

Victoria - Information Sheet

Disclaimer: The information below should not be considered an exhaustive list and service delivery may change. Please contact organisations and services directly for the most up to date information and to enquire further about eligibility. Red Cross does not determine eligibility for the third party services listed.

Australian Government Updates

- Home Affairs has updated the [COVID-19 and the Border / Staying in Australia webpage](#) with more detailed information for people with temporary visas:
 - [Visitor visa or Electronic Travel Authority \(ETA\)](#)
 - [Student and Temporary Graduate Visa](#)
 - Temporary Skill Shortage ([subclass 482](#)) or Temporary Work (Skilled) ([subclass 457](#))
 - [Working Holiday Maker visa](#)
 - [Seasonal Worker](#)
 - [Special Category Visa](#)
 - [Bridging Visa](#)
 - [Regional Visa](#)
 - [My visa has expired](#)
 - [Skilled Regional \(Subclass 887\) visa](#)
 - [Business Innovation and Investment \(Permanent\)\(Subclass 888\) visa](#)
 - [Business Innovation and Investment \(Provisional\)\(Subclass 188\) visa](#)
 - [Safe Haven Enterprise \(Subclass 790\) visa](#)
 - [Temporary Graduate \(Subclass 485\) visa](#)

For information on the [Temporary Activity Visa \(subclass 408\)](#) visit the Home Affairs website.

Health and Wellbeing

- With the relaxing of restrictions, and opening of state and international borders, Australian governments are encouraging everyone to continue to be COVID aware and stay safe. For more information please follow the recommended government [health and hygiene advice](#)

Employment & Work Rights

From 1 July 2023, work restrictions for student visa holders will be re-introduced and capped at the increased rate of 48 hours per fortnight. This ensures that student visa holders are able to focus on obtaining a quality Australian education and qualification, while remaining able to support themselves financially, gain valuable work experience, and contribute to Australia's workforce needs. For more information please refer to the [Department of Home Affairs and Australian Border Force](#)

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All workers in Australia have the same rights and protections at work, regardless of citizenship or

visa status. Your employer must comply with Australian workplace and immigration laws, including their obligation to:

- Pay you the right pay rate for all time worked
- Provide a safe workplace.
- For information on [working](#) in Australia visit the [Home Affairs website](#).
- <https://www.redcross.org.au/workrighthub/>

The [Fair Work Ombudsman](#) provides education, assistance, advice and guidance to employers and employees, and can inquire into and investigate breaches of the Fair Work Act.

Food and/or Emergency Relief

- [AskIzzy](#) is a national database with links to supports including housing, food and clothing, health services, financial support, family violence assistance, and much more.
- The National Debt Helpline provides free financial advice, and [the NDH website](#) has information on topics such as rent, utilities and emergency financial assistance. The NDH is open Monday to Friday from 9:30am – 4:30pm, on 1800 007 007.
- The DSS Grants Service Directory is a searchable database of service providers offering emergency relief (including food support). Visit the [Victoria section of the directory](#).
- The Australian Red Cross operates food pantries in North Melbourne and Dandenong.
- The City of Melbourne [Community Food Guide](#) is a resource for community agencies or anyone in the community who needs affordable, fresh and healthy food.
- Empower Australia have food relief locations in Southbank, Lower Plenty, Ringwood, Pakenham, and Grovedale. [Visit the website](#) for more information or phone (03) 9896 7999.
- Merri-bek City Council includes a list of emergency relief, foodbanks, food pantries and services offering food parcels in the Council area [here](#).
- [Health Direct](#) also maintains a database where you can search for food relief. Select food relief as the service you are looking for, and enter in your location or suburb to see what services might be available near you.
- [CISVic local services](#) assist people experiencing personal and financial difficulties by providing information, referral and support services including Emergency Relief.
- NRNA – Non-Resident Nepali Association has a list of resources on their [Facebook page](#).

Rent and Utilities

- The [Tenants Victoria website](#) is updated regularly, with information for people renting in Victoria. Ph: 9416 2577 (please note, a wait time of approximately 30 mins is expected).

- The [Justice Connect website](#) provides housing and rental support information.
- The \$250 [Power Saving Bonus](#) is available to all Victorian households to help ease cost-of-living pressures and encourage them to compare energy offers and save money. Open until 31st August 2023
- [Energy and Water Ombudsman Victoria](#)
 - In Victoria, all energy and water companies must have a hardship program to assist people who are struggling to pay their bills. There are various areas that energy and water companies can help with, including:
 - An affordable payment plan to help break bills into smaller payments.
 - Energy and water efficiency information to help lower usage.
 - Assistance with applying for the Victorian Government's [Utility Relief Grant Scheme \(URGS\)](#) which provides up to \$650 each for electricity, gas and water (subject to eligibility criteria). *If you are not a concession card holder, you need to contact your retailer to find out if you are eligible.*
 - Putting you on a cheaper energy plan.
 - Ensuring concessions are applied to your account.
 - Referral to support services including financial counselling.
 - [General Information factsheets in languages other than English.](#)

Housing / Homelessness

- [Victoria DFFH Crisis Accommodation Line](#): A 24/7 statewide toll free number – 1800 825 955 for housing support. The number will direct your call to a service closest to you, or if the call is outside business hours, it will be redirected to Salvation Army Crisis Services.
- [Launch Housing](#): Crisis accommodation support services 24/7 toll-free number – 1800 825 955. They have access points in 68 Oxford St, Collingwood & 122 Chapel St, St Kilda – open Monday to Friday 9am-4pm.
- [WAYSS](#): WAYSS Women's Integrated Services assists women and women with children, who are homeless or at risk of homelessness due to family violence, with information, advocacy, referral and support. Located at 20 Princess Hwy, Dandenong, phone (03) 9791 6111.

Health and Medical Care

- [Monash Health Refugee Health and Wellbeing](#) See website for specific locations and contacts, main line 03 9594 6666.
- All people seeking asylum are entitled to free medical care in Victorian hospitals. For more information visit the [Royal Children's Hospital](#) (RCH Melbourne) website.
- Neami 'Partners in Wellbeing' – for support or referrals call 1300 375 330 and for more

information on the program visit the [Neami website](#).

- [Cabrinia Asylum Seeker and Refugee Health Hub](#) is located at 503 Sydney Rd, Brunswick – open Monday to Friday 9am-5pm. Phone (03) 8388 7874
- The [Refugee Health Guide](#) includes Refugee Health Programs staffed by refugee nurses, doctors and other specialists that operate nationally - providing specialised mental and primary health care and service coordination to refugees and people seeking asylum. Information on referral pathways in Victoria are found [here](#).
- [Reciprocal Health Care Agreements](#): Agreements with 11 countries that cover the cost of medically necessary care when Australians visit certain countries and visitors from these countries visit Australia. Those visiting Australia from the following countries may be eligible for medical care under Medicare while in Australia, information for each country is available [here](#).
- [Temporary Visa Categories Covered by Ministerial Orders \(eligible for Medicare\)](#)

Information for the LGBTQI+ community

- [Many Coloured Sky](#) supports LGBTQI+ organisations and communities based in Melbourne. They run a peer lead support group for Queer Refugee and Asylum Seekers called QRASP. You can join this group by emailing peersupport@manycolouredsky.org or phone 0432 356 145.
- [Queerspace](#) is an LGBTQI+ health and wellbeing support service. They have a focus on relationships, families, parenting and young people and offers co-located services across the north- west metropolitan region of Victoria. Phone (03) 9336 6733 Thurs-Mon 9am-5pm Tues-Wed 9am-8pm
- Q Life A peer run counselling and referral service for people who are LGBTQI+ providing early intervention, peer supported telephone and web-based services to people of all ages across the full breadth of people's bodies, genders, relationships, sexualities, and lived experiences. Phone counselling and web chat services are available 7 days a week, between the hours of 3:00pm – 12:00am. Visit the [Q Life website](#) for more information.

Additional Information for People Seeking Asylum and Refugees

- CatholicCare have developed an online resource of financial, health, housing and other emergency relief services available for people seeking asylum. You can [access the link here](#).
- If you have a Temporary Protection Visa (TPV) or Safe Haven Enterprise Visa (SHEV), you are eligible to apply for the [Special Benefit payment through Centrelink](#). You will need to meet the other criteria for the payment. Click the link for more information.

- [Status Resolution Support Services \(SRSS\)](#)
 - The SRSS program supports vulnerable migrants who are waiting for the government's decision on a visa application, including people seeking asylum. It provides temporary needs-based support for people facing significant barriers and unable to support themselves while resolving their immigration status.
 - In Victoria, the SRSS Program is delivered by:
 - [Life Without Barriers](#). Contact: 1800 935483 info@lwb.org.au. Dandenong (03 8752 8500) / Sunshine (03 9313 2400)
 - [Adult Multicultural Education Services \(AMES\)](#) - If you or someone you know would like to apply for SRSS with AMES Australia, [contact online](#) or call 13 AMES (13 2637) for more information.

- [Humanitarian Settlement Program \(HSP\)](#)
 - The HSP is a national program funded by the Australian Government to help refugees to establish themselves when they first arrive in Australia.
 - People granted the following visas are eligible to access the HSP on arrival:
 - Refugee (subclass 200, 201, 203 and 204) visa
 - Global Special Humanitarian (subclass 202) visa
 - Other visa holders are also eligible to access the HSP, but only to receive [Specialised and Intensive Services \(SIS\)](#). These include:
 - Refugee (subclass 200, 201, 203 and 204)
 - Global Special Humanitarian (subclass 202)
 - Protection (subclass 866)
 - Temporary Protection (subclass 785), Temporary Humanitarian Stay (subclass 449), Temporary Humanitarian Concern (subclass 786) and Safe Haven Enterprise (subclass 790).
 - SIS is a component of the Humanitarian Settlement Program (HSP) available to humanitarian entrants and other eligible visa holders who have complex needs:
 - [HSP Service Provider Location](#)