



ACT ECONOMIC SURVIVAL AND RECOVERY INITIATIVES

ACT Treasurer's Update

Chief Minister, Treasury and
Economic Development Directorate

June 2020

JUNE 2020 – ACT TREASURER’S UPDATE

ACT ECONOMIC SURVIVAL AND RECOVERY INITIATIVES

In response to COVID-19, the ACT Government has delivered 50 measures with an estimated impact of \$369 million for the Territory as part of our Economic Survival and Recovery plan – a multi-staged and targeted economic response to COVID-19.

The initiatives are presented across the four objectives that have driven our response:

- Supporting local business, jobs and the economy
- Supporting families and households
- Keeping Canberrans employed
- Supporting the community

In times of economic contraction, a temporary increase to Government spending is an important and powerful tool.

Governments have a duty now to step up to support and grow the economy. These initiatives demonstrate what our Government has done so far, but there is more to do. We will help shape, create and grow markets in a way that leads to greater job creation.

We have a plan, and we are ready to deliver; creating secure jobs, supporting households, providing essential services and creating the environment for businesses to grow.

Table 1: Summary of initiatives

Summary Table – Budget Impacts ¹	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	Total
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Expense impact	-47,558	-39,982	-2,390	-503	-216,433
Revenue impact	-36,984	-80,489	-11,027	-24,004	-152,504
Operating impact	-84,542	-120,471	-13,417	-24,507	-368,937

Note:

1. Totals do not add, as impacts associated with the *More support for the healthcare system* initiative have not been allocated to specific financial years.

Table 2: Detailed initiatives

Initiatives	Impact	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	Total
		\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Supporting local businesses, jobs and the economy						
\$1,000 additional electricity rebate for cafes, takeaways and restaurants	Expense	0	1,500	0	0	1,500
Additional support for the Vocational Education and Training Sector	Expense	1,000	1,000	0	0	2,000
Automatic \$750 electricity rebates for small businesses	Expense	9,790	0	0	0	9,790
CIT IT investment	Expense	800	195	0	0	995
City Centre Marketing and Improvements Levy – 50 per cent reduction	Revenue forgone	0	950	0	0	950
City Centre Marketing and Improvements Levy – 50 per cent reduction	Expense	0	-950	0	0	-950
Commercial rates – delay of issuance	Expense	0	0	0	0	0
Commercial rates – fixed charge rebate and 2020-21 settings	Revenue forgone	16,200	6,872	7,285	7,722	38,079
Commercial rates – hardship deferrals	Expense	~	~	0	0	~
Commercial rates – rental relief and owner-occupier rebate scheme	Revenue forgone	6,250	6,250	0	0	12,500
Early payment of invoices	Expense	~	~	0	0	~
Expediting development application and unit titling approvals	Expense	0	475	490	503	1,468
Extending taxi industry support to lessees of privately-owned plates	Expense	810	0	0	0	810
Fee reduction – one-year waiver for food business registration, outdoor dining and liquor licensing fees	Revenue forgone	1,200	3,978	0	0	5,178
Fee reduction – one-year waiver for other business fees	Revenue forgone	29	89	0	0	118
Fee reduction – one-year waiver for ride share and hire car fees	Revenue forgone	55	155	0	0	210
Fee reduction – one-year waiver for taxi license fees	Revenue forgone	220	660	0	0	880
Fixed water and sewerage charges rebate for accommodation providers and community clubs	Expense	204	2,004	0	0	2,208
Payroll tax – interest-free deferral for the construction industry	Expense	27	30	0	0	57

Initiatives	Impact	2019-20 \$'000	2020-21 \$'000	2021-22 \$'000	2022-23 \$'000	Total \$'000
Payroll tax – interest-free deferral for the construction industry	Cash impact	-9,600	-4,800	14,400	0	0
Payroll tax – interest-free deferral for businesses with payroll under \$10 million	Expense	0	900	1,900	0	2,800
Payroll tax – interest-free deferral for businesses with payroll under \$10 million	Cash impact	0	-100,000	100,000	0	0
Payroll tax – six-month waiver of payroll tax for business operations directly impacted by the national ‘prohibited activities and venues’ list	Revenue forgone	4,200	3,500	0	0	7,700
Rental relief – ACT government properties	Revenue forgone	4,600	4,600	0	0	9,200
Supporting Community Clubs	Expense	5,888	0	0	0	5,888
Training support – National Infection Control Fund	Expense	0	670	0	0	670
Supporting families and households						
\$200 Residential utility concession rebate	Expense	7,000	0	0	0	7,000
Assistance for sport and recreation bodies	Revenue forgone	100	1,000	0	0	1,100
Fee and charge reduction – one-year freeze on growth of Fire and Emergency Services Levy	Revenue forgone	0	2,194	2,255	2,322	6,771
Fee and charge reduction – one-year freeze on parking and public transport fees	Revenue forgone	0	1,200	1,300	1,400	3,900
Fee and charge reduction – one-year freeze on vehicle registration fees	Revenue forgone	0	3,800	4,000	4,200	12,000
Freezing the Utilities Network Facilities Tax	Revenue forgone	500	1,500	0	0	2,000
Residential rates – 2020-21 setting	Revenue forgone	0	32,941	7,887	8,360	49,188
Residential rates – delay of issuance of residential rates and land tax bills	Expense	0	0	0	0	0
Residential rates – expanding access to residential general rates hardship deferral	Cash impact	~	~	0	0	~
Residential stamp duty reductions	Revenue	0	-7,300	11,700	0	4,400
Residential tenancy relief	Revenue forgone	3,500	3,500	0	0	7,000
Support for international students	Expense	150	0	0	0	150
Utilities hardship	Expense	250	0	0	0	250
Keeping Canberrans employed						
Access to Portable Long Service Leave	Expense	0	0	0	0	0
Jobs for Canberrans Fund	Net Expense	5,000	20,000	0	0	25,000
Rapid rollout of ‘screwdriver ready’ minor capital works projects	Capital	20,000	8,000	0	0	28,000
Rapid rollout of ‘screwdriver ready’ minor capital works projects	Expense	5,000	2,000	0	0	7,000
Rollover of contracts for any casual or contracted ACTPS staff	Expense	~	~	0	0	~
Urban forest and other public realm maintenance functions	Expense	1,000	2,000	0	0	3,000
Supporting the Community						
Community Support Package	Expense	5,447	3,553	0	0	9,000
Education Digital Delivery	Expense	500	0	0	0	500
Financial support for the Cultural Facilities Corporation	Expense	0	2,500	0	0	2,500
Increased Magistrates Court resourcing	Expense	0	310	0	0	310
Increased support for our arts community	Expense	1,500	0	0	0	1,500
Mental health support package	Net Expense	192	3,795	0	0	3,987
More support for the healthcare system	Expense	TBC	TBC	0	0	126,000
Public Housing – \$250 rent rebate	Expense	3,000	0	0	0	3,000

Initiatives	Impact	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	Total
		\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Waiver of fees for Early Childhood Education and Care service providers	Revenue forgone	130	0	0	0	130

Notes:

1. For revenue forgone impacts, expense impacts and capital impacts, a positive number indicates a cost to government and a negative number indicates a benefit to government.
2. For cash and revenue impacts, a negative number indicates a cost to government and a positive number indicates a benefit to government.
3. The listed initiatives do not include estimates for 2023-24.

Supporting local businesses, jobs and the economy

\$1,000 additional electricity rebate for cafes, takeaways and restaurants

	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	Total
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Expense	0	1,500	0	0	1,500

The Government will provide eligible cafes, takeaways and restaurants with a one-off \$1,000 rebate on their electricity bill during the first quarter of 2020-21, to help support these businesses during the economic recovery period.

Eligible businesses can apply via the [Access Canberra website](#).

Additional support for the Vocational Education and Training Sector

	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	Total
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Expense	1,000	1,000	0	0	2,000

The Government is providing support for the Vocational Education and Training Sector by increasing subsidies for apprenticeships and traineeships to access nationally recognised training in areas linked to skills needs across a range of industries. Subsidies will be provided directly to Registered Training Organisations.

Automatic \$750 Electricity rebates for small businesses

	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	Total
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Expense	9,790	0	0	0	9,790

Small businesses with electricity usage below 100 megawatts per year will have rebates of \$750 automatically applied to their next electricity bill in May, June or July 2020. This will provide necessary cashflow support for small businesses.

CIT IT investment

	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	Total
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Expense	800	195	0	0	995

The Government has fast tracked CIT's 'Study Work Anywhere Any Time' IT project to enable CIT to move delivery of components of its teaching and learning online by July 2020. The expertise required to implement this project will be sourced from local SMEs, which will support the local industry and help keep high value technology skills in the region.

City Centre Marketing and Improvements Levy – 50 per cent reduction

	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	Total
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Revenue forgone	0	950	0	0	950
Offset – expense	0	-950	0	0	-950

The Government will reduce the City Centre Marketing and Improvements Levy (CCMIL) by 50 per cent in 2020-21, with the balance of the payment deferred until February 2021. The CCMIL is applied to all rateable commercial properties (more than 600) in the City, Braddon and New Acton.

Commercial rates – delay of issuance

	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	Total
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Expense	0	0	0	0	0

The Government is deferring the issuance of rates notices for the fourth quarter instalments of the 2019-20 commercial rates by four weeks. These will be then due a month later than the usual due date, providing significant immediate cash flow assistance to commercial property owners.

Commercial rates – fixed charge rebate and 2020-21 settings

	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	Total
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Revenue forgone	16,200	6,872	7,285	7,722	38,079

The Government is providing owners of commercial property with an Average Unimproved Value (AUV) of \$2 million or less a full rebate on their commercial rates fixed charge for the 2019-20 financial year. The credit of \$2,622 (equivalent to the annual fixed charge) is being automatically applied to the fourth quarter bill of 2019-20.

The Government is also setting the average increase for commercial properties with an AUV of \$2 million or less at 0 per cent. This means that no additional general rates revenue will be collected from this group of properties, but individual rates will change in line with changes in land values. General rates for around 4,600 commercial properties will be lower than in 2019-20.

In addition, the Government will freeze the 2020-21 Fire and Emergency Services Levy at the 2019-20 amount (refer to the *One-year freeze on growth of Fire and Emergency Services Levy* initiative for further information).

Commercial rates – hardship deferrals

	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	Total
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Expense	~	~	0	0	~

The Government is supporting commercial property owners who have been significantly affected by COVID-19 to apply to the ACT Revenue Office to defer their rates charges up to October 2020. No interest will be charged on the deferred amount.

Property owners who are experiencing financial hardship can apply by sending an email to debtmanagement@act.gov.au.

Commercial rates – rental relief and owner-occupier rebate scheme

	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	Total
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Revenue forgone	6,250	6,250	0	0	12,500

The Government is providing general rates relief in 2019-20 and 2020-21 to commercial property owners who, consistent with the National Cabinet Mandatory Code of Conduct, negotiate in good faith to reduce rent for tenants affected by COVID-19. Commercial property owners who operate businesses from premises they own will also be eligible for assistance if they have been negatively affected by COVID-19.

Assistance for owners of properties with an AUV of \$2 million or below is based on the significance of the impact on their tenants. Owners of properties with an AUV above \$2 million can apply on a case-by-case basis.

This estimated foregone revenue has been revised down from the original estimate, due to initial take-up being lower than originally anticipated. The final cost of this initiative will depend on the take-up rates and landlord and tenant characteristics. The Government has confirmed that the scheme will remain in place until 30 September 2020.

Eligible businesses can apply via the [ACT Revenue Office website](#) (under the *Commercial Property Owners* section).

Early payment of invoices

	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	Total
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Expense	~	~	0	0	~

Recognising the importance of cash flow to small and medium enterprises, the Government has accelerated the payment of invoices for local enterprises. The cost associated with this is due to the indirect loss of interest from these early payments.

Expediting development application and unit titling approvals

	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	Total
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Expense	0	475	490	503	1,468

The Government will continue to fast track development application and unit titling approvals to allow work to continue in the ACT's construction sector. The Government has allocated funding for additional staff in the Transport Canberra and City Services Directorate to speed up asset acceptance processes, and reprioritised staff to expedite approvals in Planning Delivery.

Extending taxi industry support to lessees of privately-owned plates

	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	Total
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Expense	810	0	0	0	810

The Government is providing a one-off payment of up to \$5,000 to taxi drivers who lease their taxi plates from private owners. This provides the same level of support as provided to those who lease Government plates in the Territory.

Eligible drivers should submit an application form available on the [ACT COVID-19 website](#).

Fee reduction – one-year waiver for food business registration, outdoor dining and liquor licensing fees

	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	Total
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Revenue forgone	1,200	3,978	0	0	5,178

The Government is providing a 12-month waiver of food business registration and liquor licencing fees from 1 April 2020 for licenced venues and off-licenced venues with gross liquor purchase value of below \$3 million per annum. The Government will also waive the application fee payable by businesses who wish to apply for a general liquor licence to convert their temporary ability to sell liquor off licence (i.e. for takeaway purchases) during the public health emergency into a permanent arrangement.

The Government will also waive outdoor dining fees in 2020-21 and establish a new sub-category of off liquor licences – the first year micro-producer licence. The licence application fee for this category will be set at \$250, a 90 per cent discount on the standard off liquor licence application fee.

Fee reduction – one-year waiver for other business fees

	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	Total
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Revenue forgone	29	89	0	0	118

The Government is providing a fee waiver for 12 months for businesses that require infection control licensing, which includes businesses such as beauty therapists, nail salons, tattoo parlours and dentists.

This fee waiver will be automatically applied through the normal licencing process, and businesses do not need to contact Health Protection Services.

Fee reduction – one-year waiver for ride share and hire car fees

	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	Total
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Revenue forgone	55	155	0	0	210

The Government is waiving rideshare vehicle and hire car licence fees for 12 months for from 1 April 2020 as part of the normal licencing processes. This will assist workers who provide ride share services.

This fee waiver will be automatically applied through the normal licencing process. In cases where fees have been prepaid, a credit will be provided at the next due date.

Fee reduction – one-year waiver for taxi license fees

	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	Total
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Revenue forgone	220	660	0	0	880

The Government is waiving all Government-leased taxi plate fees (\$5,000 for one year), including wheelchair accessible taxis to help support this vital service.

This fee waiver will be automatically applied through the normal licencing process.

Fixed water and sewerage charges rebate for accommodation providers and community clubs

	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	Total
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Expense	204	2,004	0	0	2,208

The Government will provide a rebate of the fixed water and fixed sewerage charges payable on Icon Water bills for the first 2 quarters of the 2020-21 financial year to eligible accommodation providers including hotels, motels and serviced apartments, and a rebate for the fourth quarter of 2019-20 and first quarter of 2020-21 for community clubs. The rebate will help support these businesses during the economic recovery period.

Payroll tax – interest-free deferral for construction industry

	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	Total
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Cash impact	-9,600	-4,800	14,400	0	0
Expense	27	30	0	0	57

The Government is supporting businesses in the construction industry by allowing them to defer their payroll tax liability for the six months from April to September 2020 to provide cashflow assistance to help them retain workers. No interest will be charged on deferred amounts until 1 October 2020.

The expense component of this item relates to financing costs.

Payroll tax – interest-free deferral for businesses with payroll under \$10 million

	2019-20 \$'000	2020-21 \$'000	2021-22 \$'000	2022-23 \$'000	Total \$'000
Cash impact	0	-100,000	100,000	0	0
Expense	0	900	1,900	0	2,800

The Government will provide all ACT businesses with group Australia-wide wages of up to \$10 million the option to defer their 2020-21 payroll tax, interest free until 1 July 2022. Businesses need to complete a simple online application form to confirm their eligibility.

The expense component of this item relates to financing costs.

Eligible businesses can apply via the [ACT Revenue Office website](#).

Payroll tax – six-month waiver of payroll tax for business operations directly impacted by the national ‘prohibited activities and venues’ list

	2019-20 \$'000	2020-21 \$'000	2021-22 \$'000	2022-23 \$'000	Total \$'000
Revenue forgone	4,200	3,500	0	0	7,700

The Government is providing businesses whose operations were directly affected by restrictions and prohibitions as part of the COVID-19 public health response a six-month waiver of payroll tax from April to September 2020. Businesses covered include hotels, clubs, cafes, restaurants, creative arts and entertainment industries, gyms and indoor sporting venues, cinemas, beauty therapists and nail salons.

Eligible businesses can apply via the [ACT Revenue Office website](#).

Rental relief – ACT government properties

	2019-20 \$'000	2020-21 \$'000	2021-22 \$'000	2022-23 \$'000	Total \$'000
Revenue forgone	4,600	4,600	0	0	9,200

From 1 April 2020 to 30 September 2020, the Government will not charge any rent to community groups occupying ACT Government owned properties including head-leased Housing Asset Assistance Program properties and school facilities that are rented to the community. The Government is also providing up to \$500,000 in funding to the head-licensees of arts facilities to enable the waiving of fees for sub-licensees for 6 months (supporting 65 smaller arts organisations).

Support is also available for commercial tenants of ACT Government owned properties where they have suffered a loss of revenue as a result of COVID-19.

Supporting Community Clubs

	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	Total
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Expense	5,888	0	0	0	5,888

The Government is providing further support to Canberra's community clubs and Casino, to enable them to keep staff employed. Measures include:

- Providing clubs with the opportunity to access a payment of \$15,000 per authorisation if they voluntarily surrender gaming machine authorisations.
- A waiver/refund of gaming machine tax liabilities for clubs for March 2020 activity (for larger clubs that pay gaming tax monthly) or for first quarter 2020 activity (for smaller clubs that pay gaming tax quarterly).
- The Government has made an additional \$1.5 million contribution to the Clubs Diversification Fund, which will support clubs in the ACT to keep staff employed on the Clubs award rate.

This estimate has been revised down from the original estimate, due to initial take-up of measures being lower than originally estimated. The final cost of this initiative will depend on the final take-up of available measures.

Additionally, the Government has amended legislation to allow payment of award wages to staff to be claimed as community contributions where an emergency declaration has been made and provide incentives for clubs to prepare food for the vulnerable.

Training Support – National Infection Control Fund

	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	Total
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Expense	0	670	0	0	670

The Government will contribute of up to \$670,000 towards the joint Commonwealth-Territory fund to deliver infection control training to workers, with a focus on customer facing roles in a range of industries. With Commonwealth matched funding, this will provide fully subsidised training for up to 3,800 people in the ACT.

Supporting families and households

\$200 Residential utility concession rebate

	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	Total
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Expense	7,000	0	0	0	7,000

Around 30,000 households receiving the Utilities Concession will automatically receive a further \$200 rebate (in addition to the \$700 annual rebate) on their electricity bill. This includes Centrelink Pensioner Concession Card holders, Centrelink Low Income Health Care Card holders and Department of Veterans' Affairs Pensioner Concession Card or Gold Card holders.

Assistance for sport and recreation bodies

	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	Total
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Expense	700	1,500	0	0	2,200
Offset – expense	-700	-1,500	0	0	-2,200
Revenue forgone	100	1,000	0	0	1,100

The Government is providing funding and relief equivalent to \$3.3 million for Canberra's sports sector to address challenges associated with COVID-19. This funding incorporates an immediate financial injection of \$700,000 across ACT peak sport and recreation bodies, as well as enabling early access to approximately \$1.5 million through the 2021 Sport and Recreation Grants Program.

The Government will also waive sportsground hire fees, along with waivers for rent for use of government properties and schools.

Fee and charge reduction – one-year freeze on growth of Fire and Emergency Services Levy

	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	Total
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Revenue forgone	0	2,194	2,255	2,322	6,771

The Government will freeze the Fire and Emergency Services Levy at its current 2019-20 level for the 2020-21 financial year. This will apply to all commercial and residential properties.

Fee and charge reduction – one-year freeze on parking and public transport fees

	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	Total
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Revenue forgone	0	1,200	1,300	1,400	3,900

The Government will freeze parking and public transport fees at their current level for 2020-21.

Fee and charge reduction – one-year freeze on vehicle registration fees

	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	Total
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Revenue forgone	0	3,800	4,000	4,200	12,000

The Government will freeze vehicle registration fees at their current level for 2020-21.

Freezing the Utilities Network Facilities Tax

	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	Total
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Revenue forgone	500	1,500	0	0	2,000

The Government will freeze the Utilities Network Facilities Tax (UNFT) at its current level for the next year. Freezing the UNFT will enable utility providers to pass on savings to customers and support improved hardship measures for ACT customers.

The UNFT is paid by utility providers and applies to any network facility on land in the ACT, including networks for transmitting and distributing electricity, gas, sewage, water and telecommunications.

Residential rates – 2020-21 setting

	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	Total
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Revenue forgone	0	32,941	7,887	8,360	49,188

The Government will automatically apply a \$150 rebate to the fixed-charge components of all residential rates bills in 2020-21.

The Government is also setting the average rates increase for houses and units in 2020-21 at 0 per cent, inclusive of the \$150 fixed charge rebate. This means that general rates revenue collected from current rateable properties will not increase, but individual property rates may change in line with changes in land values. General rates for over 110,000 residential properties will be lower than in 2019-20.

Residential rates – delay of issuance of residential rates and land tax bills

	2019-20 \$'000	2020-21 \$'000	2021-22 \$'000	2022-23 \$'000	Total \$'000
Expense	0	0	0	0	0

The Government is deferring the issuing of rates notices for the fourth quarter instalments of the 2019-20 residential general rates and land tax assessments by four weeks. These will then be due a month later than the usual due date and provide significant immediate relief to household budgets.

Residential rates – expanding access to residential general rates hardship deferral

	2019-20 \$'000	2020-21 \$'000	2021-22 \$'000	2022-23 \$'000	Total \$'000
Cash impact	~	~	0	0	~

The Government has implemented a new process for rates deferrals for owner occupiers experiencing hardship because of COVID-19. No interest will apply to the deferred amount.

The deferral will be for 12 months where household income has been reduced by at least 25 per cent by circumstances such as unemployment, reduction in hours of work, or a loss of small business income.

An application form is available on the [ACT Revenue Office website](#).

Residential stamp duty reductions

	2019-20 \$'000	2020-21 \$'000	2021-22 \$'000	2022-23 \$'000	Total \$'000
Revenue – deferred tax rate reductions	0	4,000	11,700	0	15,700
Revenue – owner occupier land and off-the-plan unit concessions	0	-11,300	0	0	-11,300
Revenue total	0	-7,300	11,700	0	4,400

The Government has significantly reduced stamp duty for eligible owner occupier home buyers until 30 June 2021. This will save new home buyers thousands of dollars. This initiative will generate more work for the local construction industry and create more jobs.

The following concessions apply to contracts exchanged between 4 June 2020 and 30 June 2021:

- No stamp duty on single residential dwelling blocks
- No stamp duty on off-the-plan unit (unit-titled apartment and townhouses) purchases up to \$500,000

- An \$11,400 stamp duty reduction for off-the-plan unit (unit-titled apartment and townhouses) purchases between \$500,000 and \$750,000

The Government will delay the previously announced reductions to residential stamp duty tax rates in 2020-21 by one year.

Residential tenancy relief

	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	Total
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Revenue forgone	3,500	3,500	0	0	7,000

The Government is providing a land tax and rates rebate to residential landlords who reduce rents by at least 25 per cent for tenants who have been impacted by COVID-19.

The rebate will be equal to 50 per cent of the rent reduction, up to \$1,300 per quarter (around \$100 per week), for up to six months. This will provide rent relief to impacted tenants of up to \$200 per week.

This estimate has been revised down from the original estimate, due to initial take-up being lower than originally anticipated. The final cost of this initiative will depend on the final take-up rates. The Government has confirmed that the scheme will remain in place until 30 September 2020.

An application form is available on the [ACT Revenue Office website](#).

Support for international students

	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	Total
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Expense	150	0	0	0	150

The Government is providing assistance for international students during COVID-19, recognising that many people on temporary visas are not eligible for other forms of assistance, such as the Commonwealth's Job Keeper program. Funding will be provided to and subsequently managed by the Australian Red Cross. This funding supplements the \$300,000 being provided to support asylum seekers and temporary visa holders as part of the \$9 million Community Support Package.

Utilities hardship

	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	Total
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Expense	250	0	0	0	250

The Government has provided up to \$250,000 to a new hardship fund to assist any households severely affected by COVID-19 to pay their utility bills. All major retailers are participating in the fund, representing coverage of 99.6 per cent of residential electricity customers in the ACT.

Keeping Canberrans employed

Access to Portable Long Service Leave

	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	Total
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Expense	0	0	0	0	0

The Government has amended legislation to provide access to Long Service Leave to workers that suffer a loss of income. The legislation allows the Minister for Employment to permit early access to leave payments accrued by workers impacted by the COVID 19 pandemic.

Jobs for Canberrans Fund

	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	Total
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Expense	5,000	23,000	0	0	28,000
Offset – expense	0	-3,000	0	0	-3,000

The Government has established the Jobs for Canberrans Fund to allow the ACTPS to employ additional workers on short-term contracts to help deliver projects and programs of benefit to the Canberra community.

This provides opportunities for those in the casual workforce, such as those who are excluded from the Commonwealth's JobKeeper wage subsidy program.

Opportunities have been identified across the ACT Public Service and will focus on roles with minimal prerequisites that can be undertaken in a manner that is compliant with health restrictions.

The expense offset relates to the reinvestment of an estimated \$3 million from the Partnership on COVID-19 Response.

Rapid rollout of 'screwdriver ready' minor capital works projects

	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	Total
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Capital	20,000	8,000	0	0	28,000
Expense	5,000	2,000	0	0	7,000

The Government is providing \$35 million for minor capital works projects to provide immediate support for small and medium-sized local businesses. The 2019-20 program relates to works that can start immediately, be undertaken using local suppliers and workers, and whether they can be undertaken within social distancing requirements. The 2020-21 program builds on the success of the 2019-20 activities and will also provide \$2 million for early planning and design works for longer-term projects.

The expense component of this initiative relates to expenditures that cannot be capitalised.

Rollover of contracts for any casual or contracted ACTPS staff

	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	Total
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Expense	~	~	0	0	~

The Government has committed to automatically extending staff employed under contracts in the ACTPS. This will provide job security during this difficult period.

Urban forest and other public realm maintenance functions

	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	Total
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Expense	1,000	2,000	0	0	3,000

The Government is spending \$3 million on fast-tracking urban forest and public realm maintenance. This will redeploy staff who would otherwise have been employed under contract for work and events that are not expected to go ahead and provide positions for casual workers to undertake paid employment.

Supporting the Community

Community Support package

	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	Total
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Expense	5,447	3,553	0	0	9,000

The Government is providing additional funding of \$9 million over two years for our non-government organisation partners to meet increased service demand for emergency relief. This provides support to partners to meet increased service demand for emergency and food relief, those in our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities who require culturally appropriate support, and those that may be experiencing domestic and family violence.

The development of the package has been undertaken through consultation with our non-government sector partners and includes:

- \$1.5 million for the Canberra Relief Network (lead by UnitingCare Kippax), for food relief coordination and delivery;
- \$1.175 million to support community services organisations during the pandemic (including elements such as staff safety fixtures, and improved technology to support teleconferencing);
- \$807,000 for strengthened homelessness prevention services;
- \$580,000 to support a range of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations;
- \$550,000 for domestic and family violence prevention services;
- \$300,000 to support asylum seekers and temporary visa holders who may be missing out on other avenues of support; and
- \$200,000 for expanded legal services (such as Legal Aid).

This initiative includes \$265,000 for mental health services, in addition to the *Mental Health Support Package* initiative outlined below, bringing the total funding for expanded COVID-19 mental health services to \$4.5 million.

Education Digital Delivery

	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	Total
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Expense	500	0	0	0	500

The Government has provided Chromebooks or similar devices to all students in years 4-6 and free Wi-Fi in the homes of the most disadvantaged. This will ensure that students who would otherwise not have access to remote teaching materials will not be left behind as an increasing number of students were required to undertake remote learning.

Financial support for the Cultural Facilities Corporation

	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	Total
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Expense	0	2,500	0	0	2,500

The Government will provide additional financial support to the Cultural Facilities Corporation. This is a result of the loss of own-source revenue due to the sustained impact of COVID-19 on public gatherings, exhibition spaces and performance venues. This funding will support the arts community by allowing the Cultural Facilities Corporation to retain staff and provide rent abatements to tenants.

Increased Magistrates Court resourcing

	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	Total
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Expense	0	310	0	0	310

The Government will fund additional capacity in the Magistrates Court to quickly address any backlog of cases as a result of reduced court activity arising from the COVID-19 pandemic.

Increased support for our arts community

	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	Total
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Expense	1,500	0	0	0	1,500

Funding of up to \$10,000 per artist has been made available for ACT practicing artists to support arts development and the sustainability of arts practice. This may include the development of works to be exhibited or performed into the future, research and development, making of new works or sharing of works via online platforms. A total of \$500,000 has been provided through the recent grant round.

Acknowledging the role of the arts in our community's recovery, the ACT Government will also invest up to \$1 million in Canberra arts organisations that have been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Eligible arts organisations (currently funded Key Arts and Program organisations) have been invited to submit proposals for support by demonstrating their financial need this calendar year.

Mental Health Support Package

	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	Total
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Expense	292	3,930	0	0	4,222
Offset – expense	-100	-135	0	0	-235

The Government is providing additional mental health support for Canberrans impacted by COVID-19. Increased support will be provided across a range of services, including early intervention, expanded step-down support and additional counselling services.

Funding will increase capacity of both government and non-government service delivery, including Lifeline. This initiative is partially funded from reprioritising existing resources.

More support for the healthcare system

	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	Total
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Expense	TBC	TBC	0	0	126,000

The Government has provided an additional \$126 million to combat COVID-19.

This additional funding is for:

- Health facility infrastructure, including additional emergency department surge capacity of up to 50 beds, flexing the bed base in Canberra Health Services by an additional 131 beds, and supporting Calvary Hospital to deliver dedicated COVID-19 wards and expanded ICU capacity
- Personal protective equipment
- Establishment of respiratory clinics and additional equipment
- The Emergency operations centre
- Enhanced operational capacity for public health services including contact tracing and COVID-19 testing

This cost will be shared between the Commonwealth and the ACT under the National Partnership on COVID-19 Response.

Public Housing – \$250 rent rebate

	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	Total
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Expense	3,000	0	0	0	3,000

The Government will make a payment of \$250 to all 11,700 social housing households by 30 June 2020. This includes both public housing and community housing households that pay rent based on their income. This payment is to relieve the financial pressure that may be felt by those most vulnerable in our community during this time.

As of June 19, 8,601 households have received the payment.

Waiver of fees for Early Childhood Education and Care service providers

	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	Total
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Revenue forgone	130	0	0	0	130

The Government will waive fees ordinarily payable by approved early childhood education and care service providers during the 2020 calendar year under the Education and Care Services National Law. The Education Directorate will also refund any fees already paid for 2020.