

Media Release

The Hon Ros Spence MP
Minister for Agriculture
Minister for Community Sport
Minister for Carers and Volunteers



Thursday, 19 December 2024

HELPING BUSY FAMILIES WITH MAJOR BOOST FOR FOOD RELIEF

Communities facing food insecurity will have increased access to healthy food thanks to grants awarded through the Allan Labor Government's Community Food Relief program.

Minister for Carers and Volunteers Ros Spence today announced more than 110 grants to help communities in need. Community organisations and neighbourhood houses will receive up to \$50,000 for individual projects and up to \$75,000 for partnership projects to distribute fresh food and pantry staples.

The \$4.5 million Community Food Relief Program includes Local Grants announced today, and Coordination Grants announced in October, helping to respond to the rising demand for food relief amid cost-of-living pressures experienced by individuals and families.

Grants will boost the capacity of local community organisations to provide food relief, through expanding food relief activities, facility upgrades, support and upskilling of volunteers and delivering initiatives that address the underlying causes of food insecurity.

Grant recipients include South East Community Links which will expand its existing food pantry and storage, purchase and transport more culturally appropriate food, and provide food vouchers for people to purchase fresh produce at local grocery stores and the Dandenong Market.

In Hume, the Banksia Gardens Community Centre neighbourhood house will purchase a brand-new fridge and freezer and additional food to step up its distribution of healthy and nutritious food parcels to families and people with reduced mobility.

The Gathering Place in Morwell will use its grant to expand food access for First Nations people, offering cooking classes to preserve traditional recipes and upskill volunteers in food handling.

Since 2020, the Labor Government has invested more than \$56 million to strengthen Victoria's food relief system, including support for six Regional Foodshares.

In addition, \$3.3 million in operational funding is provided to Foodbank Victoria each year, as well as \$10 million to support the establishment of Foodbank's community food centres in Morwell and Ballarat.

To see the full list of funded projects, visit vic.gov.au/community-food-relief-program-local-grants.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Carers and Volunteers Ros Spence

"These grants will deliver much needed food relief to those who need it, and provide a helping hand for Victorians in need so they can get back on their feet."

"We know it's tough for many families right now, that's why we're boosting support for food relief where it's needed most."