030 per eligible family) are available.

This assistance will be paid to you after the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing has confirmed your eligibility.

Other forms of assistance

Other forms of relief assistance may also be available to assist you following an emergency. The department works to connect you with the services that provide this assistance. To assist this process, you will be asked if your contact details can be shared with other organisations, such as Victorian or Commonwealth governments or charitable sources.

More information

If you need more information about emergency relief assistance, please visit the department's [Personal Hardship Assistance Program](#) web page or contact the VicEmergency hotline on 1800 226 226.

Accessing relief and recovery services

Your local council coordinates relief and recovery from emergencies, and will be able to connect you with all available services and support.

The Victorian Department of Families, Fairness and Housing assists local councils with community recovery by providing financial assistance, as well as health and wellbeing support and advice on emergency housing.

Relief and recovery information will be published on www.emergency.vic.gov.au/relief, as well as on your local council web and social media pages.

Local Council

www.knowyourcouncil.vic.gov.au

Department of Families, Fairness and Housing

www.vic.gov.au/department-families-fairness-and-housing

VicEmergency hotline

Free call: 1800 226 226

VicEmergency website

www.emergency.vic.gov.au

Emergency services

In an emergency call 000 for Police, Fire and Ambulance.

Family violence services

Safe Steps Family Violence Response Centre: 1800 015 188

To receive this document in another format, [email the Emergency Management Branch](mailto:emb@dffh.vic.gov.au) <emb@dffh.vic.gov.au>.

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Available at [Personal Hardship Assistance Program \(dffh.vic.gov.au\)](https://services.dffh.vic.gov.au/personal-hardship-assistance-program) <https://services.dffh.vic.gov.au/personal-hardship-assistance-program>