

# Helping Families

## Victorian Budget 2024/25



**The Hon Natalie Hutchins MP**  
Minister for Jobs & Industry

**The Hon Gayle Tierney MP**  
Minister for Skills & TAFE  
Minister for Regional Development

**The Hon Vicki Ward MP**  
Minister for Employment

**The Hon Natalie Suleyman MP**  
Minister for Small Business

**The Hon Ben Carroll MP**  
Minister for Medical Research

Tuesday, 7 May 2024

## HELPING FAMILIES WITH SECURE JOBS AND QUALITY TRAINING

The Allan Labor Government is continuing our investments to create secure jobs and great training opportunities that lead to rewarding careers.

And it's working, with over 560,000 more people employed across Victoria since September 2020, delivering a historically low unemployment rate across the state.

But in some priority sectors, we need more workers.

The *Victorian Budget 2024/25* continues to grow our economy and build the workforce we need for the future, with nearly \$580 million to back great jobs, support workers and address skills gaps in every corner of the state.

After Labor rebuilt TAFE from the savage cuts of the former Liberal Government, TAFE sits at the centre of our world-class training system. A further investment of \$555 million into the training system will enable even more Victorians to upskill into meaningful, well-paid careers.

More people training in priority sectors means more Victorians with the essential skills and specialist trades we need to deliver the Big Build, our renewable energy projects and more homes for families.

Since 2019, we've cut the financial barriers to Victorians getting a great job with Free TAFE – now offering more than 80 courses without tuition fees to more Victorians, including those retraining for new in-demand careers.

More than 170,500 students have benefitted from Free TAFE since it began, saving more than \$460 million in tuition fees. Better yet, this investment is building the workforces we need today – and tomorrow.

This Budget will also invest \$31.6 million to deliver the Skills First Skill Set initiative – offering subsidised training for skills needed in industries facing skills shortages. Through the program, Victorians can complete accredited short courses, quickly upskilling in growth sectors like transport, new energy, disability and construction.

We'll continue to give mid-career Victorians the opportunity to re-shape their job prospects and move into Victoria's growing tech sector, thanks to a \$4.4 million investment in our Digital Jobs Program – helping Victorians move into our growing tech sector and supporting the industry to fill critical skill shortages.

Apprentices are a vital part of our state's current and future workforce – and we're investing to make sure the more than 77,000 apprentices and trainees across Victoria are looked after while they work and train.

Building on our cost-of-living support for eligible apprentices with free car rego, and the 30,000 apprentices who have benefited from our reintroduction of Trade Papers, this Budget provides an \$11.4 million package to deliver more apprenticeships and support apprentices and trainees.

We're making sure our current workforce is better protected, strengthening our Fair Jobs Code with an extra \$3.8 million to make sure companies with Victorian Government contracts treat their workers fairly.

The Fair Jobs Code builds on the Local Jobs First policy, which backs Victorian jobs by prioritising local businesses in all Victorian Government contracts – the largest procurer of goods, services and construction works in the state.

We've set strict local content requirements on more than 333 Strategic Projects with a combined total value of more than \$170.4 billion, engaging Victorian businesses and supporting Victorian jobs.

Through our Major Projects Skills Guarantee, more than 10,300 apprentices, trainees and cadets have worked over 15 million hours on construction projects since 2016 – giving them real-world work experience on some of our state's biggest projects.

We're continuing to support Aboriginal Victorians to grow their businesses and employ locals, including Aboriginal workers – this Budget will invest \$8.6 million to address economic disparity for Aboriginal communities, including support for Traditional Owner Corporations so they can grow Aboriginal owned businesses and boost local jobs.

For people running a small business or looking to start one, we're providing \$2.3 million which includes support for the Small Business Toolkits program, to continue to offer foundational advisory and capability building services and virtual mentoring.

We'll also keep running the Small Business Bus, which tours the state offering advice and support to Victorian small business owners.

We are also building on our medical research investments with the implementation of *marra ngarrgoo, marra goorri*: The Victorian Aboriginal Health, Medical and Wellbeing Research Accord.

Funding of \$4.5 million will support embedding culturally sensitive medical research practice and build capability of Aboriginal researchers and the sector to better deliver positive health outcomes for Aboriginal Victorians.

With this Budget, we're making sure more Victorians have the skills they need for a good job – and skilling our state for the future.

This is a Budget that's backing Victorian jobs and Victorian workers – because this is a Budget that's helping families.

#### **Quotes attributable to Minister for Jobs and Industry Natalie Hutchins**

*"By prioritising local businesses and local jobs, we're getting more bang for our buck – growing our economy and ensuring more Victorians have a good, stable job."*

*"We're continuing to put Victorian workers first by strengthening our Fair Jobs Code and making sure employers are doing the right thing."*

#### **Quotes attributable to Minister for Skills and TAFE Gayle Tierney**

*"Free TAFE means more Victorians have the skills they need for a rewarding career – and we have the skills we need for our growing state."*

*"Already, more than 170,500 people have benefitted from Free TAFE. We're continuing that investment – because we know what it means to Victorians and their families."*

**Quote attributable to Minister for Medical Research Ben Carroll**

*“Victoria has a world-class medical research industry. Our investment to support the delivery of marra ngarrgoo, marra goorri: The Victorian Aboriginal Health, Medical and Wellbeing Research Accord will build the capability of the medical research sector, led by Aboriginal Victorians, to better deliver positive health outcomes.”*

**Quote attributable to Minister for Small Business Natalie Suleyman**

*“We’re continuing our tailored supports for small businesses with our online resources through Business Victoria – helping businesses navigate with free advice, mentoring and self-paced learning for small business owners.”*

**Quote attributable to Minister for Employment Vicki Ward**

*“It matters to Aboriginal Victorians that workplaces are culturally respectful, inclusive and safe. This investment will support more Aboriginal businesses to get off the ground, grow and create more employment opportunities.”*