Local Jobs Plan

South Coast of Victoria | Victoria | October 2026

Workforce Australia Local Jobs (Local Jobs) is a program that creates partnerships between business and communities to meet local workforce needs, thereby improving employment outcomes.

Local Jobs operates in all 51 Employment Regions in Australia.

Local Jobs Overview

Local Jobs Plan

Each Employment Region has a Local Jobs Plan which outlines the labour market challenges in the region and the strategies to address these challenges.

Job Coordinators

Each Employment Region has a dedicated Job Coordinator who leverages existing resources, supports local labour markets through structural adjustments and retrenchments, and creates opportunities for collaboration between business and communities.

Local Jobs and Skills Taskforce

Each Employment Region has its own taskforce that meets regularly with the Job Coordinator to develop an understanding of challenges in the region and implement solutions. The taskforce is comprised of representatives from the region.

Local Jobs, Local People Grant

The Local Jobs, Local People grant funds activities that help people into ongoing employment or training. Activities must support local labour market needs.



Explore labour market insights for the South Coast of Victoria Employment Region

Local labour market challenges

- The Labour Market Insights data indicates that mature age people and people with a disability face longer periods of unemployment and underemployment. This shows the need for stronger inclusive employment pathways and targeted support.
- Youth unemployment and underemployment are increasing in smaller towns within the region. There are limited programs designed to help young people find work locally.
- Strong links between education and training that build relevant skills are required to keep young people engaged and ready for future job opportunities.
- The adoption of new technologies, climate variability, and evolving industry practices are driving changes in skills and workforce requirements across the agriculture, forestry, and fishing sectors.
- Strengthening workforce attraction, retention, upskilling, and awareness of career pathways will be critical to ensuring these industries have access to the skilled labour needed to support productivity, innovation, and long-term growth.
- Limited transport access, especially for people without a driver's licence, has contributed to a reduction in workforce participation where primary work opportunities are not located centrally. Creative mobility solutions are needed to improve access to work.
- Attracting and retaining skilled workers remains challenging. Many construction and renewable energy projects rely on 'fly-in fly-out' workers, and skilled health care and social assistance roles have a reliance on agency staff or temporary roles.

Local priorities

Priority 1 – Working together to support priority groups into employment

What are our challenges?

Many people in Workforce Australia Employment Services have been getting support for more than 12 months. A range of structural and situational barriers can affect a person's ability to take part in employment and training. These include limited transport options, health issues, insecure housing, and unequal access to education, financial support, and digital capability building. These barriers are common among priority cohorts, including people with disability, mature age workers, First Nations peoples, people who have been unemployed long term, and people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. Collaboration across organisations and support frameworks will improve job access and create sustainable employment.

How are we responding?

- We will deliver targeted initiatives that support mature age women to re-enter the workforce. This will be achieved through partnerships with organisations such as Women's Health and Wellbeing Barwon South West, Employment Services Providers, and other regional stakeholders.
- We will deliver informal networking and engagement opportunities that connect job seekers with employers in welcoming, community-based settings to support workforce participation, career exploration and local employment outcomes.
- We work closely with Employment Services Providers, including Sureway and are-able, to design and tailor initiatives that respond to the unique needs and circumstances of individuals on their caseloads.
- We will work with providers delivering Career Transition Assistance, Skills for Education and Employment, Employability Skills Training, Self Employment Assistance and Learn Local programs to ensure accessible digital and numeracy training across the region, while increasing awareness of upskilling and self-employment pathways that support entrepreneurship, career progression and workforce participation.

Priority 2 – Empower young people through employment pathways

What are our challenges?

Youth unemployment and underemployment are increasing, particularly in rural areas with limited transport and education access. Many young people are leaving school early or not completing the Victorian Certificate of Education. With a focus on academic pathways, and success often measured by academic results, there are young people disconnected from job options or accessibility to training.

How are we responding?

- We will work with organisations and initiatives such as Neil Porter Legacy, Victorian Early Leaver Connection Initiative and the Local Learning Employment Networks who are promoting career pathways. Alongside these organisations, we will engage with young people to ensure opportunities for co-design and shared understanding.
- We will actively contribute to youth-based networks across the region through council run programs and bodies, such as the Southern Grampians Youth Network and Youth Affairs Council Victoria.
- We will promote the advantages of apprenticeships and traineeships for businesses and young people, helping to develop a skilled workforce for the future, particularly in industries with strong projected demand. Working closely with Apprenticeships Victoria.
- We will encourage and support initiatives that develop practices of mentorship and intergenerational knowledge sharing.

Priority 3 – Support employers to build, grow and retain their workforce

What are our challenges?

According to Labour Market Insights, the South Coast of Victoria Employment Region has a lower unemployment rate than both the Victorian and national averages. Despite this, employers report greater difficulty finding suitable candidates than the state average, as illustrated in Jobs and Skills Australia's Recruitment Experiences and Outlook Survey. This is compounded by low use of paid advertising portals locally, meaning job opportunities often rely on personal networks or social media access and digital literacy.

How are we responding?

- We will connect employers to federal and state programs and initiatives in education and employment. These include Workforce Australia Employment Programs, Real Jobs Real Wages, Skills for Education and Employment, Work Foundations, Apprenticeships Victoria, the Victorian Early Leaver Connection Initiative, Learn Locals, Local Learning and Employment Networks, and the Skills and Jobs Centre.
- We will promote meaningful career pathways in our regions major hiring industries including healthcare and social assistance, agriculture, forestry and fishing, manufacturing, accommodation and food services, retail trade and construction. We will do this through practical initiatives, information sessions, and events designed to bring together employers and participants.
- We will actively connect job seekers, employers, and stakeholders with training opportunities, events, workforce information, and support services through the ongoing maintenance and enhancement of the South Coast of Victoria Local Jobs website, while promoting complementary regional resources.
- We will support workforce development for the clean energy transition by promoting career pathways, training opportunities and industry engagement activities that connect local people with emerging employment opportunities.

Priority 4 – Addressing transport as a barrier to employment

What are our challenges?

Limited public transport services, a shortage of learner driver trainers, and the rising costs of vehicles and fuel have contributed to a reduction in workforce participation across the region, and equitable access to education.

How are we responding?

- We will encourage and promote private sector innovation by continuing to identify and share successful employer-led transport workforce solutions.
- We will capture and document regional case studies that demonstrate the impacts of transport disadvantage on individuals and communities. The evidence gathered will support advocacy, stakeholder engagement and planning efforts aimed at improving transport access, strengthening regional connectivity and informing place-based solution.
- We will support and grow volunteer-led transport initiatives, such as learner driver and community transport programs.
- We will advocate for equitable access to jobs and training for priority groups, informed by participant experiences through facilitated focus groups.

Want to know more?

- Contact Angela Williams South Coast of Victoria Job Coordinator at Angela.Williams@localjobs.org.au
- Visit Local Jobs or Workforce Australia

The Department of Employment and Workplace Relations acknowledges the traditional owners and custodians of country throughout Australia and their continuing connection to land, waters and community. We pay our respects to them and their cultures, and Elders past, present and emerging.