

Fact sheet for Business

Key contacts

Business Enterprise Centre - 8923 6133

Chamber of Commerce NT - 8982 8188

Department of Trade, Business and Innovation - 1800 193 111

National advice hotline - 1800 020 080

National debt helpline - 1800 007 007

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Visit coronavirus.nt.gov.au and nt.gov.au/industry/support-for-business

Practicing **good hygiene** and keeping a **healthy physical distance** between individuals is our most powerful weapon in fighting this virus and saving lives

Social distancing measures

The expert health advice says gathering outdoors should be limited to two people, except for your household. This won't be enforced in the NT at this stage.

Facilities that cannot open (Stage 1 and 2):

- Pubs, hotels, registered and licenced clubs except to:
 - sell food or beverages for people to take-away
 - provide hotel or motel accommodation (room service is also allowed)
- Gyms, including yoga and barre, indoor sporting venues
- Cinemas, entertainment venues, casinos, and night clubs
- Restaurants, cafes and food courts will be restricted to takeaway and/or home delivery
- Auction houses
- Real estate auctions and open house inspections (private appointments are permitted)
- Beauty therapy, tanning, waxing, nail salons, tattoo parlours
- Spas and massage parlours
- Amusement parks and arcades
- Play centres (indoor and outdoor)
- Community and recreation centres (facilities may remain open for essential voluntary or public services, such as food banks or homeless services)
- Boot camps and personal training (can continue outside only if limited to groups of no more than 10 people and social distancing must be exercised)

- Social sporting-based activities and swimming pools
- Galleries, museums, national institutions and historic sites
- Libraries, community centres, and youth centres
- Local government non-essential facilities and services (such as libraries and pools)
- Community facilities (such as community halls, clubs, RSLs)
- Places of worship, weddings and funerals except:
 - Weddings with no more than 5 people and the 1 person per 4 square metre rule applies
 - Funerals with no more than 10 people and the 1 person per 4 square metre rule applies. Limited exceptions (i.e. if there are more than 10 immediate family members).

These measures also apply to outdoor spaces associated with the above venues.

Other restrictions and measures

- Where possible, keep 1.5 metres between yourself and others
- Avoid non-essential travel and non-essential gatherings of groups of people at home or in public
- Restrictions on visiting aged care homes, prisons and hospitals
- Public bus travel is now free across the Territory's and additional measures are in place on-board

Hairdressers

- Continue to operate, noting the 4sqm rule per person must be strictly observed and personal contact should be minimised

Childcare

The Government has announced the Early Childhood Education and Care Relief Package that gives families fee relief while supporting child care services to keep their doors open and employees in their jobs.

<https://www.dese.gov.au/news/coronavirus-covid-19#early>

JobKeeper payment

If your business has been significantly impacted by the Coronavirus you will be able to access a wages subsidy to continue paying your employees. Under the JobKeeper program, you will be able to claim a fortnightly payment of \$1,500 per eligible employee from 30 March 2020, for a maximum of six months.

Find out more at - <https://treasury.gov.au/coronavirus/businesses>

Commercial and residential tenancies

National Cabinet agreed to a moratorium on evictions over the next six months for commercial and residential tenancies in financial distress who are unable to meet their commitments due to the impact of coronavirus.

Commercial tenants, landlords and financial institutions are encouraged to sit down together to find a way through to ensure that businesses can survive and be there on the other side.

Border restrictions

International

There is a ban on Australians travelling overseas and significant restrictions on who can travel to Australia.

Coming into the Territory

Strict border controls apply in the Northern Territory (NT) for all access points by road, rail, air and sea.

If you are a non-essential traveller arriving at a Northern Territory border, you must self-quarantine for 14 days unless your situation is covered by an exemption category.

You must be able to prove you are an essential traveller before you will be granted an exemption from self-quarantine.

This will not impact the delivery of essential goods and services.

Food and freight including petrol will continue.

Rules for fly-in fly-out (FIFO) workers

If you are a Territory resident FIFO worker and believe you fall into one of the essential traveller categories, you can apply for exemption.

Further information is available by phoning call 1800 518 189 or visiting <https://coronavirus.nt.gov.au/community-advice/border-controls>

Remote

Remote communities in the Northern Territory are closed to all non-essential travel.

Find out more including exceptions for pastoral properties and mines at - <https://coronavirus.nt.gov.au/community-advice/remote-communities/travel>

Queries can be directed to the Remote Travel Hotline 1800 518 189 or remote.travel@nt.gov.au

Roadhouses

The Australian Health Protection Principal Committee (AHPPC) and the National Cabinet have approved an exemption for roadhouses, dedicated truck stop facilities and truck driver lounges to remain open so Australia's heavy vehicle drivers have access to showers, restrooms and facilities to undertake their mandated fatigue management breaks. Social distancing and hygiene requirements remain.

What happens if you don't comply?

There are penalties of up to \$62,800 for failure to comply with the new [COVID-19 directions](#).

You can report non-compliance to the Police hotline on 131444.

Help for business

Further details - <https://nt.gov.au/industry/support-for-business/programs-and-initiatives>

Deferred business loan repayments

All Australian banks will defer loan repayments for small businesses affected by COVID-19 for six months. Contact your bank to apply.

Boosting cash flow

Small business can claim back 100% of tax withheld to a maximum of \$50,000. Between July and October you can make a second claim, making the assistance available up to \$100,000. Any organisations that don't withhold tax, can recover a minimum payment of \$10,000.

Temporary relief from financial distress

Threshold for when a creditor can issue a statutory demand on a company has been increased from \$2000 to \$20,000. The timeframe to respond to that demand is extended from 21 days to six months.

The minimum amount of debt for a creditor to initiate bankruptcy proceedings against a debtor will increase from \$5,000 to \$20,000 and the timeframe for response also extended to six months. Read more.

Directors will be exempt from personal liability for trading while insolvent for six months. Directors will still need to manage their general duties including to act in the best interest of the corporation and with due care and diligence, during these extremely trying times.

Resource from the Australian Institute of Company Directors - [Getting through the coronavirus financial downturn: a guide for directors](#)

The Banking Association has information and details of the support offered by their member banks - <https://www.ausbanking.org.au/campaigns/financial-hardship/>

Supporting the flow of credit

A guarantee of 50% to small business lenders for new unsecured loans for working capital. You can borrow up to \$250,000 for up to three years with an initial six month repayment holiday.

Apprentices and trainees

Registrations are open for small businesses to apply for a 50 per cent wage subsidy of their apprentice's or trainee's wage from 1 January to 30 September 2020. Call 8935 8200 for direct support and advice.

Tourism operators

Tourism NT have partnered with KPMG to deliver immediate and targeted business support to tourism operators. The program provides two hours of dedicated, confidential support from qualified KPMG consultants. Find out more - <https://www.tourismnt.com.au/industry-toolkit/grants-and-funding/current-programs/kpmg-business-support>

NT Jobs Rescue and Recovery package

For more detail and to apply visit- <https://businessrecovery.nt.gov.au/businesses>

Home Improvement Scheme - \$30 million

The scheme will help fast track around 5,000 screwdriver-ready projects in Territory homes. This means that projects are physical improvements to land and/or buildings, and repairs and maintenance services.

Applications for homeowners open 6 April 2020.

Business Improvement Grant - \$20 million

Territory businesses will be able to access a \$10,000 grant, followed by an additional \$10,000 grant if they contribute \$10,000.

Businesses can apply for a grant from 13 April 2020.

Immediate Works Grant - \$5 million

Grants of up to \$100,000 will help not-for-profit and community organisations to engage local businesses to do repairs, renovations and upgrades to their property and facilities.

Grant applications open 20 April 2020.

Tradies and contractors

If you are a NT tradie or contractor, you can apply now to supply goods and services to businesses, not-for-profits and home owners under these three schemes. You only need to register once to participate in all three - <https://businessrecovery.nt.gov.au/tradie-contractor>

Note that solar PV panels and solar PV install is excluded from the Home Improvement Scheme, Business Improvement Grant and Immediate Work Grant eligible works. Inverter upgrades, batteries and other electrical work that supports energy efficiency are eligible works under these programs. Solar hot water systems are also eligible works under these programs.

Small Business Survival Fund - \$50 million

This fund is specifically targeted at supporting industries such as retail, hospitality, tourism and entertainment businesses.

Eligible businesses will be able to apply for two payments:

- an immediate survival payment of between \$2,000 and \$50,000 to help offset the immediate cost pressures on businesses
- a rapid adaption payment of between \$1,000 and \$5,000 to help businesses make the necessary changes it needs to help adapt to the new operating environment.

Creative industries and sport

Further details - <https://dtsc.nt.gov.au/covid-19-information-for-stakeholders>

Creative industries sector immediate response and resilience program - \$2 million

A funding program to support the Arts, Creative and Screen Industry sector with a focus on artists, arts groups and not for profit arts organisations. The package includes:

- **Indigenous Visual Arts Industry Support Program** - \$200,000 to Indigenous visual arts peak bodies, Desert and Arnhem Northern Kimberley Artists, to support Aboriginal art centres, artists and arts workers.
- **Digital Adaptation Program** - \$200,000 to assist artists and organisations publicly showcase their work, and derive revenue via digital programs.
- **Channel NT Virtual Territory** – a new initiative to further connect with the broader community through digital channels showcasing Territory artists existing and new content online.
- **Territory Arts Project** – a new grant to support existing and emerging artists create new artist works and skills development.
- **Screen Industry Support and Content Development Program** - \$1 million to deliver three new rounds of the Screen Industry Support and Content Development grant programs.

Sport and Active Recreation Sector Immediate Response and Resilience program - \$1.3 million

A reprioritised funding program to support the sport and recreation sector including:

- **Online Accreditation Training** - to support volunteers and staff from peak bodies, to complete the online accreditation course component from beginner level and up across coaching, officiating and sports training. These courses are typically available through national sporting organisations.
- **Online Activity Programs And Classes** – to support active recreation providers develop and deliver online programs targeting skill and fitness development classes for people staying home. Funding is available to purchase equipment necessary to film sessions and basic IT equipment required to manage online delivery as well as wages of staff delivering the content. Purchases must be from NT businesses.
- **Funding To Assist In Watering Fields And Ovals And To Offset Fixed Sewerage Costs** - organisations that are eligible to apply for Department of Tourism, Sport and Culture grants will be able to apply for funding to assist with the costs associated with turf surface watering and fixed sewerage costs.
- **Remote Community Activities** - grants will be provided to regional councils to support communities with the purchase of sport and recreation equipment and employment of local people to deliver sport and recreation activities. Any equipment purchased must be from NT businesses.

If you are out of work

Job seeker allowance

If you don't have a job you can access the Job Seeker (Newstart) Allowance of \$550 per fortnight.

From 27 April you can also access an additional Coronavirus allowance of \$550 per fortnight if you receive the Jobseeker, Youth and Farm Household allowances, Parenting Payment and Special Benefits.

There will be removal of some requirements, reduced means testing and waiving of waiting times.

<https://www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/individuals/news/more-financial-support-people-affected-coronavirus>

Access your super

You can access up to \$10,000 from your superannuation balance before 30 June, and up to \$10,000 between July and October.

<https://www.ato.gov.au/individuals/super/withdrawing-and-using-your-super/early-access-to-your-super/?anchor=Compassionategrounds#Compassionategrounds>

Territory Jobs Hub

Free for employers and employees. Easy to participate online - <https://business.nt.gov.au/jobs-hub>

Apprentices and trainees

Call 8935 8200 for direct support and advice.

Visa holders

The Commonwealth Government Department of Home Affairs is actively reviewing working hours and other requirements for working visa holders including Skilled Migration workers. Some information available at: <https://www.homeaffairs.gov.au/news-media/current-alerts/novel-coronavirus>

Visa holders who are on permanent visas (e.g. holders of Regional Sponsored Migration Scheme subclass 187, Skilled Regional Nominated sc190) are eligible for Centrelink payments such as the Job Seeker Allowance. Some waiting periods have been waived.

Temporary sponsored employees (i.e. holders of subclass 457 and Temporary Skill Shortage Visa subclass 482) have conditions on their visas requiring them to be employed with their sponsoring employer in the nominated occupation. The maximum number of days that they can be unemployed is 60 days, before they will be in breach of their visa conditions. Being in breach of these conditions can result in visa cancellation. However, the decision to cancel visas is discretionary, the Department of Home Affairs may exercise some lenience in situations where temporary visa holders have lost jobs due to the COVID-19 crisis.

Sponsored workers can take approved unpaid leave for up to 12 months without breaching their visa conditions.

Support and advice

Independent advice

Access to 4 hours of free and independent advice is available to directly help business.

Territory businesses can contact either the [Business Enterprise Centre NT](#) or the [Chamber of Commerce NT](#) to access independent and expert advisors on:

- Health and wellbeing
- Business strategy and managing through tough times
- Finance, accounting, bookkeeping and insurance
- Legal matters including intellectual property and contracts
- Web, ecommerce, social media and marketing

Co-contribution requirements are waived for all NT Government [Business Growth programs](#). You can [contact a small business champion](#) to find out which program is best for you.

Advice for employers

You can [contact the Chamber of Commerce NT](#) to receive free advice from expert advisors free of charge, even if you are not a member. [A guide for employers](#) is also available.

Call the Chamber of Commerce NT Hotline on 8982 8188 or the Business Enterprise Centre on 8923 6133.

The mental health of you and your staff

You can always ask for help when you need it.

<p>Mental health and counselling</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Northern Territory Mental Health Line 1800 682 288 • Lifeline 13 11 14 • Beyond Blue 1300 22 46 36 • Mensline Australia 1300 789 978 • EASA Counselling, Training, Mediation and Consulting 1800 193 123 • Catholic Care NT 8944 2000 <p>Help in other languages</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS) - call 13 14 50 and ask to speak to Lifeline 	<p>Parenting support</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FACES hotline 1800 999 900 • Parentline Queensland and the Northern Territory 1300 301 300 <p>Aid and support</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Australian Red Cross (NT Division) 8924 3904 • Somerville Community Services 8920 4100 • Foodbank NT 8947 3669 • Anglicare NT 8985 0000
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Find out more at: nt.gov.au/wellbeing/mental-health