

Media Release

The Hon Gayle Tierney MP
Minister for Skills and TAFE
Minister for Regional Development



Friday, 15 November 2024

MORE HOMES FOR MORE REGIONAL WORKERS

The Allan Labor Government is backing more regional businesses to attract the workers they need, with another round of the *Regional Worker Accommodation Fund* now open.

Speaking today at the annual conference of the Victorian Country Press Association in Torquay, Minister for Regional Development Gayle Tierney announced the opening of applications for this program's second round.

The Regional Worker Accommodation Fund supports shovel-ready projects, with co-investment from private businesses, industries, regional councils, or local community groups to deliver the worker housing that local industries and workforces need to support communities in regional Victoria to thrive for years to come.

Eligible local housing projects will be fit-for-purpose to meet the skills needs of key sectors such as health, agriculture, education, manufacturing, and tourism – from self-contained units, worker villages, family dwellings, shared accommodation, and studios – and unique to the needs of the local community.

Regional Victorian cities and towns that have robust, shovel-ready ideas in partnership with local business and industry are strongly encouraged to apply in this second round.

The opening of applications for round two comes on the back of last month's announcement of funding for more than 20 successful projects that unlock nearly \$250 million in combined private and public investment through the program's first round, boosting affordable housing options for workers and their families.

Successful projects from the *first round of the Fund* include one of Australia's largest food manufacturers Don Smallgoods, who are building eight four-bedroom units for more than 30 manufacturing and production workers. The units will provide short-term and seasonal workers with accommodation nearby to Don's Castlemaine facility.

More than 1,300 workers will also be supported with new worker accommodation throughout Victoria's alpine resorts in Mt Hotham, Mt Buller and Falls Creek. The new homes will help ease workforce shortages and support tourism offerings in Victoria's iconic Alpine region through modern accommodation facilities built by Grollo Group.

Dozens of regional healthcare workers will find more affordable housing across the state including Goulburn Valley Health, Bairnsdale Regional Health, and Bass Coast Health. These projects will ensure regional Victoria has housing for the hospital staff to make it best placed to deliver essential health services.

The *Regional Worker Accommodation Fund* is part of the Labor Government's record \$45 billion investment in regional and rural Victoria since 2014. The fund is one of the ways regional and rural Victorian cities and towns are being becoming even better places to live, work, stay, and play.

Applications will open from Monday, 18 November to Friday, 31 January. For more information about the fund, visit rdv.vic.gov.au/rwaf.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Regional Development Gayle Tierney

"We're working closely with private sector businesses, industry and community groups to build the homes and accommodation our towns need – supporting Victoria's regions to have the skilled workers they need so our communities can prosper."

"The second round of the Regional Worker Accommodation Fund is one of the ways we're creating more housing where it's needed most."

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