



**GREATER SHEPPARTON CITY COUNCIL**  
**CONFIDENT LIVING**  
**BOOKLET**



**GREATER  
SHEPPARTON**

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# Introduction

This booklet was developed by the Greater Shepparton Positive Ageing Advisory Committee in 2019 on behalf of the Greater Shepparton City Council. This booklet was updated in March 2020.

This booklet is generalist in nature. If you live in a retirement village or are renting, please check with your maintenance manager or landlord where appropriate. Please note that information is subject to change.

Calls to toll free numbers from mobile phones may incur additional charges.

This booklet provides important information about safety and security to help older residents to enjoy life to the fullest. It includes simple tips and key contacts that will assist with:

- Taking care of yourself
- Improving the security of your home
- Travelling safely and affordably
- Gaining access to services that will enhance your wellbeing and independence
- Managing your finances and other legal issues

While this booklet has been prepared to help older people to live more comfortably and independently it is also an important information source for carers.

The key contents have been divided into sections with specific areas of interest. A comprehensive list of contacts is located at the end of each of the sections.



# Section 1

## How to Take Care of Yourself

### Preventing Injury at Home

As we age, we are at a greater risk of injury in the home. The risks are different depending on individual health circumstances including eyesight, balance, muscle strength, bone density and the medications being taken by an individual.

#### Falls and accidents can be easily avoided by taking simple precautions

Injuries in the home are most commonly caused by slips on paths, steps, baths and showers, hot water and electricity, gates and fences and ingesting poisons.

#### Ensure that your home is well lit

- Install bright lighting around the home, including good lighting in your kitchen to prevent accidents. Keep your lamp switch close to your bed and a torch handy in case of power failure.
- Remember light bulbs that fail are often too hot to touch (if you try to replace them immediately after failure). If you have difficulty with your balance, ask a neighbour, family member, friend or carer to replace it for you.

#### Avoid unnecessary climbing, stretching and bending

- Store frequently used household items between hip and eye level.
- Ensure beds and chairs are at a comfortable height.
- Keep a low stepladder around the house, rather than using a chair for reaching, climbing or changing light bulbs.

#### Be aware of electrical and fire hazards

- Keep heaters away from furniture, clothing and curtains.
- If you smoke, use a deep ashtray that won't allow butts to roll out and don't smoke when you are lying down or sleepy.
- Install a smoke alarm that runs off mains electricity with a battery back-up. Change the battery annually.
- Replace appliances that have damaged cords or plugs.
- Replace damaged power points using a qualified electrician.
- Use power boards rather than double adapters.
- If you can smell gas, get out of your home immediately and contact emergency services on  000

Do these quick safety checks around your home:

- Clearly mark hot and cold taps.
- Ensure hot water temperature is controlled to below 50 degrees.
- Ensure hard floor surfaces are non-slip.
- Check carpets are well laid. Look at removing small rugs, which may cause falls.
- Check walkways are clear of obstructions.
- Ensure poisons are clearly labelled and stored in a safe location.
- Store medications separately from poisons and in a safe location.
- Check your first aid kit regularly. Ensure that it is well-equipped, easy to find and its contents have not passed their expiry dates.
- Ensure stairs, glazing, balconies and spas comply with current building regulations.

**For more information**

Contact Victoria's Department of Health and Human Services on ☎ **1300 650 172**.  
Local calls free within Victoria, except mobile phones.

**Interstate and mobile callers:** ☎ **(03) 9096 0000**

**Email:** [enquiries@dhhs.vic.gov.au](mailto:enquiries@dhhs.vic.gov.au), or visit

**Website:** <https://www2.health.vic.gov.au/ageing-and-aged-care/supporting-independent-living>

# Looking After Your Health

Looking after your physical and mental health and keeping socially active are all important ways to help maintain your mobility and independence.

Staying active helps everyone feel healthier and have more energy to enjoy life. Staying active and doing regular physical activity helps prevent and manage disease, maintain mobility and independence and reduce stress. Subject to your doctor's advice, at least 30 minutes of moderate physical activity per day is recommended for most people.

Walking regularly and briskly if you can manage it is a good way to begin exercise. This can be incorporated into a weekly program of activities. An exercise program can also include training to improve bone strength. Tai chi, yoga and dancing are good activities to improve balance and to prevent falls.

Following the tips set out below, and seeking advice from medical or nutrition experts, can help you live a long, healthy and active life.

## Tips to help you look after your health:

### Stay fit and healthy

- Choose some form of regular, appropriate exercise that you will enjoy.
- Aim to undertake at least 30 minutes of moderate physical activity per day.
- Have regular medical check-ups, especially if you are starting a fitness program.
- A mix of activity types is recommended, including endurance, strength and balance activities.
- Maintain a well-balanced diet.



# HEALTHY EATING PYRAMID



*Enjoy a variety of food and be active every day!*



## Monitor smoking, alcohol and medication

It is never too late to get help to quit smoking. Contact Quitline on ☎ **13 78 48** or visit [www.quit.org.au](http://www.quit.org.au).

If you drink, drink moderately to help avoid complications associated with heavy alcohol consumption.

Ask your doctor or pharmacist if you have questions about the medication you are taking. For more information:

The Better Health Channel has information about keeping fit and eating well. Contact via email [betterhealthchannel@dhhs.vic.gov.au](mailto:betterhealthchannel@dhhs.vic.gov.au), visit the website

[www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au](http://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au) or contact Greater Shepparton City Council on ☎ **(03) 5832 9700**. Local councils, community health centres and GPs are also a great source of information about how to get more active.

## Companionship and Social Support

Maintaining social contact with family, friends, and places of worship, interest groups or sports clubs is an important ingredient to maintain a happy and positive outlook on life.

Building and maintaining a supportive network of social contacts can help you feel more safe, secure and connected.

### Tips to help you expand your social network:

You could explore further education. Learning a new skill or gaining new knowledge contributes significantly to the enrichment of the intellectual, social and cultural life of both yourself and your community.

See what the Centre for Adult Education is offering. Contact them on

 Tel: **(03) 9652 0611**

 Toll free **1800 601 111** (from outside Melbourne) or [www.cae.edu.au](http://www.cae.edu.au)

Join a book club through your local library  
Goulburn Valley Library

 **1300 374 765**

Become a volunteer. Use your life experience and knowledge to contribute to your community by volunteering to help others or your environment. Contact

Greater Shepparton City Council

 **(03) 5832 9700**

For more information:

Greater Shepparton City Council has information about community groups and activities for older people

 **(03) 5832 9700**, or you can contact Seniors Information Victoria on

 **1300 135 090** or visit

[www.cotavic.org.au/seniors](http://www.cotavic.org.au/seniors)

The following groups also provide information for older people wanting to expand their social networks:

Association of Neighbourhood Houses and Learning Centres

 **(03) 9602 1228** or visit

[www.nhvic.org.au](http://www.nhvic.org.au)

Life Activities Club Victoria

 **(03) 9655 2106** or visit

[www.life.org.au](http://www.life.org.au)

The University of the Third Age (U3A) Network

 **(03) 5821 3333** or visit

[www.gvu3a.com.au](http://www.gvu3a.com.au)

# Assistance at Home

There are a wide range of services available to older people who may be experiencing difficulty in managing daily tasks.

## Care and meal assistance

My Aged Care is the new centralised first port of call for older people (over 65 or over 50 for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people) wishing to access services.

Following an assessment you may be eligible to receive services such as:

### Help at home

- Personal care e.g. help with showering and getting dressed
- Modifications to your home, such as hand rails or ramps
- Nursing, physiotherapy and other care
- Meals and help with cooking
- Household jobs like cleaning
- Equipment e.g. walking frames
- Social activities

To find out more Contact My Aged Care on ☎ **1800 200 422** or visit [www.myagedcare.gov.au/contact-form](http://www.myagedcare.gov.au/contact-form)

### Independent living assistance

- Home maintenance can improve your safety by helping with small jobs around your home such as installing hand rails, changing light globes and checking smoke alarms.
- Trained volunteers can assist you at your home and spend some time with you.

### Health assistance

- A registered nurse, your GP or chemist can provide advice about managing your health issues or concerns.
- The Nurse-On-Call Service is a phone service that provides immediate, expert health advice from a registered nurse, 24 hours a day, and seven days a week. ☎ **1300 606 024** or visit [www.health.vic.gov.au/nurseoncall](http://www.health.vic.gov.au/nurseoncall) for more information.

### You may need this service when:

- You or someone for whom you are caring for is feeling unwell
- You are not sure if you should seek medical help
- You are away from home or situated a long way from medical help
- You simply want advice or information about health services in your area

## Carers assistance

Support is also available for those who care for older people.

FamilyCare provides family services, carer and disability support services including respite, home and personal care to people in the Shepparton area.

FamilyCare Shepparton can be contacted on ☎ (03) 5823 7000.

Carers Victoria provides information, referrals, support and resources that include: community care services in your area, financial entitlements, care support services, legal issues for carers, health and wellbeing, respite and disease or condition-specific organisations. Carers Victoria can be found at [www.carersvictoria.org.au](http://www.carersvictoria.org.au) or by calling ☎ 1800 514 845 or TTY (03) 9396 9587

National Respite for Carers Program coordinates access to respite services in your local area. They can give you advice about respite services and find the service closest to you. Find more information at [www.health.gov.au](http://www.health.gov.au) or ☎ 1800 052 222

Greater Shepparton City Council has information about community groups and activities for older people: ☎ (03) 5832 9700

## Useful telephone numbers

### ARPA Over 50s Association

☎ (03) 9650 6144

### Beyond Blue

☎ 1300 224 636

[www.beyondblue.org.au](http://www.beyondblue.org.au)

### Commonwealth Carers Respite Centres

☎ 1800 059 059

[www.health.gov.au](http://www.health.gov.au)

### Life Activity Clubs

☎ (03) 9655 2106

[life@life.org.au](mailto:life@life.org.au)

[www.life.org.au](http://www.life.org.au)

### Lifeline

☎ 13 11 14

[www.lifeline.org.au](http://www.lifeline.org.au)

### National Relay Service

☎ TTY/voice calls 133 677

☎ Speak & Listen 1300 555 727

SMS relay 0423 677 767

[www.relayservice.gov.au](http://www.relayservice.gov.au)

### Greater Shepparton City Council

☎ (03) 5832 9700

[www.greatershepparton.com.au](http://www.greatershepparton.com.au)

### GV Health

☎ (03) 5832 2322

[www.gvhealth.org.au](http://www.gvhealth.org.au)

### Rumbalara Elders Care Facility

☎ (03) 5820 0000

[www.rumbalara.org.au](http://www.rumbalara.org.au)

### Salvation Army

☎ 13 72 58

[www.salvationarmy.org.au](http://www.salvationarmy.org.au)

### Volunteering Victoria

☎ (03) 8327 8500

[www.volunteeringvictoria.org.au](http://www.volunteeringvictoria.org.au)

### Vision Australia

☎ 5831 9400

[www.visionaustralia.org](http://www.visionaustralia.org)

### Carers Gateway

☎ 1800 422 737

<https://www.carergateway.gov.au>

## Section 2

### How to Stay Safe in Your Home

#### How to Improve the Security of Your Home

A safe and secure home is a fundamental requirement for confident living. Good planning will help you to identify potential risks and put in place preventative measures to improve the security of your home.

#### Tips to help keep your home secure:

Keep all windows and doors locked but ensure that you can still get out quickly and easily in an emergency:

- Never deadlock yourself in your home (when you are home, keep a key in the lock on the inside of the door).
- Do not hide any keys outside your house.
- Make sure windows and doors are not obscured by a fence, bushes or trees.
- Lock your front and back doors if you are outside working around your house or in your garden.

#### Keep your house safe by keeping the roof space safe

- Remove all access to ladders and tools outside.
- Attach a lock to the ceiling manhole if you have one.

#### Consider installing

- Burglar alarms, light switch timers, safes, window locks, security doors, door locks, chains and door viewers. Ensure that you can easily open security devices from the inside in an emergency.

#### If you go away or your house is unoccupied for a while

- Ask a trusted person to collect your mail, bring in garbage/recycling bins and to keep an eye on your house.
- Do not leave a message on your, or anyone else's door. It indicates you are not home.
- Set timer switches on lights so they can turn on for a while during the evening.

#### Tip for keeping your possessions secure

- Mark valuable property. It makes it easier to identify and therefore, less attractive to thieves. One of the best ways to do this is to engrave your driver's license number, preceded by your state (for example V=Victoria).
- If you do not have a driver's license, you can obtain a form for a Proof of Identity Card/Key Pass from your local police station or by calling ☎ 1300 304 614. The key pass is a good form of official identification should you need it.
- Photograph or keep written log of possessions of significant value.
- Keep receipts of items with significant monetary value.
- For more information about engraving your possessions visit [www.neighbourhoodwatch.com.au](http://www.neighbourhoodwatch.com.au)

## Fire Safety

It is important to be aware of potential fire hazards in your home such as threats posed by electrical and gas appliances, cigarettes and matches and other commonly used items. All homeowners should be prepared for fire and take some simple precautions to prevent it.

### Tips to help reduce the risk of fire in your home:

#### Equipment you must have

- Since February 1999, all residential buildings must have a smoke alarm installed. The Country Fire Authority recommends that smoke alarms should be vacuumed monthly. Batteries should be replaced at least once a year to ensure correct operation. It is a good idea to change the batteries when you change your clocks for daylight saving.
- Always use a fire screen with an open fire.

#### Equipment you should have

- Keep a fire blanket and fire extinguisher in your home.
- Protect your home with an electrical safety switch.
- If you leave the kitchen during cooking, turn off the burners.

#### Store flammable materials carefully

- Store flammable liquids away from heaters, hot water service pilot lights and other naked flames.
- Keep clothing, curtains and furniture at least one meter away from heating appliances.
- Keep matches and cigarette lighters out of the reach of children.
- Do not leave cigarettes unattended. Put out all smoking materials before you walk away.

# What to do in Emergency Situations

By planning ahead and being organised, you can get through an emergency situation.

## Tips to help you prepare for emergencies:

### Preparing yourself

- Have an emergency plan, including being prepared for an evacuation.
- Listen to local ABC radio station 97.7FM or ONE- FM 98.5FM or watch local TV for information and follow all emergency authority advice.
- Check that neighbours know of the emergency warning.
- Check food and water stocks.
- Prepare an emergency kit (water, torch, candles, and matches, portable battery powered radio, spare batteries, first aid kit, emergency contact numbers and plastic bags).
- When you are home, keep keys in doors that have been locked to ensure you can get out in an emergency.
- Ensure that all windows and doors can be opened easily from the inside.
- Make sure your house number is easy to see so emergency services can find your home.

### If you decide, or are advised, to evacuate

Listen to, and act on, official emergency information and warnings.

#### Take with you:

- important medication
- mobility aids
- prescription glasses
- personal identification, wallet/purse
- If you have a companion animal(s), prepare:
  - appropriate transport (cage/box)
  - pet food
  - water
  - plastic bags
  - restraint devices (leads, muzzles)

## Preparing your home

### To help avoid fire and storm damage:

- Trim tree branches well clear of houses.
- Ensure your gutters and roof is regularly cleaned.
- If possible, have someone secure or stow away items such as outdoor furniture and BBQs.
- Bring pets inside during a storm and comfort them.
- Check home roofing is in good condition.

### If a flood is expected:

- If possible, have someone stack furniture and possessions above likely flood level on beds and in the roof (electrical items on top).
- Move garbage, chemicals and poisons to a high place.
- Secure objects that could come loose and cause damage.
- Check with your local council if your residence is in a flood prone area and if it is, how often it floods.
- For emergency assistance in a flood or storm contact VIC SES on ☎ **132 500** or visit [www.ses.vic.gov.au](http://www.ses.vic.gov.au)

### If a fire breaks out:

- Your first priority is to leave the house. Know two separate ways to leave your home, and practice your home escape plan regularly.
- If possible, close doors behind you as you go to help you control the fire.

- When leaving your home due to fire, if possible, get down low and crawl beneath the smoke.
- To check if it is safe to move out of a room, check the door knob or door for heat (use the back of your hand).
- If your clothes catch fire, stop, gently drop to the ground, cover your face with your hands and roll back and forth until the fire is out.

### In a bushfire prone area:

- Prepare yourself and your property.
- Seek advice from your local CFA fire brigade. Call them in advance of the fire season for advice on how to prepare your home and family in the event of a bushfire.
- On high risk days, decide early to stay and defend or leave your property dependent on the preparations you have made for your home and on the severity of the situation.
- Listen to the local ABC radio station for regular updates on local bushfires. To find out your local frequency, visit [www.abc.net.au/radio/frequencyfinder](http://www.abc.net.au/radio/frequencyfinder)
- Get a battery-operated radio so you get public advisory information if the mains electricity supply is damaged.
- Listen and act on official emergency information and warnings.
- The CFA and the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning have established a Victorian Emergency Hotline for the most up to date information on bushfires and total fire bans. The number is ☎ **1800 226 226**.

If you suffer a burn:

- The most effective way to treat a burn is to run it under cool water for 20 minutes. If the burn is severe, always seek medical treatment.

### **Emergency Services**

(Ambulance, police or fire brigade)

When you ring **000** for emergency services, try to give them the following information:

- The service you need (police, fire brigade or ambulance).
- The location of the emergency including the closest intersecting streets to the incident.
- The telephone number you are calling from.
- What happened.
- How many people need help and their condition.
- What help is being given.

Any other information for which they ask.

## **Useful Telephone Numbers:**

### **ABC Local Radio**

[www2b.abc.net.au/reception](http://www2b.abc.net.au/reception)  
frequencyfinder

### **Country Fire Authority**

☎ (03) 9262 8444  
[www.cfa.vic.gov.au](http://www.cfa.vic.gov.au)

### **Key Pass**

☎ 1300 304 614

### **Neighbourhood Watch**

[www.neighbourhoodwatch.com.au](http://www.neighbourhoodwatch.com.au)

### **Victorian Emergency Information Line**

☎ 1800 226 226.

### **Victoria State Emergency Service (storms or floods)**

☎ 132 500

# Section 3

## Personal Safety and Security

### Personal safety

Feeling safe and secure is important for everyone, especially in the home.

#### Tips to help you increase your personal safety:

##### Disclosing personal information

- Always be careful about sharing private information. Be discreet about discussing financial and living arrangements.
  - Do not let strangers know how many people live in your home or when the house will be unoccupied.
  - Be careful about giving too much information on your answering machine. A simple message might say: "We cannot answer the phone at this time, please leave your details". If you are living alone, using the word 'we' instead of 'I' in your recorded message is preferable as it indicates to strangers that there may be multiple members of the household.
  - Consider installing a personal alarm. Personal alarms ensure that you receive emergency assistance at the push of a button on a pre-programmed telephone, a household alarm or a personal alarm worn as a pendant.
- The Victorian Government's Personal Alert Victoria service is free to at risk people (subject to eligibility criteria). For more information, visit the Victorian Government's Aged Care Services website at [www.health.vic.gov.au/agedcare/services/pav/](http://www.health.vic.gov.au/agedcare/services/pav/)  
To check whether you are eligible for this service contact Greater Shepparton City Council on ☎ (03) 5832 9700. Those not eligible for the free service can gain access to a private personal alarm service through a variety of different providers and Council will be able to assist with providing this information.

##### For more information:

Information on how to feel safer and more secure can be found at [www.neighbourhoodwatch.com.au](http://www.neighbourhoodwatch.com.au) or by contacting Greater Shepparton City Council on ☎ (03) 5832 9700.

## Red Cross Telecross

- Red Cross deliver a service called Telecross. It provides you with a daily phone call to check on your wellbeing and safety. Telecross gives peace of mind to people who live alone and to their carers. For more information, call **Red Cross** on ☎ **1300 885 698**.

## Be careful about whom you let into your home

- Use your peep-hole or door chain to see who is at the door without opening it.
- Always check the credentials of service repair people and do not let charity collectors enter your home.
- Always talk to people through a locked screen door. If you are not sure of the person's identity, check the company's details in the phone book. You can then verify the visitor's identity and position. Do not open the door to check identification.
- If a stranger asks to use your phone, direct them to the nearest public phone or make the call for them. Do not let them inside.

## Feeling threatened

- If you feel threatened by someone at the door or on the telephone, calling to a companion (even though you are alone) to indicate there is someone else in the house is a good security measure.
- If you receive an obscene or menacing phone call, just hang up the phone. If the calls persist, keep a record of them and contact your phone provider.

## Suspecting an intruder

- If you suspect that an intruder is in your home, leave the house immediately and call the police.
- Go to a neighbour's house and tell them what has happened. Call ☎ **000** and stay there until the police arrive. Do not confront the intruder.
- If you see the intruder leaving, note down a description of the intruder and, if they have a car, the number plate, colour, make, model and any other details.



# Financial Safety and Consumer Rights

All Victorian consumers have a right (under law) to not be misled or deceived by others. They must receive acceptable treatment by other parties and all consumers.

## Tips to help you stay financially safe

### Before purchasing goods or services

- Shop around - being informed is the best way to get the best deal or price for a product.
- Check out consumer magazines such as Choice to see if there have been any recent tests on the product or service.
- Choose wisely and be careful when considering big purchases - do not buy on impulse.
- Shop around to get the best credit deal.

### When choosing goods or services

- Resist high pressure sales techniques such as “sign now or you’ll miss out” or “this price won’t last, buy now or you’ll pay more”. The more the salesperson pressures you, the more reason not to sign.
- Understand ALL the documentation and ALL your rights when purchasing goods or service in store or over the internet, over the telephone, through a door-to-door salesperson or through mail order.

- Ensure door-to-door sales of more than \$50 are recorded in writing and include a 10 day cooling-off period.
- Know what you are getting from whom.
- Know how much it costs and how you will pay for it.
- Know if you can return the goods for a refund. Unqualified ‘No Refund’ signs are unenforceable if the goods purchased are faulty or have been misrepresented to you in any way.

### After purchasing goods or services

- Send in the warranty card on the new product if necessary.
- Keep all receipts as proof of purchase.

### For more information:

Contact Consumer Affairs Victoria on

☎ 1300 55 81 81

☎ TTY 133 677 or

[www.consumer.vic.gov.au](http://www.consumer.vic.gov.au)

# Abuse, Mistreatment or Neglect of Older People

All people have the right to be treated with respect and dignity. Older people have the same right as everyone else to feel and be physically, mentally, socially and financially safe.

Unfortunately, older people may be vulnerable to abuse, mistreatment or neglect by people they know, including family. The most common type of abuse against older people is financial exploitation. It is not uncommon for a family member to try to use an older family member's money for their own purposes or to feel entitled to someone else's money if they know or think they will be a beneficiary of their estate.

## Tips to help protect against abuse, mistreatment or neglect:

### Consider appointing a power of attorney or power of guardianship:

- Enduring powers of attorney and guardianship enable you to appoint someone you trust to make decisions on your behalf should you be unable to because of some incapacity. Enduring means the power continues even when you are unable to make decisions for yourself. There are three main types of enduring powers of attorney. These different forms enable you to appoint someone who can:
  - manage your finances so that your financial interests are protected
  - make decisions in relation to medical treatment
  - make lifestyle decisions such as where you live (guardianship).

- The Office of the Public Advocate has a free comprehensive written guide and provides telephone advice on all these powers of attorney and guardianship.

### Keep regular contacts:

- Keep a network of support with friends, neighbours and family members.
- Keep in touch with people you trust such as community health workers, religious leaders and communities or a medical practitioner.

### Get advice:

- Seek independent professional advice when making any changes to your financial or living arrangements.
- Don't make decisions or sign documents until you have all the information you need.

## Seek help

- The first time abuse happens - that is you feel or think something is not quite right - seek help.
- Abusive behaviour does not go away on its own.
- Write important telephone numbers, such as those of friends or the police, on a card, and leave this beside your bed or telephone.
- If you think that another person needs assistance but is having difficulty because they have dementia or some other cognitive disability, you may want to seek advice on possible guardianship or administration from the Office of the Public Advocate.
- You can speak to your GP about what is happening to you as well.
- The prevention of elder abuse is everyone's responsibility.

## For more information:

If you experience abuse or neglect you should seek help from the Office of the Public Advocate ☎ **1300 309 337** or ☎ TTY **1300 305 612** or visit [www.publicadvocate.vic.gov.au](http://www.publicadvocate.vic.gov.au)

Seniors Information Victoria  
☎ **1300 135 090** or visit  
[www.cotavic.org.au/seniors](http://www.cotavic.org.au/seniors)

## Goulburn Valley Community Legal Service

☎ **(03) 5831 0900** or  
☎ **1800 310 900**

## Useful Telephone Numbers:

### Consumer Affairs Victoria

☎ **1300 55 81 81** TTY **133 677**  
[www.consumer.vic.gov.au](http://www.consumer.vic.gov.au)

### Emergency Services

**(Ambulance, police or fire brigade)**  
☎ **000**

### Independent Living Centre

☎ **1300 885 886, (03) 9362 6111**  
TTY: **(03) 9314 9001**  
[www.yooralla.eom.au/ilc.php](http://www.yooralla.eom.au/ilc.php)

### Mount Eliza Personal Alarm Services

☎ **1800 451 300**  
[www.mepacs.com.au](http://www.mepacs.com.au)

### Neighbourhood Watch

[www.neighbourhoodwatch.com.au](http://www.neighbourhoodwatch.com.au)

### Office of the Public Advocate

☎ **1300 309 337**  
☎ **(03) 9603 9529**  
[www.publicadvocate.vic.gov.au](http://www.publicadvocate.vic.gov.au)

### Safety Link Personal Response Service

☎ **1800 813 617**  
[www.safetylink.org.au](http://www.safetylink.org.au)

### Seniors Information Victoria

☎ **1300 135 090**  
<http://cotavic.org.au/info/siv/>

## Section 4

### How to Travel Safely

#### Tips for Safe Travel in Victoria

Feeling confident and at ease while walking, driving a car or riding on public transport is vital to keeping active and participating in your community.

Whatever your mode of travel, carrying a charged mobile phone is a good safety tool to get help in emergency situations.

A number of services and discounts are available for older people to help make public transport more comfortable and affordable.

#### Tips to help you walk with care:

##### Plan ahead

- Plan your route so you cross the road at controlled crossings.
- Minimise the number of roads you cross in uncontrolled locations. Contact the Visitor Centre ☎1800 808 839 or visit [www.greatershepparton.com.au](http://www.greatershepparton.com.au) for walking maps.
- If you must walk at night, wear light coloured clothing or a reflective aid.

##### Safety first! Always take the following precautions

- Ensure that you have enough time to cross the road.
- Cross at a pedestrian crossing, with traffic signals. If these are not available, whenever possible, choose a place with a pedestrian refuge and/or median strip.
- Wait on the median strip if you are unable to cross the road in one attempt.
- Look carefully in all directions for vehicles before and as you cross the road.
- Do not start to cross near a bend in the road. Give yourself a good chance to see vehicles coming from both directions.
- Time your outing to coincide with busy pedestrian times.
- Avoid crossing roads near roundabouts. Drivers must look in a lot of directions and may not see you.
- Walk along busy or well-lit streets, and walk against the direction of traffic.
- Walk well away from the roadway, preferably on the footpath if provided.
- Do not assume that a driver has seen you.
- Do not cross from between parked cars.
- Check with you doctor to see how any medication you are taking may affect you.
- Keep the amount of cash and valuables you carry to a minimum.
- Keep your pension and credit cards separate from your cash wallet, as they take a lot of time to replace, which will be inconvenient for you.
- If someone tries to snatch your bag, let it go and report it to the nearest police station.
- If you feel uncomfortable about the presence of someone behind you, go into a nearby house or shop.

## Tips to help you drive safely:

It is important to maintain confidence when driving.

A good way to do that is to drive regularly.

### Plan ahead

- If you are driving somewhere unfamiliar, plan your route carefully in advance, and if possible use intersections with traffic lights. Intersections with STOP or GIVE WAY signs are a better choice than intersections with no signs.
- If possible, avoid driving in wet weather, poor light or at night. If it is necessary to drive at night, do not drive at times when you would normally be asleep.
- Ensure maximum visibility by keeping windscreen and windows clean.
- Wear driving glasses or sunglasses in bright sunshine.
- Make sure that car devices such as heaters and radios are selected and adjusted before you start driving.
- Always carry a torch with good batteries in your car.
- Do a Wiser Driver or Years Ahead course to update your knowledge and skills.

### Wait until you are ready

- Don't drive if you are tired, upset or affected by alcohol or medication.
- Take a break every one or two hours on long trips.

### Get advice

- The Victorian Older Drivers' Handbook aims to help you continue driving safely. It includes a helpful checklist to encourage you to think about your driving. The handbook is available at no cost from the VicRoads Book shop on <https://billing.vicroads.vic.gov.au/epages/bookshop.sf>

If you are unsure of your driving ability, arrange for a driving instructor or occupational therapist that specialise in driver assessments to check your driving. Many driving schools offer driver assessment and refresher courses.

- Get regular check-ups from your doctor and optometrist, particularly if you or others notice there have been some changes which mean you cannot see as clearly as you would like. You should have your eyes examined every two years, or more frequently if necessary.
- Tell your doctor that you drive. Some medications can affect your driving ability.
- Read your medicine labels carefully and follow the directions and warnings.
- When buying a car, check its safety rating. Useful vehicle safety information can also be obtained by visiting [www.howsafeisyourcar.com.au](http://www.howsafeisyourcar.com.au)

### For more information:

You can get more information about Victoria's roads and road safety by calling VicRoads on

 13 11 71 or visit [www.vicroads.vic.gov.au](http://www.vicroads.vic.gov.au)

# Tips to help you feel confident using public transport:

## Plan ahead

- Get and use an up-to-date timetable and Myki from Public Transport Victoria  
**☎ 1800 800 007**  
[www.ptv.vic.gov.au](http://www.ptv.vic.gov.au)  
[www.vline.com.au](http://www.vline.com.au)
- You will need to pre-purchase tickets before you get on public transport.
- Stay in well-lit areas or wait near local shops and avoid long waits at platforms, particularly in the evening.
- If possible, try to use the following stations, which are marked on metropolitan train maps:
  - One of the 67 premium stations in metropolitan Melbourne. They have toilets and are staffed seven days a week (from the first to last train) as well as a staffed Customer Service Centre
  - One of the 30 Host Stations where staff are present during morning peak hours.
- If you use a wheelchair or use a mobility aid, you can ask for help from the tram, train or bus driver to assist you board. To assist the driver to help you exit the train, let them know at what stop you want to get off.

## Stay with others

- On a train or tram, pick a carriage with lots of people in it. If possible, and if they make you feel comfortable, sit near them.

- If someone starts to interact with you in a way that makes you feel vulnerable or unsafe, speak out, draw attention to it and seek assistance of an employee or another adult. Don't ignore it.
- Think 'safety in numbers' and, if possible, take a friend with you when you travel, or travel in a group.

Be vigilant;

If you drive to the train station:

- Park your car as close as possible to the station
- Always look inside your car before you get in, and have your keys ready when you are leaving the station
- Lock your car as soon as you get in, and do not leave anything of value in the car

## For further information:

Public Transport Victoria on **☎ 1800 800 0007** or [www.ptv.vic.gov.au](http://www.ptv.vic.gov.au) offers information and advice on gaining access to transport, planning your journey, timetables, stations, stops and fares. Public Transport Victoria can advise you on concessions on public transport including use of Seniors Card, Vision Impaired Travel Pass, Companion Card, pensioner concession cards and myki tickets.

V/Line Helpline ☎ [1800 800 007](tel:1800800007) or [www.vline.com.au](http://www.vline.com.au) offers similar information to travellers throughout country Victoria.

For people with severe and permanent disabilities which prevent the use of public transport, the Multi-Purpose Taxi Program provides travel concessions. They can be contacted on ☎ **1800 638 802** if you are in the city.

Travelers Aid Society of Victoria provides support, advice and assistance to people in emergency situations or with special requirements. Its Centre is at Level 2, 169 Swanston Street, Melbourne or you can call ☎ **(03) 9654 2600**. Travelers Aid Southern Cross Station offers similar services, including vital services for travellers who are frail or have special needs. You can contact them on ☎ **(03) 9670 2072**.

The Disability Access Service (Level 2, 169 Swanston Street, Melbourne), provides personal care and support services to people with disabilities who want to be independent when they visit Melbourne. They can be contacted on **(03) 9654 7690** or by email at [s@travellersaid.org.au](mailto:s@travellersaid.org.au).

Pension Card & Seniors Card holders are entitled to discounted fare on the public transport system, including senior's day pass allowing free Sunday metropolitan travel and greater access concession fares on a number of services. To gain access to these transport concessions, you must have your Seniors Card with you when you travel. More details about Seniors Card travel benefits are included in Section 5 or you can call ☎ **1300 797 210**.

## Useful Telephone Numbers

### Disability Access Service

☎ (03) 9654 7690

### How Safe is Your Car

[www.howsafeisyourcar.com.au](http://www.howsafeisyourcar.com.au)

### Liveable Housing Australia

[www.liveablehousingaustralia.org.au](http://www.liveablehousingaustralia.org.au)

### Multi-Purpose Taxi Program

☎ 1800 638 802

### Public Transport Victoria

☎ 1800 800 007

[www.ptv.vic.gov.au](http://www.ptv.vic.gov.au)

### Seniors Card

☎ 1300 797 210

[www.seniorscard.vic.gov.au](http://www.seniorscard.vic.gov.au)

### Travellers Aid Society of Victoria

☎ (03) 9654 2600

### Travellers Aid Southern Cross Station

☎ (03) 9670 2873

### Viclink

[www.viclink.com.au](http://www.viclink.com.au)

### VLine Helpline

☎ 1800 800 007 or [www.vline.com.au](http://www.vline.com.au)

### VicRoads

☎ 13 11 71 or [www.vicroads.vic.gov.au](http://www.vicroads.vic.gov.au)

### VicRoads Bookshop

[www.vicroads.vic.gov.au](http://www.vicroads.vic.gov.au)

## Section 5

### Other Services that May Assist Older Victorians

#### Seniors Card

The Seniors Card is a retail discount card providing exclusive benefits to eligible older Victorians. To be eligible you must be:

- aged 60 years or over
- a permanent resident of Victoria
- retired or not working more than 35 hours per week in paid employment.

#### Benefits and Discounts:

##### Public Transport Benefits:

- Travel throughout metropolitan zones 1, 2 and 3 on the all-day senior's daily fare or at the concession fare rate for shorter trips within zones. For more information visit the PTV website: [www.ptv.vic.gov.au/tickets/fares/concession/seniors/](http://www.ptv.vic.gov.au/tickets/fares/concession/seniors/)
- Concession fare travel on all V/Line rail and coach services, with additional discounted fares available for off peak travel from Tuesday to Thursday.
- A Seniors Card entitles Seniors Card holders to free travel on Sundays on metropolitan trams, buses and trains throughout zones 1, 2 and 3 and on the bus networks in Ballarat, Bendigo and Geelong.

**Fishing** - Seniors Card holders are not required to hold a fishing license and can fish at no cost throughout Victoria.

**Museums** - Free admission is offered to Seniors Card holders throughout the year at the Immigration Museum, Science Works and the Melbourne Museum.

**Discounts** - Discounts or additional benefits to Seniors Card holders are available from 3,000 participating businesses and retailers including travel, accommodation, hospitality, entertainment, leisure and further education.

##### How to apply

Application forms for the Seniors Card are available from your local Post Office or from your local State Member of Parliament. Further information can be found by calling

☎ **1300 797 210** or visit

[www.seniorsonline.vic.gov.au/seniors-card/other-benefits/public-transport-benefits](http://www.seniorsonline.vic.gov.au/seniors-card/other-benefits/public-transport-benefits)

##### Companion Card

- Companion Card promotes the right of people with a disability, who require a companion, to fair ticketing at Victorian events and venues.

☎ **1800 650 611**

[companioncard@health.vic.gov.au](mailto:companioncard@health.vic.gov.au)

##### Carers Card

- Carers Card Program is collaboration between the government, businesses and the community. The Carers Card Program gives recognition, understanding and support to Victorian carers.

☎ **1800 901 958**

[www.carercard.vic.gov.au](http://www.carercard.vic.gov.au)

## Home Modification and Renovation Services

A number of services may be available to seniors to help with the up-keep of their homes.

In some areas, councils can provide maintenance services at minimal cost to undertake minor modifications and to assist with the installation of some security devices 📞 (03) 5832 9700.

## Legal Assistance and Personal Advocacy

- Victoria Legal Aid aims to give legal advice to people who cannot afford it. If you have a legal problem, do not ignore it. You can contact the Legal Aid Commission on 📞 1300 792 387 or visit [www.legalaid.vic.gov.au](http://www.legalaid.vic.gov.au).
- Powers of attorney/powers of guardianship. The Office of Public Advocate offers information and advice on the four different types of powers of attorney and guardianship (three enduring and one general – see section 3 for further details).
- How to make a decision and act on these.
- Guardianship and Administration. If you believe the interests of an older person need to be protected because they are at risk and unable to make decisions themselves contact the Office of Public Advocate for advice on 📞 1300 309 337  
TTY: 1300 305 612 or visit [www.publicadvocate.vic.gov.au](http://www.publicadvocate.vic.gov.au).
- Goulburn Valley Community Legal Service 📞 (03) 5831 0900 or  
📞 1800 310 900 (if calling from outside Shepparton)



## Resolving Disputes with Neighbours and Family

Disputes with neighbours can occur for a number of reasons. If you live in a neighbourhood, you have legal obligations not to unreasonably interfere with your neighbour's enjoyment and use of their land. Your neighbour owes the same legal duty to you. Often conflicts can be resolved without the need for legal action, through patience and good communication.

The Dispute Settlement Centre of Victoria is an organisation established to help people settle their disputes in a cooperative and lasting way. It can help resolve conflict in families, clubs and body corporates as well. For information, advice and referral, contact the Dispute Settlement Centre on ☎ (03) 5858 7653. Information about common neighbourhood disputes can be found at [www.justice.vic.gov.au/disputeinfo](http://www.justice.vic.gov.au/disputeinfo)

## Assistance with Meeting your Household Costs

The Victorian Government provides a waiver or reduction on a range of state and local taxes and charges for people holding a Pensioner Concession Card. Some benefits are also available to holders of the Low Income Health Care Card.

### State concessions include:

- A rebate on council and water and sewerage rates.
- A rebate for six months of the year on gas and electricity accounts.
- Transport concessions.
- Waiver of land tax on your principal residence.
- Low-cost eye care and reduction in the cost of spectacles from public hospitals.

- Free ambulance travel in emergencies and reduced rates on ambulance subscriptions.
- Access to the Utility Relief Grant Scheme ☎ 1800 658 521.
- A rebate on water by measure charges.
- A rebate on third party insurance.

### For further information:

Contact Seniors Information Victoria on ☎ (03) 9655 2100 or visit [www.cotavic.org.au/seniors](http://www.cotavic.org.au/seniors)  
Or Greater Shepparton City Council on ☎ (03) 5832 9700.

## Victims of Crime Assistance

If you are a victim of crime, there are a range of services that can help you through this difficult time. You may be eligible for compensation or financial assistance to help cover some of the cost of counselling and medical expenses, loss of income and any other losses you may incur.

### Support services available for victims of crime:

- The Victims of Crime Helpline is a free service offering information, advice and referrals to assist victims manage and recover from the effects of crime. It can be contacted on ☎ **1800 819 817** (8.00am to 11.00pm).
- The Victims Assistance and Counselling Program offers trained counsellors who can give practical support to you, your family and others affected by crime. They can help you make a police report, provide referral to accommodation services and access to support groups and outreach/ home services. The Victims of Crime Helpline ☎ **1800 817 819** can give you more details.
- The Victims of Crime Assistance Tribunal may be able to cover the costs of counselling, medication, funeral, loss of income or other loss caused by a crime against you or a child you are responsible for. The tribunal can be contacted on ☎ **1800 882 752**.
- Victoria Legal Aid provides a free legal advice service if you wish to make a claim for compensation. It can be contacted on ☎ **1300 792 387** or ☎ **5823 6200** (Shepparton) or visit [www.legalaid.vic.gov.au](http://www.legalaid.vic.gov.au)

Centre Against Sexual Assault (CASA) provides emotional support and advice about legal processes for people who have been assaulted. To contact any CASA and the afterhours Sexual Assault Crisis Line call ☎ **1800 806 292**

Women's Domestic Violence Crisis Service of Victoria offers 24-hour crisis telephone support for women experiencing abuse in their relationships. The service can be contacted on ☎ **(03) 9373 0123** or ☎ **1800 015 188**.

Lifeline - is a 24-hour support service providing immediate counselling and emotional support. ☎ **131 114**.

For Further information:

A Victims Guide to Support Services and the Criminal Justice System provides information about what help is available, from the time a crime occurs right through to after the court case has concluded.

The Guide also provides information about the many support services available, including where to go for counselling, how to apply for compensation or financial assistance to help with medical expenses or loss of income, or where to get help if you have to go to court. Arrange your free copy by contacting the Victims of Crime Helpline on

☎ **1800 819 817**.

**Goulburn Valley Community Legal Service**

☎ [03 5831 0900](http://www.gvcl.org.au) or ☎ [1800 310 900](http://www.gvcl.org.au)

## Useful Telephone Numbers:

### Aged Care Quality Agency

☎ 1800 978 666 or [www.aacqa.gov.au](http://www.aacqa.gov.au)

### Centres Against Sexual Assault (CASA)

☎ (03) 5831 2343 or [www.casa.org.au](http://www.casa.org.au)

### COTA (Council on the Ageing)

☎ (03) 9655 2100 or [www.cotavic.org.au](http://www.cotavic.org.au)

### Dispute Settlement Centre

☎ (03) 5858 7653 or  
[www.justice.vic.gov.au/disputeinfo](http://www.justice.vic.gov.au/disputeinfo)

### Lifeline

Lifeline ☎ 13 11 14

### Office of Public Advocate

☎ Phone: 1300 309 337

TTY: 1300 305 612

Or [www.publicadvocate.vic.gov.au](http://www.publicadvocate.vic.gov.au)

Please note toll free numbers may incur charges if called from a mobile phone.

### Seniors Card

☎ 1300 797 210 or  
[www.seniorscard.vic.gov.au](http://www.seniorscard.vic.gov.au)

### Seniors Information Victoria

☎ 1300 135 090 or  
[www.cotavic.org.au/seniors](http://www.cotavic.org.au/seniors)  
or  
[www.seniorsonline.vic.gov.au](http://www.seniorsonline.vic.gov.au)

### Utility Relief Grant Scheme

☎ 1800 658 521

### Victims of Crime Assistance Tribunal

☎ 1800 882 752

### Victims of Crime Helpline

☎ 1800 819 817

### Victoria Legal Aid

☎ (03) 5823 6200 or  
[www.legalaid.vic.gov.au](http://www.legalaid.vic.gov.au)

### Domestic Violence Resource Centre Victoria

☎ (03) 8346 5200







## CONTACT US

**Business hours:** 8.15am to 5pm weekdays

**In person:** 90 Welsford Street, Shepparton

**Mail:** Locked Bag 1000, Shepparton, VIC, 3632

**Phone:** (03) 5832 9700 **SMS:** 0427 767 846 **Fax:** (03) 5831 1987

**Email:** [council@shepparton.vic.gov.au](mailto:council@shepparton.vic.gov.au) **Web:** [www.greatershepparton.com.au](http://www.greatershepparton.com.au)

Join the conversation:    

Greater Shepparton City Council is NRS friendly. If you are deaf, hearing-impaired, or speech-impaired, we ask that you call us via the National Relay Service:

**TTY users:** 133 677 then ask for (03) 5832 9700.

**Speak & Listen users:** (speech-to-speech relay) 1300 555 727 then ask for (03) 5832 9700.

**Internet relay users:** Connect to the National Relay Service via [www.relayservice.com.au](http://www.relayservice.com.au) and then ask for (03) 5832 9700.

A hearing loop is also available at Council's customer service centre and Council meeting rooms.



Interpreter service available.