

# Mornington Centrelink Closure

## Council is requesting

***The Mornington Peninsula Shire calls on the Federal Government to reverse its devastating decision to close the Centrelink and Medicare Service Centre in Mornington.***

It is understood that the Australian Government intends to replace the full-time Service Centre with an 'agency' service operating for a mere 15 hours per week over up to three days; a 62.5% reduction in the hours offered by the existing Service Centre.

We urge the Federal Government to recognise that there is a compelling case for retaining a Centrelink and Medicare Service Centre in Mornington – and expanding the range of services it offers - given that our community has:

- Significantly more older residents than Greater Melbourne and the State average
- more people with a disability
- more unemployed young people
- more people without an internet connection
- Limited access to public transport

5.5% of us need help with a disability with some areas 2x higher than that of Greater Melbourne

2x

The Shire calls on the Government to consult with the community on expanding the range of core services available at Mornington. There is existing unmet demand in our community for an expanded range of face to face government services that could be co-located at the Mornington Service Centre. This creates an opportunity for the Federal Government to invest in a government services hub at Mornington that would include existing and expanded Centrelink services.

## Why is this important?

Closing the office will have a devastating impact on the most vulnerable in our community. In the catchment area of Mornington Service Centre we estimate the impact will be felt by a community with diverse needs such as:

- 3,000 low income households
- 11,600 older people
- 6,106 couples with children
- 1,700 single parent families
- 12,000 people with a disability (including 3,731 with disability parking permits and 1,170 NDIS participants)
- 3,298 young people
- 800 unemployed people

Many are non-drivers and public transport on the Peninsula is inadequate. These residents will struggle significantly with the cost and difficulties associated with travelling to the Frankston, Hastings or Rosebud Centrelink offices to get the essential support they rely upon.

We have a high percentage of residents who do not have access to or cannot use the internet and who rely on face to face support. 10.5% of households in the Mornington Centrelink catchment do not have internet access at home.

Increased foot traffic at these other Centrelink sites will increase congestion and queue waiting times for community members across the Peninsula. Closing the Mornington Centrelink office will have a significant impact on the mental health and wellbeing of our community.

