

29 June 2021

SMALL BUSINESS SUPPORT PACKAGE HITS THE MARK

The region's peak business advocacy organisation, Business Illawarra, has welcomed the NSW Government's lockdown support package as a well-timed support for business that would be gratefully received, and commended government to listening to business and acting swiftly.

This morning's announcement follows advocacy over the weekend by Business Illawarra together with its state body, Business NSW, as well as calls by local members of parliament from across the region.

Executive Director of Business Illawarra, Adam Zarth, said that the lockdown for the Wollongong and Shellharbour local government areas was already having a dramatic impact on the bottom line of local business owners and that they will be relieved to hear that payments will start to hit their accounts from next month.

"Our organisation has been working with the Government on this initiative since the lockdown was confirmed on Saturday, and by using the real experiences of our members, we were able to demonstrate the widespread need for a quick turn-around for this package," said Mr Zarth.

"I also spoke to the NSW Small Business Commissioner on Sunday to ensure he was appraised of the situation facing Illawarra businesses following the announcement of a lockdown from Saturday evening, which created great concern and uncertainty."

"For small businesses of 20 or fewer employees including sole traders, they'll be eligible for grants of either \$5,000, \$7,000 or \$10,000, depending on the nature of the loss in turnover they can demonstrate. A tourism or hospitality related business can claim the grants if its turnover is less than \$10 million each year."

"This package does what we asked, and is based on what was used on the Northern Beaches following the shutdown over Christmas and takes into account feedback from the Small Business Commissioner, impacted businesses and local chambers of commerce."

"Illawarra business owners will take great comfort in knowing that some bills will be able to be paid by accessing these grants as soon as they become available. Larger businesses haven't been ignored either, with a number of State Government taxes and charges deferred, with payments due later in the year."

"It is terrific to see that Dine & Discover vouchers will be extended until 31 August, and be able to be used at takeaway venues, so long as that food is delivered, and not picked up."

"We all want this lockdown to be over as soon as possible, so businesses can get back to doing what they do best, employing people and supporting their local communities," said Mr Zarth.

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About Business Illawarra

Formerly the Illawarra Business Chamber, *Business Illawarra* is the region's peak business organisation, and the regional office of Business NSW responsible for the south-east of the state, including the Southern Highlands.