

# Summary

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The COVID-19 pandemic (COVID-19) is causing significant adverse impacts on individuals, businesses and the Queensland economy. The speed and depth of the impacts, and the ongoing government responses to them, are unprecedented.

The Queensland Government has announced a range of measures with the aim of supporting the state economy, promoting public safety, and assisting households and businesses. The costs of the government's response are significant and will largely depend on the ongoing health and economic impacts of the pandemic.

This report covers the government's response measures up to 21 August 2020. It covers key measures across four response areas—health care, support for individuals, support for businesses, and public safety. The report does not cover all of the government's initiatives, such as its response through the *COVID Safe Business Framework*.

As at 21 August 2020, the Queensland Government had announced over \$7 billion in response measures, representing two per cent of gross state product. (Gross state product is an aggregate measure of the total economic production of goods and services, including international and interstate trade). This is in addition to \$314 billion of response measures announced by the Australian Government (National Cabinet Media Statement, 7 August 2020). We acknowledge that while our report covers the period 25 January 2020 to 21 August 2020, the Queensland Government announced further response measures on 7 September 2020 as part of its COVID-19 Fiscal and Economic Review. As a result, the measures now total more than \$8 billion.

Given the substantial additional expenditure required to meet the government's COVID-19 related commitments, the Queensland Government sought legislative approval for this funding. In April 2020, the Queensland Parliament passed the *Appropriation (COVID-19) Act 2020*, providing funding of \$4.8 billion over two years—\$3.18 billion in 2019–20 and \$1.62 billion for 2020–21.

The balance of the government's expenditure is expected to be funded through existing appropriations, but not all of the response measures involve actual payments from the government to the intended recipients. The Queensland Government's response measures also include support in the form of tax relief and rent waivers.

Central agencies should consider the following questions as part of their governance role for the Queensland Government's COVID-19 response:

- What are the objectives of each response measure and how will their effectiveness be measured?
- What are the uptake rates of the response measures and how does this compare with what was expected when the initiatives were announced?
- What are the actual costs of delivering the response measures?



## Snapshot

This snapshot highlights the key facts relating to the Queensland Government's response to COVID-19.

