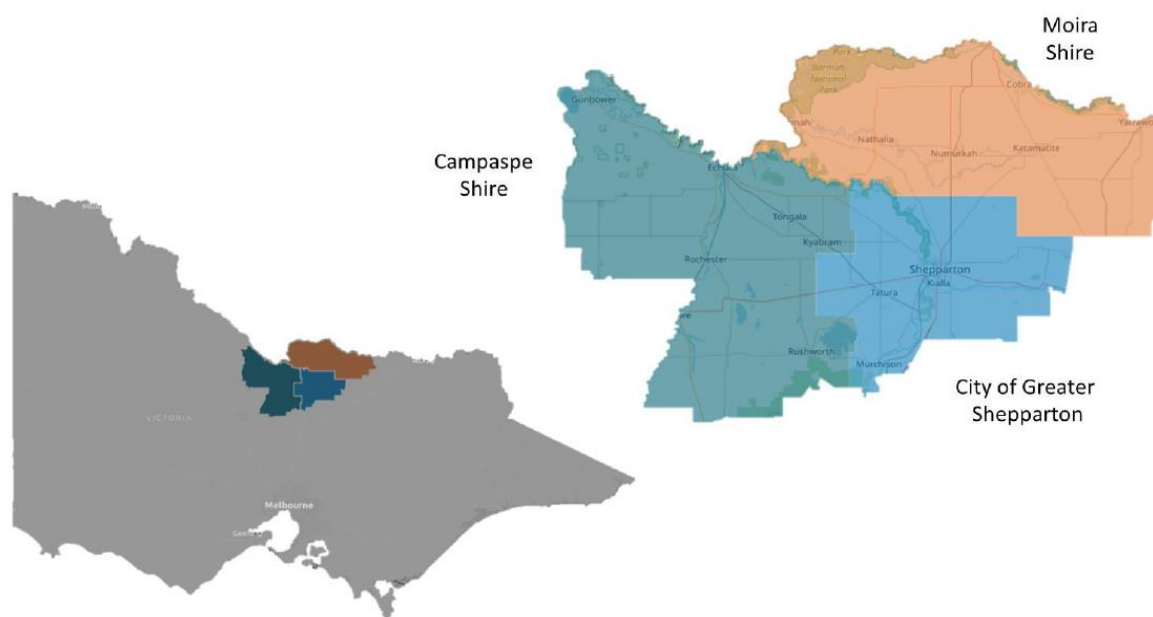


VICTORIA'S GOULBURN VALLEY SETTLEMENT GUIDE

OUR GOULBURN VALLEY REGION

Our Designated Area, **Goulburn Valley** Region is located in the heart of Victoria. The region is made up of [Greater Shepparton](#), [Moir](#) and [Campaspe](#).



WELCOME TO THE GOULBURN VALLEY REGION OF VICTORIA

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE This guide has been developed to work best on electronic devices (computer, laptop, iPad) with access to the internet, as it has many links to external websites. If you do not have your own computer or device, your nearest library can provide you with access to one.

DISCLAIMER:

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VICTORIA'S GOULBURN VALLEY REGION

Contents

OUR GOULBURN VALLEY REGION	1
HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE.....	1
OUR GOULBURN VALLEY REGION POPULATION AND ENVIRONMENT WEATHER	4
OUR ECONOMY	5
TRANSPORTATION	5
DRIVER'S LICENCE	5
ACCOMMODATION	5
EDUCATION	6
UNIVERSITY / TERTIARY EDUCATION IN THE GOULBURN VALLEY	6
BANKING	7
SHOPPING	7
PARKS, SPORT, RECREATION AND LEISURE.....	7
ENTERTAINMENT FESTIVALS & EVENTS.....	7
RELIGIOUS CONTACTS.....	8
COMMUNICATION SERVICES	8
PHONES – MAKING CALLS TO AND FROM AUSTRALIA	8
COMPUTER ACCESS.....	8
LIBRARIES	9
EMERGENCY SERVICES / CONTACTS	9
IMPORTANT AND EMERGENCY TELEPHONE NUMBERS	9
HEALTH AND WELFARE SERVICES / MEDICAL SERVICES.....	10
FINDING A FAMILY DOCTOR	10
ROUTINE HEALTH CONCERN	10
MEDICAL EMERGENCIES	10
TELEPHONE HEALTH INFORMATION AND ADVICE SERVICES	10
HOSPITALS.....	11
PRIVATE HEALTH INSURANCE	11
MEDICARE	11
COUNSELLING AND SUPPORT SERVICES.....	11
DOMESTIC OR FAMILY VIOLENCE	11
WORKPLACE ISSUES	12
SAFETY IN THE WORKPLACE	12
PAYING TAX.....	12

VICTORIA'S GOULBURN VALLEY REGION

SUPERANNUATION	13
EMPLOYMENT / CAREER	13
RECRUITMENT AGENCIES	13
LAWS & LEGAL ADVICE	13
LEGAL ISSUES – MIGRATION	14
TRANSLATING AND INTERPRETING SERVICES.....	14
VISA RELATED MATTERS	14
WORKING IN AUSTRALIA	15
EMPLOYEE RIGHTS	15
Visa holders and migrant workers – workplace rights and entitlements	19

VICTORIA'S GOULBURN VALLEY REGION

OUR GOULBURN VALLEY REGION POPULATION AND ENVIRONMENT WEATHER

GREATER SHEPPARTON [Map](#) [has a population of 68,522](#). Greater Shepparton is a vibrant, diverse community located approximately two hours north of Melbourne in the heart of the Goulburn Valley, the food bowl of Australia. Offering all the amenities to suit almost any lifestyle there are fantastic shopping outlets, a variety of restaurants and eateries for all tastes, and a range of social and recreational activities. There is an extensive shared bicycle/walking path network to explore, sporting clubs, theatre companies, shows and events, social activities and much more to discover. Greater Shepparton has rich agriculture, history and heritage, arts and culture and family friendly activities and attractions.

MOIRA Shire has a [population of 30,351](#) Moira is a vibrant and progressive regional municipal in which to live, work and invest. The region is supported by industries such as agriculture, horticulture, food manufacturing, commercial manufacturing, transport to name a few and is strategically positioned only two and a half hours from Melbourne and surrounded by other major regional centres. Blessed with copious amounts of sunshine during all seasons, the Moira Shire region is affectionately known as Sun Country on the Murray. We're fortunate enough to have access to the Murray, Ovens and Goulburn rivers as well as Lake Mulwala. Whatever it is you like to do, you will find an attraction or activity to suit. Golf, water sports, adventure, fun, relaxing, art, fine food, wine and nature at its best, it's all here just waiting to be discovered and explored, making it one of the best year-round holiday destinations in Australia.

CAMPASPE Shire has a [population of 38,545](#), is located at the heart of one of the richest and most diverse agriculture and food processing regions in Victoria. Campaspe is a vibrant rural community in northern Victoria. It comprises of many townships including: Echuca, Kyabram, Rochester, Rushworth, and Tongala. Campaspe is best known for its history and natural assets, including Australia's iconic Murray River, which winds along the shire's northern boundary. The unique mix of great weather, culture, food and wine, natural beauty and events attracts growing numbers of people to Campaspe every year. Major features of the Shire include the Campaspe, Murray and Goulburn Rivers, the Port of Echuca, Echuca paddle steamers and river cruises, Port of Echuca Discovery Centre, National Holden Motor Museum, Kyabram Fauna Park, Rochester Sports Museum, The Great Aussie Beer Shed & Heritage Farm Museum, Whroo Historic Reserve (including the Balaclava open cut mine), Lockington & District Living Heritage Complex, Bendigo TAFE (Echuca Campus), Torrumbarry Weir, Waranga Basin, Lake Cooper, Gunbower Island, Wallenjoe Wetlands, several state forests and various wineries.

More information on Victoria's weather can be found here.

The [Bureau of Meteorology](#) is Australia's national weather, climate and water agency and provides timely updates and warnings during times of drought, floods, fires, storms, tsunami and tropical cyclones. [Elders Weather](#) and [weather.com.au](#) provide state and regional weather forecasts, current conditions.



VICTORIA'S GOULBURN VALLEY REGION

OUR ECONOMY

Campaspe Shire Council's [Gross Regional Product](#) is estimated at \$1.86 billion, which represents 0.39% of the state's Gross State Product (GSP).

Moira Shire Council's [Gross Regional Product](#) was \$1.767 billion as of 30 June 2021.

Greater Shepparton City Council's [Gross Regional Product](#) is estimated at \$3.54 billion which represents 0.75% of the state's Gross State Production (GSP).

TRANSPORTATION

Public Transport Victoria ([PTV](#)) and VicRoads came together with the Department of Transport to create a properly integrated transport department — in step with other global cities.

Victoria's passenger rail service is operated by [VLine](#). Services run to Melbourne daily from most Goulburn Valley regional towns. Bus services often provide a link to rail services. It is advisable to book your travel. Travel timetables and bookings are available through the VLine website.

An efficient public bus service runs in major towns, taxis and hire cars are widely available. Public transport services are designed to meet the needs of the general public, students, students with special needs, seniors and the mobility impaired

DRIVER'S LICENCE

To drive legally throughout Australia, the Goulburn Valley and in Victoria you must obtain a driver's licence. Vic Roads <https://www.vicroads.vic.gov.au/> provides driver licensing services throughout Victoria. For further information on licensing and motor vehicle registration, call 13 11 71, 8am–5.30pm Monday–Friday and 8.30am–12.30pm Saturday +61 3 8391 3216 (international).

ACCOMMODATION

New overseas workers must prepare themselves for entering the property market by conducting their own research. It is recommended you research the cost of housing in the town or area where you will be living before you move to the Goulburn Valley region. Two websites that contain relevant information on the housing market are <https://www.realestate.com.au/> and <https://www.domain.com.au/>.

It is common for new migrant arrivals to first rent a unit, apartment or house while familiarising themselves with their new environment, including the surrounding townships. The latest Real Estate Institute of Victoria ([REIV](#)) rental and median house price data from September 2022 is shown in Table 1 and 2.

TABLE 1 - AVERAGE WEEKLY RENTAL COSTS

AVERAGE WEEKLY RENTAL COSTS	2 BEDROOM	3 BEDROOM	4 BEDROOM
Goulburn Valley Region	\$330	\$390	\$460

TABLE 2 - MEDIAN SALE PRICE HOUSE

MEDIAN SALE PRICE - HOUSE	2 BEDROOM	3 BEDROOM	4 BEDROOM
Goulburn Valley Region	\$440,000	\$531,000	\$722,500



VICTORIA'S GOULBURN VALLEY REGION

REIV provides research and well-informed advice on a range of issues affecting the Victorian property market. You can find a list of real estate agents on the REIV website, which can assist with renting or purchasing accommodation throughout the Goulburn Valley.

You need to be aware that if you intend to rent, you may be asked to supply reference documents to the owner or agent. Owners and agents will request these documents to assist them in assessing your ability to pay the rent and ability to take care of the property in accordance with the terms of the lease contract you will be asked to sign. Examples of reference documents may include:

- Verification of employment
- Verification of income
- Reference from an employer or fellow staff member
- Reference from a neighbour/teacher/business person/doctor/accountant
- Photo identification - driver's licence/passport/student ID
- Three personal references - these should not be from relatives
- Last gas/electricity/phone bill or rates notice
- Copy of a bank statement
- Registration number of a vehicle
- Last address

Migrants without a history of renting in Australia may not have the above documents. In such cases it is important that migrants anticipate the need to explain their situation to real estate agents and gather together alternative proof of their ability to pay the rent (references from a previous overseas landlord, Australian bank statements, references from friends and relatives in Australia etc.)

[Tenants Victoria](#) operates a Tenants Help Line that can be contacted on 03 9416 2577

The Tenants Help Line is a free and confidential information and basic advice service.

EDUCATION

There are numerous government and private schools across the Goulburn Valley region. School is compulsory for children aged between 6 and 17 years. To attend a government school in Victoria, your child must be five years old by 30 April of the year they start school. Non-compulsory preschool programs are available for children turning 4 by 30 June each year.

A full list of government, Catholic and independently operated schools may be found on the Victorian Government Department of Education and Training's website at: <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/>

If you are an overseas worker in the Goulburn Valley region on a Temporary Skill Shortage (TSS) Subclass 482 visa or Skilled Regional (Provisional) Subclass 494 visa, your dependents can access primary and secondary schooling in government schools for free. Public primary schools (state schools) are fully government-funded and free to attend. However, you are usually asked to pay a voluntary school levy per student per year. You will also need to pay for uniforms, some books and extra-curricular subjects and activities such as excursions.

Fees for private schooling vary widely. Check fees and other costs with individual education providers.

UNIVERSITY / TERTIARY EDUCATION IN THE GOULBURN VALLEY

La Trobe University regional@latrobe.edu.au

University of Melbourne (Shepparton Campus) <https://www.unimelb.edu.au/>

Bendigo TAFE (Echuca Campus) <https://www.bendigotafe.edu.au/>

GO TAFE (Shepparton / Cobram) <https://www.gotafe.vic.edu.au/>



VICTORIA'S GOULBURN VALLEY REGION

BANKING

The chart below shows the banks with branches in the Goulburn Valley region. There are others with branches only in other states, as well as some which operate exclusively online.

TABLE 3 - BANK FACILITIES IN THE REGION

BANK	WEBSITE	COBRAM	ECHUCA	NUMURKAH	SHEPPARTON	YARRAWONGA
Australia & New Zealand Bank (ANZ)	https://www.anz.com.au/	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Commonwealth Bank	https://www.commbank.com.au/	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
National Australia Bank (NAB)	https://www.nab.com.au/	✓	✓	✓		✓
Bank of Melbourne	https://www.bankofmelbourne.com.au/	✓			✓	
Bendigo Bank	https://www.bendigobank.com.au/	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Goulburn Murray Credit Union	https://www.gmcu.com.au/	✓		✓	✓	✓
Rabobank	https://www.rabobank.com.au/		✓		✓	
Westpac Banking	https://www.westpac.com.au/	✓	✓		✓	✓

SHOPPING

The larger centres including Echuca, Shepparton, Kyabram, Tatura, Numurkah, Nathalia, Cobram Yarrowonga offer some unique opportunities for shopping. Major national retailers are present across the region including, Bunnings (Hardware/Building & Gardening supplies), Harvey Norman (Furniture and electronics), Kmart (Clothes, books, homewares, sporting supplies), Target (Clothes, books, homewares, sporting supplies), Rebel Sports (Sporting goods) and Harris Scarfe (Clothes, homewares) among others.

PARKS, SPORT, RECREATION AND LEISURE

Information about clubs and groups in your community, including volunteering recreational facilities can be found here;

[Greater Shepparton Parks, Sport, Recreation & Leisure](#)

[Moirá Shire Sport and Recreation Club Directory](#)

[Campaspe Shire Recreation & Events](#)

ENTERTAINMENT FESTIVALS & EVENTS

The Goulburn Valley region boasts an array of prestigious events and festivals from sporting events, music, art and multicultural events, food and wine festivals. More events can be found here;

[Greater Shepparton Events](#)

[Moirá Shire Events](#)

[Campaspe Events](#)



VICTORIA'S GOULBURN VALLEY REGION

RELIGIOUS CONTACTS

Victoria (and the Goulburn Valley region) is a multi-ethnic, multi-religious and multicultural society. Religious freedom and mutual respect for different religions is an integral part of our shared culture. World faiths have for centuries celebrated key events or aspects of their religious tradition. These significant moments, celebrated each so differently, all converge in their shared belief in something both within and transcendent of this world.

Whatever your faith, tradition, customs, language or heritage, celebrations are a defining part of our Australian identity and history. Victoria is home to one of the most culturally diverse societies in the world, and is also amongst the fastest-growing and most diverse states in Australia. In Victoria, people practice more than 130 different faiths, they speak 260 languages other than English, over a quarter were born overseas and close to half of Victorians have at least one parent born overseas.

Discover the diversity of Victorians' celebrations by visiting the Faith Communities Council of Victoria 2018 Multi Faith Calendar and the [Calendar of Cultural and Religious Dates](#).

COMMUNICATION SERVICES

PHONES – MAKING CALLS TO AND FROM AUSTRALIA

For information on how to make international calls to and from Australia see: <http://www.idd.com.au/international-dialling-codes.php>

To make calls from our region to other parts of Australia you need to dial the following numbers before the phone number you want to ring. Please note that if you are calling another number within Victoria you do not need to add 03. Mobile phone calls made to other mobile phone number also do not require the Area Code prefix. All Australian mobile telephones begin with **04** regardless of provider.

TABLE 4 - AREA CODES FOR PHONE CALLS

Area code	Region	State or territory	Capital city
02	Central East	New South Wales, Australian Capital Territory	Sydney, Canberra
03	South East	Victoria, Tasmania	Melbourne, Hobart
04	Mobile telephones	Australia-wide	
07	North East	Queensland	Brisbane
08	Central and West	Western Australia, South Australia, Northern Territory	Perth, Adelaide, Darwin

COMPUTER ACCESS

Libraries can be a useful resource both in terms of books, but they also often have computers available for use.

Public libraries in Victoria (except the State Library) are owned and operated by the relevant council or through a regional library corporation.



VICTORIA'S GOULBURN VALLEY REGION

LIBRARIES

Libraries are no longer a place just for borrowing books. They are places where the community can access e-resources, Wifi, computers, meeting rooms, art spaces, and many diverse child, youth and adult programs. Public libraries are vibrant community hubs that provide all Victorians universal access to information. They offer a safe space for social interaction, digital connection, lifelong learning and rich cultural experiences.

EMERGENCY SERVICES / CONTACTS

The Vic Emergency website is the gateway to information on preparing for and getting through emergency situations in Victoria.

TABLE 5 - EMERGENCY SERVICES CONTACTS

EMERGENCY SERVICE	WEBSITE	CALL FOR EMERGENCY	CALL FOR NON-EMERGENCY
Victoria Police	https://www.police.vic.gov.au/	000	131 444
Victoria Police - Local Station	https://www.police.vic.gov.au/location	000	131 444
Victoria - State Emergency Service (SES)	https://www.ses.vic.gov.au/	000	132 500
Country Fire Authority (CFA)	https://www.cfa.vic.gov.au/	000	
Bureau of Meteorology (BOM)	http://www.bom.gov.au/		1300 754 389
Energy Safe Victoria (Electricity & Gas)	https://esv.vic.gov.au/	000	03 9203 9700
Water	https://www.water.vic.gov.au/water-reporting/water-in-your-region		1800 226 226
Crime Stoppers	https://www.crimestoppersvic.com.au/report-a-crime/	000	1800 333 000
Threats to National Security	https://www.nationalsecurity.gov.au/		1800 123 400

IMPORTANT AND EMERGENCY TELEPHONE NUMBERS

Triple Zero (000) is the primary national emergency number in Australia (including Victoria).

Triple Zero (000) is intended only for use in **life-threatening or time-critical emergencies**.

For calls to the State Emergency Service ([SES](#)) the Australia wide number **132 500** can be used (except for Northern territory). This number should only be used for **non-life-threatening situations**.

When you dial triple zero (000) you will be asked if your emergency requires police, ambulance or fire, and you will then be connected to the relevant service. These trained dispatchers will gather information about your situation and respond with appropriate emergency services and resources. The phone dispatcher is also able to help with information such as CPR and advice while the services are on their way.

Other relevant numbers are:

Crime Stoppers – **1800 333 000**;

Threats to national security – **1800 123 400**;

For other police information and local offices, please use the [Victorian Police Location Tracker](#)



VICTORIA'S GOULBURN VALLEY REGION

HEALTH AND WELFARE SERVICES / MEDICAL SERVICES

FINDING A FAMILY DOCTOR

A 'family doctor' will get to know your family and their health needs, and be your first contact for medical matters. These doctors are called General Practitioners or GPs. They provide general medical assistance for common illnesses and for people with chronic conditions who live at home.

Unlike some countries where it is necessary to go to the hospital to see the doctor, Australian GPs usually work from offices (surgeries) or clinics in regional cities and towns. People usually visit a doctor near to where they live. You are able to change doctors if you are not comfortable or satisfied with the service provided.

You don't need to be registered with a doctor in Australia. However, many people have a family doctor – a medical practitioner who they see for general health matters, including immunisations, prescriptions, medical certificates, health checks, mental health care and health advice. They may work in a small private clinic or practice, or in a public or private medical centre with other doctors.

You can choose which doctor or medical centre you attend. GPs are listed online and in the telephone directory under 'Medical Practitioners'. You can decide whether you want to be seen by the same doctor each time, or if you are willing to be treated by other doctors in the same centre. You may need to visit more than one practice to find your preferred family doctor. Some practices may not accept new patients. The **healthdirect** website at <https://www.healthdirect.gov.au/australian-health-services> also features a General Practice search to find your closest General Practice services.

ROUTINE HEALTH CONCERN

If you have a health concern and it is not an emergency, go to your family doctor or to a medical centre. You may need to wait before seeing a doctor. You usually need to make an appointment by telephone or online before you arrive. Make sure you are on time for your appointment.

MEDICAL EMERGENCIES

Emergency medical treatment is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week at the Emergency departments of public hospitals. Public hospitals are listed under 'Hospitals' in the White Pages and also in this guide. Emergency treatment may also be available at some medical centres and some private hospitals.

If you or someone else is dangerously ill, telephone **000** immediately and ask for an **Ambulance**. When you go to hospital, bring any medicines and your Medicare, private health insurance membership, Health Care or Pension Concession cards. If the situation is not an emergency, contact your family doctor.

TELEPHONE HEALTH INFORMATION AND ADVICE SERVICES

All states and territories have telephone health services that operate 24 hours a day, seven days a week. They provide free guidance and can direct you to local health services.

You should always try to contact your family doctor first if you have health issues. If your family doctor are unavailable, these telephone services have qualified nurses who can give you immediate



VICTORIA'S GOULBURN VALLEY REGION

professional advice. In Victoria, this service is called Nurse-On-Call and the contact number is **1300 606 024**. Find more information <https://www.health.vic.gov.au/primary-care/nurse-on-call>

HOSPITALS

All major regional towns have their own hospitals offering general inpatient, outpatient, emergency services and mental health support. Major hospital facilities across the region include:

PRIVATE HEALTH INSURANCE

If you are a holder of a provisional or temporary visa, one of your visa conditions requires you to maintain adequate health insurance for yourself and any of your dependents who accompany you to Australia. If you require treatment in a public hospital, you will NOT be covered by Australia's national health scheme (Medicare), unless your home country has a reciprocal health care arrangement and you meet the relevant requirements. Such reciprocal health care arrangements are limited to a very small number of countries.

There are two types of private health insurance - hospital policies will cover you when you go to hospital, while general treatment policies (sometimes known as ancillary or extras) cover you for ancillary treatment (e.g. dental, physiotherapy). Most health funds offer combined policies that provide a packaged cover for both hospital and general treatment services, or you can buy separate hospital and general treatment policies to 'mix and match'.

For further information, please visit the Private Health website at www.privatehealth.gov.au.

MEDICARE

The Department of Human Services (DHS) determines whether or not you are eligible for Medicare benefits. Non-citizens/PR visa holder in Australia are only eligible for Medicare if they have applied for a permanent visa (excludes Parent Visa) and they hold a valid temporary visa (includes a bridging visa). For further information on eligibility for a Medicare card and who can get it, please click [here](#).

COUNSELLING AND SUPPORT SERVICES

[Beyond Blue](#)

Provide information and support for anxiety, depression and suicide prevention for everyone in Australia. Call 1300 22 46 36

[Kids Helpline](#)

Free counselling for kids, teenagers, parents, carers, schools and teachers. Call 1800 55 18 00

[MensLine Australia](#)

Provides free counselling. Accessing it doesn't cost you anything, (other than the cost of a phone call) and you don't need a healthcare card. You don't even need a referral. Call 1300 78 99 78

DOMESTIC OR FAMILY VIOLENCE

The Department of Social Services' Family Violence Pack is available in 46 languages. This includes information on;

- [domestic and family violence](#)
- [sexual assault](#)
- [forced and early marriage](#)
- [family violence and partner visas](#)



VICTORIA'S GOULBURN VALLEY REGION

- dowry abuse
- female genital mutilation/cutting
- LGBTIQ relationships
- trafficking and slavery

1800 RESPECT – 1800 737 732 is a national sexual assault, domestic violence counselling service

RURAL FINANCIAL COUNSELLING SERVICE – 1300 834 775 Personal and Crisis Counselling

LIFELINE - 13 11 14 or Text 0477 13 11 141 is a national charity providing a service for anyone with a personal crisis with access to 24 hour crisis support and suicide prevention services

HEADSPACE - addresses the unique barriers that young people face to accessing mental health support. It provides tailored and holistic mental health support to 12 - 25 year olds, with a focus on early intervention.

WORKPLACE ISSUES

You have rights when you work in Australia. A fact sheet is available that outlines some of these rights. A copy of this fact sheet is enclosed, and is available online on the [Fair Work Ombudsman's website](#)

SAFETY IN THE WORKPLACE

WorkSafe Victoria is the occupational health and safety arm of the Victorian WorkCover Authority (VWA). It takes the lead role in the promotion and enforcement of health and safety in Victorian workplaces. VWA is the manager of Victoria's workplace safety system. Broadly, the responsibilities of the organisation include:

- helping avoid workplace injuries occurring
- enforcing Victoria's occupational health and safety laws
- helping injured workers back into the workforce
- managing the workers' compensation scheme.

VWA is responsible for assisting businesses and workers understand their obligations under work health and safety, dangerous goods, electrical safety, and rehabilitation and workers compensation in the Victoria. WorkSafe Officers are available to provide advice and information to assist in making workplaces safe. WorkSafe's phone numbers are toll-free

- Advisory service 1800 136 089
- 24/7 Emergencies 13 23 60

PAYING TAX

In Australia, tax is paid out of money you earn from a job, business or investment. The Australian Taxation Office (ATO) collects taxes from individuals and businesses to pay for important community services like hospitals, schools and roads. While you are working in Australia, your employer will automatically take out tax from each pay.

Before you start work, you should apply for a tax file number (TFN) from the ATO. If you do not have a TFN, your employer is compelled to take out the maximum amount of tax from your pay. Be sure to keep your TFN secure. Allowing someone else to use your TFN can cause serious problems for you.



VICTORIA'S GOULBURN VALLEY REGION

The Australian Taxation Office provides Information in other languages to help people from non-English speaking backgrounds understand tax and superannuation (super) in Australia.

SUPERANNUATION

Superannuation refers to the arrangements which people make in Australia to have funds available for them when they retire. Generally, workers in Australia who are 18 years old or over and paid \$450 or more (before tax) in a month are entitled to superannuation guarantee contributions from their employer. It does not matter whether the worker is a temporary resident of Australia – employers must pay superannuation.

You need to provide your tax file number (TFN) to your employer and/or superannuation fund on a tax file number declaration form. If you don't your superannuation fund may take extra tax out of your superannuation contributions. Most people can choose the superannuation fund they want their employer contributions paid into.

You may apply for a 'Departing Australia superannuation payment' (DASP) if eligible. You can claim superannuation benefits you accumulated while working in Australia if all of the following apply:

- you visited on a temporary visa (excluding visa subclasses 405 and 410)
- your visa has ceased to be in effect
- you have left Australia.

EMPLOYMENT / CAREER

The most popular places to look for jobs in the region are online searches through a number of employment search engines such as seek.com.au; careerone.com.au; indeed.com.au; moirajobslink.com.au and Local newspapers such as the [Shepparton News](#), [The Courier Cobram](#) and [Numurkah Leader](#), [Yarrawonga Chronical](#), [Red gum Courier](#) and [Riverine Herald](#)

RECRUITMENT AGENCIES

There are a large number of local recruitment agencies in the Goulburn Valley region. These agencies can assist in matching employers with jobseekers. The larger agencies in the region include [Programmed Skilled Workforce](#), [Monarch Personnel](#) and [CVGT Employment](#).

LAWS & LEGAL ADVICE

The Australian legal system has a hierarchy of the courts. While courts are an important part of the Australian justice system, there are many situations where other options for resolving a dispute will be faster, cheaper and more suitable. Visit the [Australian Government's Attorney-General's Department website](#) for more information on access to justice.

Legal advice can be sought from a number of legal firms in the Goulburn Valley region, or initial contact can be made through [Victoria Legal Aid](#) on 1300 792 387

The Law Institute of Victoria operates the Find a Lawyer Legal Referral Service. You can also call 03 9607 9550 or email referrals@liv.asn.au



VICTORIA'S GOULBURN VALLEY REGION

[Consumer Affairs Victoria](#) is an independent office within the Department of Justice and Community Safety of the Victorian Government. Its aim is to promote and regulate responsible business conduct through administration of a regulatory system that protects consumer interests. The main functions of Consumer Affairs are associated with consumer protection with the purchase of goods and services, residential tenancies and residential building disputes.

LEGAL ISSUES – MIGRATION

Only registered migration agents or migration lawyers can legally give immigration assistance in Australia. To do this, they must be listed on the Register of Migration Agents, held by the Office of the [Migration Agents Registration Authority](#) (MARA).

TRANSLATING AND INTERPRETING SERVICES

The [Translating and Interpreting Service](#) (TIS National) is an interpreting service that provides a 24 hours a day, 7 days a week telephone interpreting service:

Phone: 131 450 (within Australia)

Phone: +61 3 9268 8332 (outside Australia)

TIS National provides interpreting services for people who do not speak English and for government agencies and businesses that need to communicate with their non-English speaking clients. More information is available by visiting the TIS National website: <http://www.tisnational.gov.au>

MULTICULTURAL COMMUNITY CONTACTS

[Ethnic Council of Shepparton & District Inc.](#)

SETTLEMENT ENGAGEMENT AND TRANSITION SUPPORT (SETS) PROGRAM

The [Settlement Engagement and Transition \(SETS\) program](#) aims to equip and empower humanitarian entrants, other eligible permanent migrants and their communities to address their settlement needs, in order to improve social participation, economic well-being, independence, personal well-being and community connectedness.

VISA RELATED MATTERS

For any visa related matters for you or your family please contact the Australian Government's Department of Home Affairs.

Phone: 131 881

Internet: www.homeaffairs.gov.au

Email: sponsorship.monitoring@homeaffairs.gov.au

Report something unlawful and suspicious: <https://www.homeaffairs.gov.au/about/contact/report-suspicious-activities-behaviour>

The Beginning a Life in Australia booklet provides helpful settlement information and links to other websites and resources for newly arrived migrants.

<https://immi.homeaffairs.gov.au/settling-in-australia/settle-in-australia/beginning-a-life-in-australia>



VICTORIA'S GOULBURN VALLEY REGION

WORKING IN AUSTRALIA

EMPLOYEE RIGHTS

All employees, including those employed on temporary visas granted under the Goulburn Valley Designated Area Migration Agreement (GV DAMA), must be paid no less than the terms and conditions outlined in your employment agreement.

Australia has what are known as National Employment Standards (NES). The NES are the minimum entitlements for workers covered by federal awards in Australia under the Fair Work Act 2009. Under the NES all employees in Australia regardless of whether they are a temporary visa holder, an Australian permanent resident or an Australian citizen have certain minimum employment entitlements. In addition to pay rates in modern awards and minimum wage orders, the NES provides the safety net that cannot be altered to the disadvantage of the employee.

There are 11 minimum conditions covered under the NES:

- Maximum weekly hours
- Requests for flexible working arrangements
- Offers and requests to convert from casual to permanent employment
- Parental leave and related entitlements
- Annual leave
- Personal care leave and compassionate leave and unpaid family and domestic violence leave
- Community service leave
- Long service leave
- Public holidays
- Notice of termination and redundancy pay
- Fair Work information Statement

Employers have to give every new employee a copy of the [Fair Work Information Statement](#) (the FWIS) when they start their new job.

The Fair Work Ombudsman helps employers and employees understand their rights and responsibilities under Australian workplace laws. It also works with employers and employees to resolve any workplace issues that may arise. The services provided by the Fair Work Ombudsman are free to all workers and employers in Australia. For additional information, please refer to its website: <http://www.fairwork.gov.au> or phone 13 13 94 (in Australia).

Regional Trades & Labour Councils represent the peak body for Victorian Unions. The Victorian Trades Hall Council and its affiliated unions advocate for worker rights in Victoria and campaign on national issues which affect workers. For more information on the role of unions please click here. The Victorian Trades Hall Council can be contacted on 03 9659 3511. Please see: <https://www.weareunion.org.au/>





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Visa holders and migrant workers – workplace rights and entitlements

Workplace laws in Australia generally apply equally to all workers employed in Australia. Employers engaging foreign workers must ensure that they comply with both Australian workplace laws and immigration laws.

Australian immigration laws - including applying for and understanding the rules of valid work visas, as well as the obligation to pay market salary rates for Subclass 482 and 457 visa holders - are enforced by the Department of Home Affairs. For information on all visa requirements, visit the [Department of Home Affairs website](https://www.homeaffairs.gov.au) at [homeaffairs.gov.au](https://www.homeaffairs.gov.au) or phone 13 18 81.

Commonwealth workplace laws, including the payment of minimum rates of pay and conditions under awards and agreements, are enforced by the Fair Work Ombudsman. All references to an award or agreement in this fact sheet include modern awards, enterprise agreements, and award or agreement-based transitional instruments.

What are my minimum rights and conditions at work?

All employees in the national workplace relations system receive basic minimum entitlements known as the National Employment Standards (NES).

The NES include:

- Maximum weekly hours of work
- Requests for flexible working arrangements
- Parental leave and related entitlements
- Annual leave
- Personal/carer's leave, compassionate leave and family and domestic violence leave
- Community service leave
- Long service leave
- Public holidays
- Notice of termination and redundancy pay

- The Fair Work Information Statement and Casual Employment Information Statement
- The right for casual employees to become permanent employees in some circumstances.

For more information on the NES, please see our [Introduction to the National Employment Standards fact sheet](https://www.fairwork.gov.au/factsheets) at [fairwork.gov.au/factsheets](https://www.fairwork.gov.au/factsheets). Your minimum rights and conditions at work may be set by a legal document like an award, an agreement, or a contract of employment. Ask your employer which one applies to you to find out how you are affected.

If an award or agreement does not apply, all employees in the national workplace relations system will receive basic minimum pay, conditions and protections under Commonwealth workplace laws.

If you are asked to sign any type of document agreeing to specific work conditions, make sure you read it very carefully and understand it before signing. Keep a copy for your records. You should not feel undue pressure to sign any agreement with your employer. If you do, contact the Fair Work Infoline on 13 13 94.

Am I an employee or independent contractor?

Employees work for another person under a contract of employment in return for regular pay. They will usually also be subject to an award or agreement.

Independent contracting is where one business works for another business. Generally, independent contractors will use their own equipment, choose the hours they work, and decide how the work is done.

Some employers disguise employment relationships as an independent contracting arrangement to avoid paying legal minimum rates of pay, tax, and entitlements like annual leave and sick leave. This is called 'sham contracting' and it is against the law.



VICTORIA'S GOULBURN VALLEY REGION

[For more information on independent contractors](#), visit fairwork.gov.au/contractors

Minimum rates of pay

Under Commonwealth workplace laws, no employee over the age of 21 in the national workplace relations system can be paid less than the minimum wage. The national minimum wage order is determined by the Minimum Wages Panel within the Fair Work Commission and is intended as a safety net.

An employee's minimum wage will generally be contained within an award or agreement, establishing a basic rate of pay for ordinary hours. It may also contain additional rates for overtime hours, or penalty rates for certain shifts outside ordinary working hours.

Employers must pay the correct rate of pay (according to the appropriate award or agreement) for all hours that the worker is required to attend work, including for work meetings and training.

Find out more information about [awards and agreements](#) at fairwork.gov.au/awards-and-agreements

If you are a primary Subclass 482 or 457 visa holder, your sponsor must ensure that the terms and conditions of employment provided to you are no less favourable than those they provide to Australian citizens/permanent residents performing equivalent work in your workplace. This means that all primary Subclass 482 and 457 visa holders should be paid market salary rates by their sponsors.

For more information about market salary rates, visit the [Department of Home Affairs website](#) at homeaffairs.gov.au or phone 13 18 81.

Can my employer deduct money from my wages?

An employer can only deduct money from an employee's wage if:

- the employee agrees in writing and it's principally for their benefit
- it's allowed by a law, a court order, or by the Fair Work Commission

- it's allowed under the employee's award, or
- it's allowed under the employee's registered agreement and the employee agrees to it.

For example, if you accidentally break something, the employer cannot deduct money from your wages. Further, an employer can't force you to agree to a deduction.

Even if the deduction is authorised under a term in an award, registered agreement or contract of employment, the term has no effect if:

- the deduction is directly, or indirectly, for the employer's benefit, and is unreasonable, or
- the employee is under the age of 18 and the employee's parent or guardian has not authorised the deduction in writing

If you are concerned about deductions from your wages, contact the Fair Work Infoline on 13 13 94.

Can my employer pay me in cash?

Your employer may choose to pay you using cash, cheque, money or postal order, or through electronic funds transfer into your bank account.

It is acceptable for your employer to pay you in cash as long as tax has been taken from your earnings and sent to the Australian Taxation Office (ATO). Generally, you should also be receiving superannuation. You should check your pay slip each time you are paid to make sure this is being done.

'Cash in hand' is a term used to describe cash payments where tax has not been taken out - this is against the law.

Contact the Fair Work Infoline on 13 13 94 if you are unsure about your pay arrangements.

My employer wants me to sign an individual flexibility arrangement, what do I do?

Employers and employees can enter into individual flexibility arrangements (IFAs) which alter the way a modern award or enterprise agreement applies to an employee. This can change the way some

Fair Work Infoline: 13 13 94

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VICTORIA'S GOULBURN VALLEY REGION

entitlements, such as penalty rates or allowances, apply in your employment.

An employer cannot force you to enter into an IFA. If you feel that you are being pressured to do so, you should contact the Fair Work Ombudsman.

In order to create an IFA, the employer is required to ensure that you are better off overall than you would be normally under the award or agreement. This may mean that you receive additional benefits in one area to compensate for those changed in another area. If you believe that you are not better off overall, you should not enter into the IFA.

If you wish to seek further information, contact the Fair Work Infoline on 13 13 94.

Unlawful workplace discrimination

The Fair Work Act 2009 protects employees against unlawful workplace discrimination. Unlawful workplace discrimination occurs when an employer takes adverse action against a person who is an employee or prospective employee because of the following attributes of the person:

- race
- colour
- sex
- sexual orientation
- age
- physical or mental disability
- marital status
- family or carer's responsibilities
- pregnancy
- religion
- political opinion
- national extraction or social origin.

Where an investigation finds that the employer has (or had) discriminatory practices that are linked to adverse actions for employees or prospective employees, the Fair Work Ombudsman may take enforcement action.

Adverse action taken by an employer includes doing, threatening or organising any of the following:

- dismissing an employee
- injuring an employee in their employment
- altering an employee's position to their detriment
- discriminating between one employee and other employees
- refusing to employ a prospective employee
- discriminating against a prospective employee on the terms and conditions in the offer of employment.

For more information on unlawful workplace discrimination, please see our [Workplace Discrimination fact sheet](#) at fairwork.gov.au/factsheets

Industrial activities

Under Commonwealth workplace laws, all employers, workers and independent contractors are free to take part in certain industrial activities. This includes the right to become, or not to become, members of an industrial association (such as a union), or the right to participate in lawful activities organised by a union.

It is unlawful for an employer to take adverse action against an employee because they are engaging in lawful industrial activities. For example, an employer cannot alter an employee's position because they are not a member of a union.

For more information on adverse action and other rights protected from certain unlawful action, please see our [Protections at work fact sheet](#) at fairwork.gov.au/factsheets

Further information

For more information on all visa requirements or market salary rates, visit the [Department of Home Affairs website](#) at homeaffairs.gov.au or phone 13 18 81.

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VICTORIA'S GOULBURN VALLEY REGION

CONTACT US

Fair Work Online: [fairwork.gov.au](https://www.fairwork.gov.au)

Fair Work Infoline: **13 13 94**

Need language help?

Contact the Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS) on **13 14 50**

Hearing & speech assistance

Call through the National Relay Service (NRS):

For TTY: **13 36 77**. Ask for the Fair Work Infoline **13 13 94**

Speak & Listen: **1300 555 727**. Ask for the Fair Work Infoline **13 13 94**

The Fair Work Ombudsman is committed to providing you with advice that you can rely on. The information contained in this fact sheet is general in nature. If you are unsure about how it applies to your situation you can call our Infoline on 13 13 94 or speak with a union, industry association or a workplace relations professional.

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VISA HOLDERS AND MIGRANT WORKERS – WORKPLACE RIGHTS AND ENTITLEMENTS

