



# Delivering for the Wheatbelt



The Cook Labor Government is doing what’s right for the Wheatbelt, with the 2024-25 State Budget delivering significant cost of living relief while investing in health facilities and services, housing, quality jobs and targeted training programs.

The 2024-25 State Budget is focused on WA’s regions, with a record \$12.8 billion investment in regional infrastructure, and billions more to fund regional service delivery.

This Budget delivers measures that will drive regional economic growth, diversify regional economies and create jobs for our kids in the regions.

In addition, \$4 billion in Royalties for Regions funding will go towards projects which enrich regional communities, ensuring they remain great places to live, work and raise a family.

## Cost-of-Living Relief for Wheatbelt Residents

### A family living in the Wheatbelt with two kids could receive:



- \$400 Household Electricity Credit
- Two WA Student Assistance Payments totalling up to \$500

**Total assistance Almost \$1,000**

#### And they’ll benefit from:

- \$147m for free regional school buses or transport subsidies
- \$706m for regional water and electricity subsidies
- Free flu immunisation

### A pensioner living in the Wheatbelt could receive:



- \$400 Household Electricity Credit
- \$334 Energy Assistance Payment
- \$107 Seniors Cost of Living Rebate
- 50% rebate, up to \$750, on local government rates
- 50% rebate, up to \$600, for water service charges
- Around \$180 in vehicle licence fee discounts
- \$675 Regional Pensioner Travel Card

**Total assistance More than \$3,000**

#### And they’ll benefit from:

- Up to 50% discount on the Emergency Services Levy
- \$706m for regional water and electricity subsidies
- Free flu immunisation

- \$492.4 million to provide a **\$400 electricity credit** for every WA household and small business, including across the Pilbara
- \$103.5 million **WA Student Assistance Payment** to ease the pressure of school expenses, which provides \$150 for WA kindergarten and primary school students and \$250 for secondary school students
- \$20.3 million to increase the value of the **Regional Pensioner Travel Card** (formerly the Country Age Pension Fuel Card) by \$100, bringing the total annual amount to \$675, from 1 July 2024
- \$8.2 million to provide **free flu vaccinations** to all Western Australians in preparation for the 2025 flu season

- \$8 million to extend the highly successful **Fee Free TAFE program** through the 2025 training year
- \$3 billion to subsidise the cost of providing **water and electricity to regional Western Australians**, including Wheatbelt residents, to keep services affordable for everyone

### Plus we're continuing to deliver:

- \$147.3 million in 2024-25 to provide **free regional school bus services** and the Student Transport Allowance – which has more than doubled from 25.24c per kilometre to 55.6c per kilometre – to assist kids in regional and remote areas who aren't able to access free regional school bus services

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## Delivering Regional Housing

- Massive \$1.1 billion additional investment to **boost housing supply and affordability**
- \$400 million for **social and affordable housing projects**, including in the Wheatbelt
- \$60 million for a **Regional Community Housing Grants Program**, to support community housing providers to deliver new dwellings or refurbish existing dwellings
- \$43.8 million in additional investment for **Government Regional Officer Housing (GROH)**, to fund new builds, spot purchases, refurbishments and land acquisitions
- \$8.9 million to **strengthen protections for renters** following the passing of the Residential Tenancies Act, and to support the Consumer Protection Commissioner in dispute resolution processes

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## Investing in Regional Health and Mental Health

- \$2.6 billion per annum in **regional healthcare** investment
- \$405 million to **boost regional health service delivery**, including \$11.9 million to incentivise nurses and midwives to work in regional WA
- \$32.5 million boost to the **Patient Assisted Travel Scheme**
- \$10.9 million to **vaccinate young babies** under eight months old, against respiratory syncytial virus (RSV)
- \$8.6 million to expand **Child Development Services** in the regions
- \$4.7 million to extend the WA Country Health Service **Brief Crisis Intervention Service**, providing virtual post-ED follow up for children, adolescents and their families or carers who have been discharged from a regional ED following a mental health-related presentation
- \$7.7 million to refurbish outdated **staff accommodation**
- \$2.5 million to develop an extension plan for the **Ronald McDonald House facility**, supporting families travelling to Perth for medical treatment

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## Diversifying Regional Economies and Creating Local Jobs

- \$17.5 million to extend northern breakwater at **Jurien Bay Boat Harbour**, improving water quality at the marina and opening up opportunities for private investment at the harbour
- \$1.5 million for a new 25-site campground at Kangaroo Point in Nambung National Park near Cervantes
- \$15 million toward future upgrades of the **Goldfields and Agricultural Water Supply Scheme** that supplies water to customers from Mundaring to Kalgoorlie, including Northam, Cunderdin, Kellerberrin, Merredin and Southern Cross

- \$23.2 million over the next three years for **biosecurity management**
- \$3 million to manage the significant impact of **wild dogs, feral deer and pigs** on the environment and farming communities
- \$324 million investment into the **South West Interconnected System**, to support WA's decarbonisation journey, provide certainty to investors, and unlock job-creating renewable energy projects
- \$36.4 million to **slash green tape and facilitate approvals** for job-creating projects in the regions

### Plus we're continuing to deliver:

- Developing the **King Rocks Wind Farm**, located in the Shire of Kondinin, that could generate up to 150MW of green electricity, planning currently underway
- Funding for **events to attract visitors** to the region, such as Avon Descent, the York Festival, the York Motorcycle Festival, and the Northam Motorsport Festival

## Delivering a Pipeline of Skills

- **\$1.7 billion per annum** to provide regional Western Australian students with access to a quality education
- \$10 million boost to the **School of Isolated and Distance Education**, to ensure the highest quality learning experiences to students, no matter their location
- \$224.3 million **boost to individual disability loading allocations**, to enable schools to help support and educate students with a disability
- Extending the provision of **free period products** to WA public primary schools, with students being able to access them from Term 3, 2024
- **\$1.1 billion in training programs** across regional WA, to prepare Western Australians for the jobs of the future
- \$11.6 million to continue and expand the **Driving Access and Equity Program** to help disadvantaged people in remote and regional locations access a driver's licence, including a pilot program in the Wheatbelt
- \$21.2 million for the **Apprenticeship Support Package** to provide building and construction apprentices with an annual \$1,000 milestone payment during their training
- \$15.1 million to provide additional support to employers in the **building and construction industry** with increased grant amounts to assist with the cost of training an apprentice
- \$16 million for the **Apprentice Tool Allowance** to provide eligible building and construction apprentices with a \$1,000 rebate to help them purchase tools or safety equipment at commencement and completion of their training
- \$470,000 to provide regional building and construction apprentices with an **increased travel and accommodation allowance** when required to travel for training
- \$5 million to the Capital Grant Program so private registered training organisations can invest in facilities and equipment to **expand their training capacity**
- \$4.2 million to continue providing **specialist services for Aboriginal People** at Jobs and Skills Centres, including in Northam

### Plus we're continuing to deliver:

- \$2 million for a new STEM laboratory and a primary science classroom at **Merredin College**, underway
- \$1 million for a new STEM laboratory at **Narrogin Senior High School**, underway

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## Investing in our Regional Roads and Infrastructure

- \$169 million in **additional funding for regional roads**, which forms part of our \$4.5 billion investment in regional roads over the next four years
- \$29.3 million to upgrade **regional and remote airstrips** across the State, keeping communities connected

### Plus we're continuing to deliver:

- \$200 million for the **Agricultural Supply Chain Improvement program**, for freight rail upgrades including 11 rail siding upgrades, with Brookton siding completed in August 2023, construction underway at Broomehill, and contracts awarded for works at Cranbrook and Konnongorring
- \$275 million for the **Bindoon Bypass** along Great Northern Highway, currently under construction
- \$250 million for upgrades to **Great Eastern Highway** between Coates Gully, Walgoolan and Coolgardie, with widening and sealing of 11 kilometers of highway between Southern Cross and Ghooli currently underway
- \$80 million for upgrades to **Toodyay Road**, currently under construction
- \$14 million to upgrade 62 kilometers of roads in the Wheatbelt through the **Regional Road Safety Program**
- \$9 million for the **Chidlow–York Road and Forrest Street** Intersection Upgrade

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## Building Strong and Fair Regional Communities

- \$460 million per annum to provide **police services across regional WA**
- \$23.4 million to extend **Operation Regional Shield**, which allows WA Police to rapidly deploy officers to the regional areas where they are needed most
- \$3.1 million to continue funding the DFES **Grain Harvest Air Support Strategy**, that strategically bases firefighting aircraft in strategic agricultural areas during grain harvest
- \$8.6 million to support WA's vitally important **emergency service volunteers** with communications equipment, road crash rescue equipment and station upgrades
- \$46.3 million to continue the successful **Home Stretch WA program**, which provides support for young people leaving Out of Home Care, including through the Yorganop Association Incorporated will provide the program across the Wheatbelt to 28 young people
- \$26.4 million for programs and initiatives to address family and domestic violence across regional WA, including boosting **Family and Domestic Violence response teams in Northam**
- \$10 million to improve safety at warden-controlled **school crossings** across the State, including new electronic speed signs at Kellerberrin District High School and Mount Barker Community College

### Plus we're continuing to deliver:

- A **men's behaviour change program in Northam** for perpetrators of family and domestic violence