Illegal Dumping Clean-up Rebate Program Guidelines (Version 2)

Minimising costs of cleaning up illegally dumped waste





deeca.vic.gov.au

VICTORIA State Government | Energy, Environment and Climate Action

AL

Photo credit

All photos by Waste Enforcement Association Australia.

Acknowledgement

We acknowledge and respect Victorian Traditional Owners as the original custodians of Victoria's land and waters, their unique ability to care for Country and deep spiritual connection to it.

We honour Elders past and present whose knowledge and wisdom has ensured the continuation of culture and traditional practices.

DEECA is committed to genuinely partnering with Victorian Traditional Owners and Victoria's Aboriginal community to progress their aspirations.



© The State of Victoria Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action 2025

Creative Commons

This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International licence, visit the Creative Commons website (http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/).

You are free to re-use the work under that licence, on the condition that you credit the State of Victoria as author. The licence does not apply to any images, photographs or branding, including the Victorian Coat of Arms, and the Victorian Government and Department logos.

ISBN 978-1-76176-660-2 **(pdf/online/MS word)**

Disclaimer

This publication may be of assistance to you, but the State of Victoria and its employees do not guarantee that the publication is without flaw of any kind or is wholly appropriate for your purposes and therefore disclaims all liability for any error, loss or other consequence which may arise from you relying on any information in this publication.

Accessibility

To receive this document in an alternative format, phone the Customer Service Centre on 136 186, email customer.service@deeca.vic.gov.au, or contact National Relay Service on 133 677. Available at DEECA website (www.deeca.vic.gov.au).

Contents

Message from the Minister 1

1. What is the Illegal Dumping Clean-up Rebate program? 2

2. Guidelines version control 2

3. Who can apply? 2

4. Who cannot apply? 2

5. What might be funded? 2

6. What will not be funded? 3

7. What are the rebate funding details? 3

8. What supporting documents will need to be provided? 3

9. What are the funding conditions? 3

10. What is the application process? 5

11. Additional information 5

12. What is the notification process? 5

13. Key dates 5

14. Checklist 5

Message from the Minister

Illegal dumping is a significant issue for governments and land managers across Victoria. It is found on bushland, vacant lots, roadsides and waterways, making it one of the most visible and prevalent signs of pollution in our environment.

In Victoria, if waste is dumped, abandoned or buried at a site that is not an authorised place, the disposal of that waste is illegal. We have listened to councils and other public land managers about this growing problem and the significant financial impact that this presents to these organisations.

That is why we have committed more than $21 million to address the issue, identify and prevent this illegal activity, pursue the perpetrators where we can, and ensure that illegally dumped waste is cleaned up and the costs to ratepayers and taxpayers is minimised.

Victorian Councils and public land managers have reported an increase in illegal dumping activity with five of Victoria's most impacted councils estimating that collectively they:

- receive almost 38,000 reports of dumped rubbish annually
- incur over $2.65 million in landfill levies as a result of cleaning up dumped rubbish
- spend more than $12.9 million on education to prevent, investigation and enforcement and cleaning up of dumped rubbish per annum.

The general environmental duty outlined in the *Environment Protection Act 2017* requires everyone to eliminate or reduce their risk of harm to human health and the environment. Dumping waste does not meet this duty, nor does it meet community expectations

Illegally dumped waste is a significant concern to communities, with an estimate that more than 30% of waste dumped originates from the construction sector which accounted for 80% of the total tonnage of dumped rubbish in one outer metropolitan local government area alone in 2024/25.

Dumped rubbish can often include materials that are unsafe to both people and the environment, including chemicals, asbestos and other contaminants.

The Victorian Government's commitment to protecting Victoria's open space is strong, not only to prevent environmental harm, but also to encourage all Victorians to get out and enjoy Victoria's unique natural beauty and take pride in the places and spaces where we live, work and spend leisure time.

Victorians have a critical role to play in protecting this environment, both by ensuring that the activities we undertake do not contaminate the environment, and by actively reporting illegal dumping activity.

Anyone who witnesses illegal activity such as the dumping of waste can take action by contacting their local council to report what they have witnessed or the EPA by calling 1300 372 842 or lodging a report at https://www.epa.vic.gov.au/report-illegal-waste-dumping.



The Hon. Jaclyn Symes MP

Minister for Environment

1. What is the Illegal Dumping Clean-up Rebate program?

The $8.5 million Illegal Dumping Clean-up Rebate Program is part of the Victorian Government's response to the negative impact illegal dumping has on our environment and waterways and the significant impact to local council services and community perceptions of safety and community pride.

Victorian Councils and public land managers have reported an increase in illegal dumping activity with five of Victoria's most impacted councils estimating that collectively they:

- receive almost 38,000 reports of dumped rubbish annually
- incur over $2.65 million in landfill levies as a result of cleaning up dumped rubbish
- spend more than $12.9 million on education to prevent, investigation and enforcement and cleaning up of dumped rubbish per annum.

The Victorian Government is investing $21.5 million over four years to:

- enhance the state's existing efforts to prevent and disrupt small to medium scale dumping in Victorias' parks, forests, public and council land ($13 million).
- support local government authorities and other public land managers clean-up activities by offering a rebate on a portion of costs incurred for clean-up activities, where all avenues to trace the perpetrator and recover costs have been exhausted or reasonably assumed to be infeasible ($8.5 million).

2. Guidelines version control

These Guidelines (Version 2) replace the previous guidelines (Version 1) that were initially published in January 2026.

Version 2 applies to applications lodged on or after the publication date of these Guidelines for clean-up activities undertaken on or after 1 July 2025 until 30 June 2029 or the closure of the program (whichever occurs first).

Applications lodged before the publication date of Version 2 will continue to be assessed under Version 1 of the Guidelines.

3. Who can apply?

This program will provide rebates to the following organisations responsible for the maintenance of public lands:

- Local government authorities
- Crown land Committees of Management
- Parks Victoria

4. Who cannot apply?

The following organisations and individuals cannot apply for a rebate:

- Individuals
- Private sector businesses and agencies
- Sole traders
- Educational institutions
- Not for profit organisations
- Unincorporated organisations
- Victorian or other state government agency or body (unless explicitly listed as eligible)
- Incorporated trustees on behalf of a trust
- Individual partners on behalf of a partnership
- Incorporated joint ventures
- Consortia applications with a lead organisation
- Applicants who do not hold an Australian Business Number (ABN).

5. What might be funded?

Eligible applicants can apply for a reimbursement of eligible costs associated with cleaning up illegally dumped waste as follows:

- Local government authorities and Crown land Committees of Management can apply for up to 50% of the costs associated with cleaning up illegally dumped waste.
- Parks Victoria can apply for up to 25% of the costs associated with clean up.

Eligible expenses include:

- contractor and council costs directly related to the collection, transport and disposal of illegally dumped waste
- rental of equipment required for waste disposal e.g. skip bin, trailer, bobcat

- waste disposal at a place authorised to receive it.

6. What will not be funded?

Ineligible expenses include, but are not limited to:

- insurances (e.g. public liability, volunteer, motor vehicle)
- recurrent operational expenses
- purchase of equipment or vehicles (heavy machinery, motor vehicles, boats)
- site rehabilitation expenses
- administrative costs, including project management and wages
- sampling equipment
- uniforms
- cost associated with fleet hire, purchase or maintenance
- litter clean ups and events
- standard hard waste collection services provided by councils
- disaster waste.

7. What are the rebate funding details?

Applicants may apply for rebate claims up to:

- 50% of costs up to $250,000 per claim and capped at $500,000 per council or Crown land Committees of Management organisation per financial year.
- 25% of costs up to $75,000 per claim and capped at $150,000 per financial year for Parks Victoria.

8. What supporting documents will need to be provided?

Please submit the following documents with your application:

- a signed statutory declaration - you can download the template from: www.environment.vic.gov.au/grants/illegal-dumping-clean-up-rebate
- photographs of illegally dumped waste showing scale of issue and main type of material and impact
- photographic evidence of the area after clean-up
- relevant site inspection reports
- invoices/receipts relating to claimed eligible expenses.

9. What are the funding conditions?

Rebate conditions

Rebates will be available for the costs of clean-up and disposal of eligible illegally dumped waste, subject to the following set of conditions:

- minimum volume of waste illegally dumped is equal to, or greater than, 2.5m3 or 2.5 tonnes or if a lesser amount, total eligible cleanup expenses exceeding $1,000
- clean-up area is confined to a localised area and is not widely dispersed – multiple dumping incidents may be included in the same claim if they are within the same confined area
- all avenues for the land manager and/or EPA to trace the perpetrator and recover costs have been exhausted or can be reasonably assumed to be infeasible
- photographic evidence of the illegally dumped waste is provided
- illegally dumped waste has been cleaned up on or after 1July 2025 and in accordance with requirements under the *Environment Protection Act 2017* and disposed of at a place authorised to receive it, including through the appropriate waste stream where applicable.
- applications must be lodged within 12 months of cleanup activities taking place.

DEECA will share information with the EPA and may require additional evidence before accepting the claim, and may, depending on evidence provided decline the claim with written justification.

DEECA reserves the right to:

- undertake random audits of all claims or cap funding to individual applicants depending on the number and costs of claims.
- amend and/or pause funding conditions, this guideline and application terms at anytime
- not approve any application
- approve a lesser amount than applied for

- end the entirety of the rebate program without notice.

The rebate program covers clean-up activities occurring between 1 July 2025 and 30 June 2029, or until funds are exhausted—whichever comes first.

If any information in the application is found to be false, misleading, or contrary to the conditions of these guidelines, the grant will be repayable on demand and future rebate applications may not be considered.

Funding must not be used for political campaigning or advocacy activities for political parties.

Caretaker Conventions

As the Victorian State election will be held on Saturday 28 November 2026, the Victorian Government will assume a caretaker role from 6.00pm on 3 November 2026 until such time that either it becomes clear that the incumbent government will be returned, or when a new government is commissioned.

In line with the caretaker conventions, the incoming government will determine whether to proceed with this rebate process and award funding after the caretaker period.

Applicants should be aware that:

- all information about this rebate process represents the position of the current government only, and is subject to change
- the incoming government may decide to not proceed with this rebate process.

Legislative and regulatory requirements

In delivering the activity rebate recipients are required to comply with all relevant Commonwealth and state/territory legislations and regulations, including but not limited to:

The Privacy Act 1998 (Commonwealth)

The Freedom of Information Act 1982 (Vic)

Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004

Environment Protection Act 2017

Tax implications

Applicants should consult the Australian Taxation Office or seek professional advice on any taxation implications that may arise from this rebate funding.

Successful applicants without an ABN will need to provide a completed Australian Taxation Office form “Statement by a Supplier” so that no withholding tax is required from the rebate payment.

Acknowledging the Victorian Government’s support

Successful applicants are expected to acknowledge the Victorian Government’s support and promotional guidelines (available at https://www.environment.vic.gov.au/grants/illegal-dumping-clean-up-rebate). Successful applicants must liaise with the departmental program area to coordinate any public events or announcements related to the project.

Payments

DEECA will make payment within 14 days of acceptance of the claim.

Privacy

Any personal information about you or a third party in your application will be collected by the department for the purposes of administering your grant application and informing Members of Parliament of successful applications. Personal information may also be disclosed to external experts, such as members of assessment panels, or other Government Departments for assessment, reporting, advice, comment or for discussion regarding alternative or collaborative grant funding opportunities. If you intend to include personal information about third parties in your application, please ensure that they are aware of the contents of this privacy statement.

Any personal information about you or a third party in your correspondence will be collected, held, managed, used, disclosed or transferred in accordance with the provisions of the *Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014* and other applicable laws.

DEECA is committed to protecting the privacy of personal information. You can find the DEECA Privacy Policy online at www.deeca.vic.gov.au/privacy.

Requests for access to information about you held by DEECA should be sent to the Manager Privacy, P.O. Box 500 East Melbourne 8002 or contact by emailing for.unit@deeca.vic.gov.au.

10. What is the application process?

1. Assess, document and photograph each site and determine eligibility against the criteria.
2. Document actions taken to trace the perpetrator and assessment of the likelihood of cost recovery.
3. Keep records of all invoices, purchase orders and receipts associated with the clean-up.

Claims must be submitted exclusive of GST.

4. Submit an "Application" to DEECA with evidence required as specified in section 7.
    a. Applications are submitted online using the Grants Online portal.
    b. To apply, go to the grant program web page: https://www.environment.vic.gov.au/grants/illegal-dumping-clean-up-rebate and click on the 'Start New Application' button. To return to a saved draft application, click on the 'Access Saved Application' button.

Attaching required documents:

Supporting documents must be in an acceptable file type, such as Word, Excel, PDF, or JPEG. The maximum file size for each file is 10MB.

You will receive an application number when you submit an application online. Please quote this number in all communications with the department relating to your application.

If you have documents to submit that cannot be attached to your online application you can email them to grantsinfo@deeca.vic.gov.au, quoting your application number. Attach all documents to one email, zipping the files if required.

Note: No hard copy applications will be accepted. Late and incomplete applications will not be considered

11. Additional information

Additional information is available at the program web page: www.environment.vic.gov.au/grants/illegal-dumping-clean-up-rebate/.

If you require assistance submitting your application online, email grantsinfo@deeca.vic.gov.au.

12. What is the notification process?

Successful and unsuccessful applicants will be notified in writing after the rebate review process is completed. All decisions are final and are not subject to further review. Unsuccessful applicants can ask for feedback on their application.

13. Key dates

Milestone	Date
Applications open	From 6 January 2026
Review and amendment of Guidelines	July – September 2026
Program closure	30 June 2029 (unless declared sooner)

14. Checklist

Before applying complete the following checklist:

- ☐ Read these guidelines carefully.
- ☐ Check if you are, or your organisation is, eligible for this rebate program.
- ☐ Check if your activity if eligible for this rebate program.
- ☐ Comply with all relevant laws and regulations in delivery of your clean-up activity.
- ☐ Download and sign the statutory declaration template (www.environment.vic.gov.au/grants/illegal-dumping-clean-up-rebate).
- ☐ Have your appropriate supporting documents ready.



deeca.vic.gov.au