

# 2021 State Government Rent Relief Grant



The Victorian Government has reintroduced a rent relief grant to support people experiencing rental hardship due to COVID-19. Renters can access a one-off payment, paid directly to their agent, lessor or landlord, of up to \$1,500 under the new grant.

This grant is specifically for renters living in their primary residence to help them maintain safe, secure and stable accommodation.

## What is rental hardship?

Rental hardship is a situation where a renter is paying more than 30 per cent of their income in rent and may have limited personal savings and access to other benefits or support.

## To be eligible for the grant people will need to:

- Have lost income as a result of the pandemic on or after 27 May 2021;
- Have less than \$2,000 in savings (excluding superannuation);
- Have a single income of less than \$1,208.85 per week, or \$1,813.46 as a couple, aligning to an annual income limit of \$62,860 for singles, and \$94,300 for couples;
- Provide proof of a rent reduction agreement for a period after 27 May 2021; and
- Be paying more than 30% of your income in rent.

There are no citizenship or permanent residency requirements for applicants.

Applicants that may be eligible include:

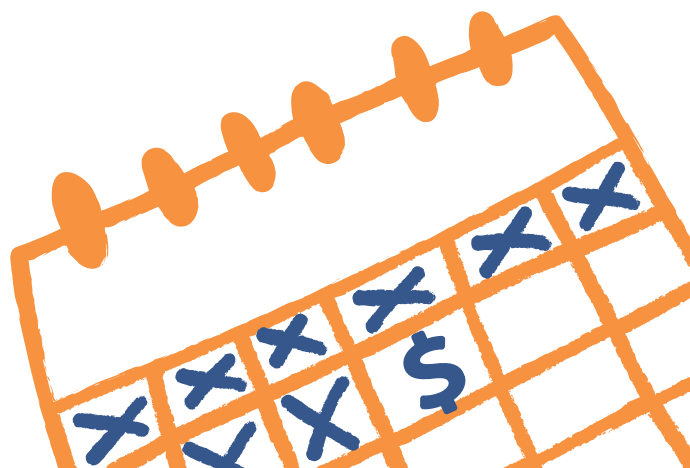
- casual workers on holiday and working visas,
- international students,
- skilled visa holders,
- seasonal workers,
- New Zealand citizens and all refugee and temporary protection visa holders.

## How to apply:

1. Check the eligibility criteria.
2. Negotiate a rent reduction agreement with your agent, lessor or landlord.
3. Complete the declaration as proof of the rent reduction agreement.
4. Once these steps have been completed, you can apply online at: <https://rentrelief.covid19.dhhs.vic.gov.au/>.

## For more information:

<https://www.housing.vic.gov.au/help-renting/rentrelief>



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## Where can renters go for support to negotiate a rental reduction?

**Tenancy Assistance and Advocacy Program (TAAP):** TAAP agencies help Victorian renters in a private rental agreement, to understand their renting rights and obligations and resolve renting disputes. The agencies provide a range of services, including information and referral to other services, negotiation with rental providers or real estate agents, and assistance in preparing for and attending hearings at the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT).

To contact your local TAAP agency, call:  
Bayside Peninsula/Southern Melbourne -  
*Peninsula Community Legal Centre: 9783 3600*

Brimbank Melton - *Uniting Lentara: 9351 3600*

Hume Moreland - *Uniting Lentara: 9351 3601*

Inner Eastern Melbourne - *Uniting Harrison: 9051 3000*

North Eastern Melbourne - *Uniting Kildonan: 1800 002 992*

Outer Eastern Melbourne - *Uniting Wesley: 8870 4020*

Western Melbourne - *Westjustice: 9749 7720*

Goulburn - *Beyond Housing: 5833 1000*

Inner Gippsland - *Quantum Support Services: 5120 2000*

Website:

<https://www.consumer.vic.gov.au/clubs-and-fundraising/funded-services-and-grants/tenancy-program-2021-24/tenancy-assistance-and-advocacy-program>

**Tenants Victoria:** Tenants Victoria has a page dedicated to explaining the 2021 rent relief grants. This includes letter templates to negotiate a rental reduction with a real estate agent or rental provider.

Renter advice line: **(03) 9416 2577**

Monday to Friday 10.00 am – 2.00 pm

Calls are answered by lawyers, advocates and intake workers with specialist knowledge of Victorian rental laws.

(Approximate waiting time is over 30 minutes).

Website:

<https://tenantsvic.org.au/advice/covid-19-information/rent-relief-grants/>

**Justice Connect:** Justice Connect has a tool called **Dear Landlord** which is a free online self-help tool to help guide renters who are behind on rent or worried about falling behind. The tool can assist renters in writing a letter to their landlord, as well as help renters understand the general legal processes around renting.

Website:

<https://justiceconnect.org.au/help/dear-landlord/>

Alternatively, you can access a CISVic member agency for support.

To find your nearest agency go to:

<https://www.cisvic.org.au/find-your-local-agency>

