



COVID-19 Financial Hardship Policy

Frequently Asked Questions

Q. How long will these Financial Hardship assistance measures be in place?

A. The following measures will be in place until 30 September 2020 and will be reviewed again at that time.

Q. Who is eligible to access the COVID-19 Financial Hardship assistance?

A.

For businesses – if your business has been assessed by the Australian Taxation Office (ATO) as being eligible for the Commonwealth JobKeeper Payment you are automatically deemed to be in Financial Hardship for the purposes of this policy.

For individuals and households – if you or a member of your household has lost their job as a direct result of the COVID-19 Pandemic you are automatically deemed to be in Financial Hardship for the purposes of this policy.

Q. What does “lost their job” mean?

A. “Lost job” includes having been made redundant, sacked or stood down without pay as a direct result of COVID-19 Pandemic. People in receipt of the Commonwealth JobKeeper Payment do not qualify as having lost their job.

What if my business has NOT been assessed by the Australian Taxation Office (ATO) as being eligible for the Commonwealth JobKeeper Payment, or me or a member of my household has NOT lost their job as a direct result of the COVID-19 Pandemic?

You can still apply for COVID-19 Financial Hardship assistance if you believe that other circumstances relating to COVID-19 have caused you financial hardship, by completing and lodging the application form.

Q. How do I apply to access the COVID-19 Financial Hardship assistance?

A. Complete the one-page application form on our website www.centralgoldfields.vic.gov.au/financialsupportpackage and return to Council. Once your application has been assessed, you will be advised whether it has been approved or disallowed.

Q. If my application for COVID-19 Financial Hardship assistance is disallowed can I appeal the decision?

A. Yes – you can complete the Hardship Application Appeal Form on our website www.centralgoldfields.vic.gov.au/financialsupportpackage and return to Council.

Q. What are the COVID-19 Financial Hardship assistance measures in place if I'm having trouble paying my rates?

A. If your application for COVID-19 Financial Hardship assistance is approved, you are entitled to the following assistance:

- Suspension of all current debt recovery action until 30 September 2020
- Extension of rate payments to 30 September 2020 with no interest penalty
- Waived interest on overdue rates and waste charges from 16 March 2020 to 30 September 2020

Q. What if I have already paid my rates but now want that money refunded?

A. Council is not refunding rates already paid.

Q. What other support is Council providing?

A. Waived pet registration fees for people assessed as being eligible for the COVID-19 Financial Hardship assistance (your pets must still be registered by 10 April 2020, but the registration fee will be waived)

Q. What if I have already paid my pet registration fees but now want that money refunded?

A. Council is not refunding pet registration fees already paid.

Q. What Business support is Council providing?

- New COVID-19 Financial Hardship Policy will also apply to businesses
- Payment of local suppliers weekly to improve business cash flow
- Waived rent for businesses occupying Council buildings and facilities from 16 March 2020 to 30 September 2020
- Dedicated business contact officer within Council Alisha, Andrea, Lee or Sally at the Visitor Information Centre on 5460 4511 or 0438 868 420 or email visitorinfo@cgoldshire.vic.gov.au
- Dedicated COVID-19 business support page on Council's website with link to local employment opportunities – www.centralgoldfields.vic.gov.au/covid-19
- Access to Victorian Chamber of Commerce and Industry support in partnership with Committee for Maryborough, including a **free one-year membership to the Victorian Chamber of Commerce and Industry**
<https://www.victorianchamber.com.au/>

Q. What if I have already paid some rent for occupying a Council building or facility covering the period 16 March 2020 to 30 September 2020?

A. Council is will refund any rent paid relating to this period if you request a refund in writing.

Q. What is Council doing in relation to Permits?

A.

- Extension of expiry dates for septic, building and planning permits for 12 months at no cost upon request
- Refund of permit fees for events and business activities that have been cancelled or closed as directed by Government upon request

Q. How do I obtain a time extension on a permit?

A. Simply email mail@cgoldshire.vic.gov.au and request an extension.

Q. How do I obtain a refund of permit fees for events and business activities that have been cancelled or closed as directed by Government?

A. Simply email mail@cgoldshire.vic.gov.au and request a refund of the particular fee.

Q. What is Council doing to provide support to the community?

A.

- Waived rent for all occupiers of Council buildings and facilities until 30 September 2020
- Waived building or planning permits fees under Council's Community Support Policy for community projects
- Additional parking enforcement around MDHS to support health workers/patients
- Dedicated COVID-19 information page on Council's website – www.centralgoldfields.vic.gov.au/covid-19

Q. What is Council doing in regards to Capital works?

A. Council will continue works where they can be done maintaining safe working practices (e.g social distancing), so as to maximise local business and employment opportunities.