



DROUGHT SUPPORT

Guide to Services in Victoria

for individuals, families and farmers

Personal Assistance

Initiative/Service	Description	Eligibility/Available to	Timings	More information
Education Maintenance Allowance	Assistance with education costs for eligible low-income families	Families	Ongoing	Contact your child's school or visit www.education.vic.gov.au/management/financial/ema
Kindergarten Concessions	Assistance with kindergarten costs for eligible low-income families	Families	Ongoing	Contact your child's kinder or call the Department of Education and Early Child Development on 1300 731 947
Victorian State Concessions	Assistance with essential services such as housing, water, energy, health, education and transport	Eligible Commonwealth Concession Card holders. Assistance with paying utility bills is available to low income households registered with a utility company's hardship program	Ongoing	Call the Concessions Information Line on 1800 658 521 or visit www.cyf.vic.gov.au/concessions
Hardship Relief	Assistance for people are having difficulties paying utility bills and repairing household appliances due to temporary financial crisis	Households and individuals holding an eligible Commonwealth Concession Card	Ongoing	Call the Concessions Information Line on 1800 658 521
Family Support	Assistance for families affected by drought	Families	Ongoing	Call the Salvation Army on 03 5441 7959
Emergency Relief	Emergency food relief and a range of services such as assistance with back to school costs	Individuals and families	Ongoing	Call the Drought Information Line on 136 186 or visit www.dpi.vic.gov.au/drought

Emotional Support

Initiative/Service	Description	Eligibility/Available to	Timings	More information
Lifeline	24/7 telephone counselling – Connect with someone who cares	Individuals and families	Ongoing	Call 13 11 14 or visit www.lifeline.org.au
Mensline Australia	24/7 service for men with relationship and family concerns	Men	Ongoing	Call 1300 78 99 78 or visit www.menslineaus.org.au
Kids Help Line	24/7 telephone and online counselling service for young people	Children	Ongoing	Call 1800 55 1800 or visit www.kidshelp.com.au
Family Relationship Service	Providing families with access to information about family relationship issues	Individuals and families	Ongoing	Call 1800 050 321 or visit www.familyrelationships.gov.au
beyondblue	Provides information about issues associated with depression and anxiety	Individuals and families	Ongoing	Call 1300 224 636 or visit www.beyondblue.org.au
Counselling services	Social and emotional support	Individuals and families	Ongoing	Contact your local doctor, Community Health Service, local council or local drought worker. If you require help in contacting any of the above, call the Drought Information Line on 136 186

Farm Support

Initiative/Service	Description	Eligibility/Available to	Timings	More information
Rebate for fixed water charges	The rebate for fixed water charges will automatically be deducted from your water bill	Irrigators who received less than 30% of their normal entitlement at 1 December 2008	Available to 30 June 2009	Contact your local Water Authority. For contact details call the Drought Information Line on 136 186 or visit www.dpi.vic.gov.au/drought
On-Farm Productivity Improvement Grants	Grants for fixed on-farm productivity improvements	Farm businesses in the 25 most drought-affected councils plus Bacchus Marsh/Werribee irrigation districts	Apply by 31 March 2009	Call Rural Finance on 03 5448 2600 or visit www.ruralfinance.com.au
CMA Drought Employment Program	Employment for those directly affected by drought to protect assets on public and private land	Farmers and farm workers	Available to 30 June 2009	Contact your local Catchment Management Authority. For contact details call the Drought Information Line on 136 186 or visit www.dpi.vic.gov.au/drought
Professional Advice and Planning Grants	Grants of up to \$5,500 for professional drought management and recovery advice	Farm businesses in EC areas	Apply by 12 June 2009	Call Centrelink on 13 23 16 or visit www.centrelink.gov.au
Climate Change Adjustment Program Advice and Training Grant	Grants of up to \$5,500 for specialised professional advice and training to assist farmers to adjust to the impacts of climate change	Farm businesses in EC areas	Apply by 12 June 2009	Call Centrelink on 13 23 16 or visit www.centrelink.gov.au
Irrigation Management Grants	Grants of up to \$20,000 to implement water management strategies	Eligible irrigators who draw water from the Murray-Darling Basin	Expressions of interest by 31 March 2009	Call the Murray Darling Basin Assistance and Referral Line on 1800 050 015 or visit www.centrelink.gov.au
Municipal Rate Subsidy	Subsidies of up to 50% on municipal rates for eligible farming families	Farm businesses who receive Emergency Payments or EC Relief Payments between 1 April 08 and 1 June 09	Relevant dates depend on eligibility	Contact your local council. For contact details call the Drought Information Line on 136 186 or visit www.dpi.vic.gov.au/drought
EC Income Support	Relief payments for eligible farmers in EC declared areas	Farm businesses in EC areas	Dependent on the EC status of your area	Call Centrelink on 13 23 16 or visit www.centrelink.gov.au
EC Business Assistance	Interest rate subsidies	Farm businesses in EC declared areas	Dependent on the EC status of your area	Call Rural Finance on 03 5448 2600 or visit www.ruralfinance.com.au
Farming Advice	Advice and information to assist farmers affected by drought and low water availability, as well as a broad range of agricultural issues	Farm businesses	Ongoing	Call the Drought Information Line on 136 186 or visit www.dpi.vic.gov.au/drought

Farm Support (continued)

Initiative/Service	Description	Eligibility/Available to	Timings	More information
Ag Futures	Information to assist farming communities to make sense of changes that will effect agriculture in the future	Farm businesses	Ongoing	Call the Drought Information Line on 136 186 or visit www.dpi.vic.gov.au/drought
Financial Counselling	Free and independent financial advice for communities	Everyone	Ongoing	Call 1800 686 175 to speak a local counselor from the Rural Financial Counselling Service or visit www.rfcs.gov.au
Water Resources	Up-to-date information on Victoria's water resources	Everyone	Ongoing	Contact your local Water Authority. For contact details call the Drought Information Line on 136 186 or visit www.dpi.vic.gov.au/drought
EC Exit Grant	Up to \$150,000 for eligible farmers leaving the sector	Farmers in EC areas who sell their farm enterprise	An EC Exit Grant application must be lodged by 30 June 2009	Call Centrelink on 13 23 16 or visit www.centrelink.gov.au
Climate Change Adjustment Plan – Transitional Income Support	Financial support for eligible farmers who have a farm in area that is no longer EC declared	Farmers who meet criteria based on the previous 2 years of operations and who no longer qualify for EC Income Support	The payment is available until 30 June 2009	Call Centrelink on 13 23 16 or visit www.centrelink.gov.au
Climate Change Adjustment Plan – Re-Establishment Grant	Up to \$150,000 for eligible farmers leaving the sector	Farmers who sell their farm enterprise which is in an area that is no longer EC declared	Re-Establishment Grant application must be lodged by 30 June 2009	Call Centrelink on 13 23 16 or visit www.centrelink.gov.au

For information relating to Exceptional Circumstances (EC) contact the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food on 13 23 16 or visit www.daff.gov.au/agriculture-food/drought/ec

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The information within this guide may be subject to change. Updates of this document can be accessed at www.dpi.vic.gov.au/drought or if you do not have access to the internet, please call the Drought Information Line on 136 186.

Each of the services or assistance listed in this guide has some accompanying contact details listed and this should be the first point of communication. General information on any drought related service or assistance is available from the Drought Information Line on 136 186 or at www.dpi.vic.gov.au/drought

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Drought related information is available in languages other than English. Anyone requiring help in understanding information in this guide should contact the Drought Information Line on 136 186.

If you would like to receive this information/publication in an accessible format (such as large print or audio) please call the Customer Service Centre on: 136 186, TTY: 1800 122 969, or email customer.service@dpi.vic.gov.au