



Hon. Minister Luke Donellan MP
Ministerial Office
Level 22,
50 Lonsdale Street,
Melbourne, VIC 3000
Luke.donnellan@parliament.vic.gov.au

24 March 2020

Dear Minister Donellan

Re: Community Information & Support Services – an essential service.

Our local centres deliver information, referral and support services including emergency relief (ER) across 60 sites. We have contact with over half a million Victorians each year. They are place-based, generalist services that are deeply embedded and trusted by the local community.

We deliver of \$2 million annually of federally funded Emergency Relief. Others sources of ER include local donations, philanthropy, Foodbank, FareShare & Second Bite. Our ER programs assist people with food, food vouchers, household bills, medical bills, transport and education costs.

Our local services deliver a range of other support services including financial counselling, No Interest Loans, personal counselling, youth services and settlement programs.

All local centres are committed to continuity of service. Over the last week, all implemented social distancing policies and procedures and some closed the doors for face-to-face delivery, offering service over the phone. ER was delivered by parcels, digital vouchers, or direct EFT payment.

We consider our centres as delivering *ESSENTIAL SERVICES* and would like State Government to affirm this.

Please feel free to contact me via phone (0407 670 125) or email (kate@cisvic.org.au) should you require any additional information.

Kind regards

Kate Wheller
Executive Officer

Community Information & Support Victoria