

Hon Michelle Lensink MLC

Minister for Human Services

Sunday 5 April 2020

\$1.6 million funding boost to help vulnerable South Australians

Ensuring vulnerable South Australian have food on the table, can pay their bills and have access to financial counselling services is the focus of a \$1.6 million Marshall Liberal Government funding boost targeted at helping those most in need at this unprecedented time.

The additional funding to relief organisations, NGOs and charities will be spent over the next three months as demand surges for their services – and forms part of the Marshall Government’s strong plan to protect South Australians from the impacts of the coronavirus pandemic.

The \$1.6 million funding injection includes:

- An additional \$500,000 for the food relief sector, including \$200,000 to Foodbank and \$300,000 to other food relief charities including Oz Harvest, Secondbite and Meals on Wheels SA.
- \$800,000 provided to charities so they can give emergency relief to vulnerable South Australians, including supermarket and pharmacy vouchers and help with cost-of living pressures.
- \$185,000 to the Salvation Army, who provide the Affordable SA Helpline and National Debt Helpline SA branch.
- \$144,000 to existing providers within the Statewide Financial Counselling Program.

Minister for Human Services Michelle Lensink said the Marshall Liberal Government recognises our most vulnerable South Australians need extra help and support at this unprecedented time and has a strong plan to protect them.

“We recognise many South Australians are hurting right now and every little bit helps,” said Minister Lensink.

“Vulnerable South Australians, including families on low-and-fixed incomes , may be experiencing financial hardship as a result of COVID-19 and this \$1.6 million Marshall Liberal Government funding boost will be used to provide immediate relief to them.

“Food relief organisations like Foodbank, Meals On Wheels SA, Oz Harvest and Secondbite are doing fantastic work ensuring people have healthy, nutritious and tasty food on the table even as demand for their services continues to increase.

“This \$500,000 funding boost for food relief organisations will ensure food can continue to be available for those who need it and will enable more food hampers, as well as cooked



and frozen meals, to be delivered to vulnerable South Australians who are doing the right thing and self-isolating.

“Now, more than ever, people need help with their cost of living expenses including bills and daily essentials like groceries.

“We’ve committed \$800,000 to be dispersed to charities and NGOs including Baptist Care SA, Uniting Country SA, Anglicare and Junction Australia to help South Australians with cost of living relief through supermarket and pharmacy vouchers, as well as bill relief.

“We’ve boosted funding towards the Affordable SA Helpline, National Debt Helpline SA branch and existing providers within the Statewide Financial Counselling Program, so South Australians experiencing financial difficulties at this time have access to the support and help they need, whether that be counselling by phone or online.

“Under the current challenges we’re facing, the Marshall Liberal Government is committed to working with our organisations that provide critical services to South Australians to ensure they have the information and the support they need.”

National Debt Helpline: 1800 0007 007

Affordable SA Helpline: 1800 025 539