

Mike Baird's resignation as premier left NSW taxpayers with a \$6 million bill

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EXCLUSIVE Miles Godfrey

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FORMER premier Mike Baird's mid-term resignation cost taxpayers \$6 million, including hefty payouts to ministerial staffers who left when he did.



Former premier Mike Baird's staff departures cost NSW taxpayers big time

After telling voters in March 2016 that they could bank on him running in the 2019 election, Mr Baird is now running a bank after he resigned in January and [joined NAB as a senior executive.](#)

Figures released under freedom of information show \$3.95 million has been paid to 64 ministerial staff who left their jobs since November — 60 who followed Mr Baird out the door from late January.

The pay-offs consist of generous “severance, redundancy, separation and termination” payments, including unused annual leave.



A total of \$3.95 million was paid out to 64 ministerial staff who left their jobs since November — 60 who followed Mr Baird out the door from late January.

Just over \$1 million related directly to payments for departing members of Mr Baird’s own staff. Mr Baird’s former staffers include media director Imre Salusinszky — nicknamed “Kimre” after he allegedly suggested Mr Baird copy North Korea’s dictator Kim Jong-un and bypass traditional media for Twitter — plus social media adviser Tony Story, and Clare Masters, who also now works at NAB.

The largest payment to a ministerial staffer was \$184,416.07, while the next two were paid out \$175,516 and \$173,714.39. The staffers’ identities were not disclosed.

The Manly by-election to fill Mr Baird’s position in Parliament cost an estimated \$500,000.

And the opposition claims that a further \$1.8 million has been spent on Premier Gladys Berejiklian's expanded Cabinet.

Labor's Wastewatch committee chairman Hugh McDermott said Ms Berejiklian should have kept staffers who worked under Mr Baird.

"Rather than keep the staff, the Premier has squandered millions of taxpayer dollars on severance payments so she can claim to be a new broom," he said.



Premier Gladys Berejiklian has hit back over the claims about her predecessor Mike Baird's resignation costs.

Ms Berejiklian hit back yesterday, accusing Labor of overseeing huge staff turnovers while in power.

"Under Labor, between August 2005 and the 2011 election, there were 217 ministerial appointments," Ms Berejiklian's spokesman said.

"On average each portfolio had four ministers.

"This included six ministers for police, five ministers for health and roads, four ministers for education and three ministers for transport.

“Over the past six years we have introduced a 2.5 per cent limit on public sector wage increases, saving more than \$2.5 billion since June 2011, and we have also reduced back office waste while boosting frontline services. There has been no net increase in the budget for ministerial staff as a result of the reshuffle.”

<http://www.dailytelegraph.com.au/news/nsw/mike-bairds-resignation-as-premier-left-nsw-taxpayers-with-a-6-million-bill/news-story/15d63f903c60c4e402eec95ed4d72f76>