

External Services Information Sheet – Victoria (VIC)

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.

Food and/or Emergency Relief

- **The Australian Red Cross** operates food pantries in North Melbourne and Dandenong.
- [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 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.
- **Moreland 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.

Housing and Homelessness

- 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.
- **[Victoria DHHS Crisis Accommodation Line](#)**: A 24/7 state-wide 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](#)**: Bob's Place, 35 Robinson Street, Dandenong, phone: 03 9792 0750
- **[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.

Utilities

- Australian Red Cross operates a **[Utility Subsidy Program](#)** to help people seeking asylum pay a portion of their utility bills.
- **[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 \$500 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.

Health and Medical Care

- **Coronavirus Hotline**: 1800 675 398 – if you suspect you may have coronavirus (COVID-19) phone the hotline, which is open 24 hours, 7 days.
- **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](#).
- [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 LGBTQIA+ Community

- Information on health and counselling services, social groups, legal support, multicultural specific services, and other services are found on this [national LGBTQI+ directory](#).
- Uniting Care runs the peer support program QRAC. Contact Ian (0400 121 907), Jayke (0448 440 991) or Andi (0409 091 734) for more information.

Information for International Students in VIC

- Victorian Government’s International Student Emergency Relief Fund closed on 31 December 2020. The **Study Melbourne** [website](#) provides information on other supports available to international students living in Victoria.
- International students’ hotline (1300 981 621) international.students@dese.gov.au

Information for New Zealanders living in VIC

- New Zealand citizens in Australia on a Special Category Visa (SCV) may be able to access a range of payments, depending on their circumstances.
 - Those who came to Australia prior to 26 February 2001 generally have protected status and have the same access to all Australian payments as permanent residents and Australian citizens, where eligible, including JobSeeker Payment.

- New Zealanders who came to Australia after 26 February 2001 and have non-protected status can access family payments, such as FTB, paid parental leave payments and childcare subsidy, where eligible. If they have been continuously living in Australia for at least 10 years since February 2001, they can also access JobSeeker Payment or Youth Allowance for a one-off period of up to six months.
- New Zealand citizens may also be able to claim the Age Pension or, in limited circumstances, Disability Support Pension or Carer Payment, under the Social Security Agreement between Australia and New Zealand.
- For further general information:
<https://www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/individuals/subjects/payments-visa-holders>
- Individuals needing specific advice on their circumstances should contact Services Australia:
<https://www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/individuals/contact-us>

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.
- 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: info@lwb.org.au Dandenong (03 8752 8500) / Epping (03 8405 4400) / 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 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 Locations](#).