

Victorian Budget 2022/23



# Putting Patients First

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OVERVIEW



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Budget Paper No. 4 – State Capital Program  
Budget Paper No. 5 – Statement of Finances  
(incorporating Quarterly Financial Report No. 3)

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# Treasurer's Message



## *Putting patients first.*

Ever since the pandemic reached our shores, we've acted quickly to protect our people and our economy.

We stood by the Victorian community with support of more than \$44 billion – to respond to the pandemic and keep workers in jobs and businesses afloat.

We provided rent relief, so Victorians kept a roof over their head, we supported people to test and isolate and relieved stress on businesses with direct financial support.

It built the foundations for Victoria's remarkable economic recovery.

Victorians are once again able to do the things they love. Restaurants and cafes are busy. Shops and theatres are bustling.

Businesses are hiring, with 280 000 jobs created across the state since September 2020. In regional Victoria, the unemployment rate is the lowest in the nation.

But across our nation – and around the world – the pandemic put unprecedented pressure on health systems.

From a sharp increase of critical COVID patients, disrupted care resulting in longer hospital recovery times and people delaying seeing their GP, the last few years have really knocked our health system around.

Now – just like we've done before – we'll ease the pandemic pressure points on our hospitals and our healthcare workers, to make sure every family can get the care they need, close to home.

That's what the *Victorian Budget 2022/23* is about. A Pandemic Repair Plan for more staff, better hospitals and first-class care.

We're backing our healthcare workers with training and the extra pair of helping hands they need – with funding to train and hire up to 7 000 new healthcare workers across the sector, to help relieve pressure on the system and improve care for all Victorians.

We will help Victorians catch-up on care and get more elective surgeries done, sooner.

And more people will get the care they need in the comfort of their own home, as we continue the Better at Home program.

So that every Victorian has the confidence that an ambulance will arrive in their hour of need, we're making record investments in our Triple Zero services and hiring more paramedics.

This Budget also delivers for regional Victorians, who deserve the same level of care as people in Melbourne.

We're upgrading regional hospitals and healthcare facilities in every corner of our state, with the largest ever investment in the Regional Health Infrastructure Fund.

We're also getting on with delivering the schools, roads and public transport services Victorians rely on.

With this Budget, we're building 13 new schools and upgrading a further 65 schools, because a good education is a good foundation for life.

We're upgrading 36 special schools, which means we will have upgraded every special school in our state since coming to Government. We understand that students with special needs are entitled to exactly the same opportunities as every other Victorian student.

We're investing in roads and rail, preparing for day one of the Metro Tunnel and getting on with removing dangerous and congested level crossings – because Victorians want to get home sooner and safer.

At its heart, this is a Budget that looks after the health and wellbeing of every single Victorian.

This is a Labor Budget that invests in the hospitals and healthcare our state needs and the Victorian workers we need to deliver it.

It's a Budget that delivers more staff, better hospitals and first-class care.

This is a Budget that is putting patients first.

Tim Pallas

**Treasurer of Victoria**

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# Victoria's economic recovery

## SUPPORTING VICTORIANS AND RESTORING THE BUDGET

Today, there are almost as many Victorians in work as there ever have been.

Victorian unemployment is at the lowest since current records began, and in regional Victoria it is even lower.

People are heading back into work, and visitors and students are returning to our state once again.

Our economy is bouncing back from the global pandemic – businesses are busy, restaurants are buzzing again, and there are growing job opportunities for Victorian workers.

It's no accident that Victoria's economic outlook is so strong.

Our record investments have delivered the jobs we needed in the short-term and they're supporting our growing state into the future.

Our strong action to protect the health of all Victorians during the pandemic has helped shield our state from the very worst of this once-in-a-century event.

But our health system is under more pressure than ever due to the pandemic. From a sharp increase of critical COVID patients, disrupted care resulting in longer hospital recovery time or people delaying seeing their GP, the last few years have really knocked our health system around.

Which is why, in this year's Budget, we're putting patients first – with a Pandemic Repair Plan for more staff, better hospitals and first-class care.

This Budget invests to help our health system meet growing demand and ensure Victorians have the care they need close to home.

And when it comes to mental health, we held a Royal Commission to help us fix a broken system – one in which too often, Victorians in crisis ended up in an emergency department, or simply fell through the cracks because they didn't know where to turn, or who to turn to.

We're building a new mental health system from the ground up. A system where all Victorians can get the care they need much sooner and much closer to their families and communities.

We're also building and upgrading schools, with a focus on special schools – because kids with special needs should have exactly the same opportunities as every other student in Victoria.

And we're transforming the way people and freight move around our state, as well as investing in the industries and technologies of the future.


These investments will not only create decent, secure jobs right now, they will also support the growth of key industries and provide a stronger recovery that delivers more opportunities for workers into the future.

And we're not simply getting back to where we were before the pandemic – this Budget keeps us on track to deliver our fiscal strategy while continuing to make Victoria stronger, fairer and more prosperous than ever.

We are building big, and we're bouncing back.

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## Victoria has bounced back – and we're still growing strongly







## DELIVERING ON OUR FISCAL STRATEGY

This Government has a proven record of financial management.

During the pandemic, we used our balance sheet to support Victorian households and businesses, while also setting out a clear, four-step fiscal plan for the medium term:

- **Step 1:** Creating jobs, reducing unemployment and restoring economic growth
- **Step 2:** Returning to an operating cash surplus
- **Step 3:** Returning to operating surpluses
- **Step 4:** Stabilising debt levels.

We're pleased to report that in this Budget, having continued to deliver on the first two steps, we're successfully delivering Step 3 of our fiscal plan in 2025-26.

We are also turning our focus to Step 4 which prioritises stabilising debt levels over the medium term.

While we're delivering on our fiscal plan, we're also investing in initiatives that will support Victoria's long-term economic growth.

This Budget delivers for the industries that have the greatest potential to grow – industries that will leverage Victoria's strengths to create the jobs of the future.

Our continuing investments in our caring workforce and Big Build are creating quality jobs, improving people's lives and making it easier for Victorians to move around our state.

Victoria's economy is strong – the unemployment rate is the lowest since current records began, demand for workers is high, and business conditions and confidence are elevated. Victoria is on track for strong economic growth.

### VICTORIAN FUTURE FUND

In this Budget, we are establishing the Victorian Future Fund to manage the fiscal impact of the pandemic and deliver positive outcomes for Victorians, by reducing the debt burden on future generations. The Fund will support the state's debt stabilisation strategy.

The Fund will be established using proceeds from the VicRoads Modernisation Joint Venture. The investment returns from the Fund will be quarantined and returned to the Fund so that its balance will grow over time to offset borrowings. Both the initial investment and future returns will be used to repay pandemic borrowings. The Fund is projected to have a balance of around \$10 billion in the medium term.

Further investments will be made into the Fund through proceeds from designated government land sales and a proportion of future budget surpluses once net debt stabilises.

The Fund will be managed by the Victorian Funds Management Corporation (VFMC), the state's specialist investment agency. The VFMC will implement a diversified investment strategy designed to deliver the best possible returns for Victorians. Over time, this will improve the state's operating result and net debt position, further supporting the state's debt stabilisation strategy. The Fund will be managed in line with strict environmental, social and governance (ESG) principles consistent with other investments managed by the VFMC.

## Victorian economic forecasts<sup>(a)</sup> (per cent)

	2020/21 actual	2021/22 forecast	2022/23 forecast	2023/24 forecast	2024/25 projection	2025/26 projection
Real gross state product	-0.4	5.50	3.25	2.25	2.75	2.75
Employment	-1.1	3.00	1.75	1.00	1.25	1.75
Unemployment rate <sup>(b)</sup>	6.2	4.25	4.00	4.25	4.50	4.75
Consumer price index <sup>(c)</sup>	1.4	3.00	2.50	2.25	2.50	2.50
Wage price index <sup>(d)</sup>	1.4	2.50	2.75	3.00	3.00	3.00
Population <sup>(e)</sup>	-0.7	0.10	1.20	1.70	1.70	1.70

Sources: Australian Bureau of Statistics; Department of Treasury and Finance

Notes:

<sup>(a)</sup> Percentage change in year average terms compared with the previous year, except for the unemployment rate (see note (b)) and population (see note (e)). Forecasts are rounded to the nearest 0.25 percentage points, except for population (see note (e)).

The key assumptions underlying the economic forecasts include interest rates that broadly follow market economists' expectations; an Australian dollar trade-weighted index of 61.2; and oil prices that follow the path suggested by oil futures.

<sup>(b)</sup> Year average.

<sup>(c)</sup> Melbourne consumer price index.

<sup>(d)</sup> Wage price index, Victoria (based on total hourly rates of pay, excluding bonuses).

<sup>(e)</sup> Percentage change over the year to 30 June. Forecasts are rounded to the nearest 0.1 percentage point.

## General government fiscal aggregates

	Unit of measure	2020/21 actual	2021/22 revised	2022/23 budget	2023/24 estimate	2024/25 estimate	2025/26 estimate
Net result from transactions	\$ billion	(14.6)	(17.6)	(7.9)	(3.3)	(1.1)	0.7
Net cash flows from operating activities	\$ billion	(13.0)	(11.8)	1.3	0.8	3.6	5.5
Government infrastructure investment <sup>(a)(b)</sup>	\$ billion	15.0	18.9	21.4	23.0	21.7	19.2
Net debt	\$ billion	72.7	101.9	118.5	137.4	154.8	167.5
Net debt to GSP <sup>(c)</sup>	per cent	15.3	19.8	21.7	24.1	25.8	26.5

Source: Department of Treasury and Finance

Notes:

<sup>(a)</sup> Includes general government net infrastructure investment and the estimated construction costs of public private partnership projects.

<sup>(b)</sup> Includes the estimated private sector construction related expenditure associated with the North East Link held in the public non-financial corporations (PNFC) sector.

<sup>(c)</sup> The ratios to gross state product (GSP) may vary from publications year to year due to revisions to the Australian Bureau of Statistics GSP data.





Pandemic Repair Plan

More jobs

Building a world-class education system

Made in Victoria

Bringing the Commonwealth Games  
to our regions

Getting Victorians home sooner and safer

A fairer Victoria

Helping families

Building strong communities





# Investing in every corner of the State





## STATEWIDE

- \$4.2 billion to support our ongoing pandemic response, including \$522 million to support our hospitals to treat COVID-19; \$1.1 billion to purchase and distribute free rapid antigen tests to schools, hospitals and Victorians with disability; \$284 million for PPE; \$258 million to protect and vaccinate Victorians against COVID-19; and \$110 million for COVID-19 care pathways and to continue our 28 general practitioner respiratory clinics
- \$1.8 billion for school infrastructure, including upgrades to 65 schools including 36 special schools, building 13 new schools, additional stages at four more schools, and expanding capacity at two schools to meet enrolment demand
- \$1.5 billion for COVID Catch-up to enable record levels of surgical capacity
- \$1 billion in low-interest loans and government guarantees for social and affordable housing
- \$780 million in 2022/23 to undertake road maintenance works across the metropolitan and regional road network
- \$698 million for Better at Home
- \$383 million to switch on the Big Build, prepare for Metro Tunnel operations, and provide train timetable service upgrades across the state
- \$372 million for our mental health workforce
- \$342 million to recruit an extra 502 police and 50 Protective Services Officers over the next two years
- \$300 million for the Regional Health Infrastructure Fund to boost regional healthcare
- \$265 million to build and upgrade trains and trams, including 12 new VLocity trains, built and maintained in Victoria, for the regional rail network
- \$263 million to continue to deliver Victoria's 2021-2030 Road Safety Strategy and first three-year action plan
- \$250 million for the Power Saving Bonus to help households save on their energy bills
- \$248 million to deliver a package of V/Line improvement projects to support regional passenger rail operations, and for maintenance works on freight rail corridors across the state
- \$246 million to help our creative industries bounce back even stronger than before
- \$246 million to fund the *Sick Pay Guarantee* pilot, to support casual or insecure workers in select industries that don't provide sick or carer's pay
- \$215 million to give frontline police officers and protective services officers equipment to keep Victorians safe
- \$158 million for accessibility and safety upgrades at various train stations and tram stops
- \$151 million to prepare for Victoria's nation-leading treaty process
- \$146 million to build three new public residential aged care facilities in regional areas and plan for two more
- \$135 million to provide vital support to Victorians with disability who aren't eligible for the NDIS
- \$131 million to continue four-year-old kindergarten services, including important support for rural and small services and continued help for disadvantaged children to access kindergarten
- \$131 million for extra literacy and numeracy support for students who need it most, including tailored support for students in middle years
- \$126 million in road upgrades in metropolitan Melbourne
- \$124 million to put more paramedics on the road and improve ambulance performance
- \$111 million to support Victoria's visitor and events economy, to attract more tourists and promote Victoria to the world
- \$109 million to improve Victoria's suburban and regional bus services and bus stops
- \$101 million for regional road upgrades, including intersection upgrades, new overtaking lanes and roundabouts on key regional roads and highways across the state

**Bright new aged care facility planning**

**Princes Highway and Bairnsdale-Dargo Road intersection improvements**

**Orbost new aged care facility**

**Croajingolong Coastal Wilderness Walk**

**Bairnsdale train stabling upgrades**

**Latrobe Regional Hospital mental health ED hub**

- Arts
- Clean energy
- Education
- Environment and parkland
- Health
- Justice
- Mental health
- Public transport
- Regional investment
- Roads
- Sport and recreation
- Strong communities

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# Pandemic Repair Plan

*The pandemic has put unprecedented pressure on health systems right across Australia and around the world.*

In Victoria, our health system has been stretched like never before – and a sharp increase in critical COVID-19 patients is only part of the picture.

The pandemic has also resulted in disrupted care and longer recovery times, and people delaying seeing their GP. All of this puts huge demands on our hospitals and healthcare workers.

When we came to government, we put an end to the war on our paramedics, and we took ambulance response times from the worst in our history to the best.

We did this by working alongside our nurses, doctors and paramedics – with a clear plan to get it done.

Now – just like before – we'll ease the pressure on our hospitals and healthcare workers by putting patients first.

Our Pandemic Repair Plan will mean more staff, better hospitals and first-class care.

This Budget gives a much-needed boost to our health system, including:

- Delivering record levels of surgical capacity across the state, to give Victorians the specialist care they need – before they end up in the emergency department
- More than \$12 billion for health, including for more nurses, doctors, paramedics, health services and new and improved health infrastructure, so all Victorians have access to high-quality healthcare, closer to home
- Training and hiring up to 7 000 new healthcare workers, including 5 000 nurses.

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## Our Pandemic Repair Plan will mean more staff, better hospitals and first-class care







## SUPPORTING OUR HEALTH WORKERS

Our health workers have borne the brunt of the pandemic, and Victorians are so proud of their dedication and sacrifice.

We know how important it is that we support them into the future.

That's why we're backing our healthcare workforce with training and the extra pair of helping hands they need – so they can give the very best care.

Ambulance Victoria will recruit 90 more paramedics with a \$124 million investment to put more ambos on the road, while we're unclogging emergency departments to prevent ramping.

In a huge boost to care, we're delivering 1125 new Registered Undergraduate Nursing Positions per year over the next two years. We will also improve training for nurses and midwives by reviewing clinical placements, and roll out nursing and midwifery pilot programs.

There's a further \$9.7 million to support an additional 75 Registered Undergraduate Student of Midwifery positions, and to boost our flexible maternity staffing pool.

We are also supporting more cadetships, scholarships and traineeships for Aboriginal healthcare workers, to ensure that more Aboriginal Victorians can get culturally sensitive care.

Our paramedics, nurses and doctors have given so much to our state – and it's had a cost on their mental health.

That's why we are expanding the Nursing and Midwifery Health Program to provide one-on-one psychological support for up to 600 additional nurses and midwives.

We're also expanding Safer Care Victoria's Healthcare Worker Wellbeing Centre program. This will help our health system manage staff fatigue and stress, and provide advice and training opportunities.

Our investment includes \$8 million for Ambulance Victoria to deliver the recommendations of the Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission's review into workplace equality.

## IMPROVING OUR EMERGENCY RESPONSE

The pandemic has tested our emergency departments.

They've had to handle a sharp increase in critical patients.

And they've had to manage workforce disruptions when staff got sick, and roll out COVIDSafe practices that – while important – complicate and slow down care.

Across Australia, demand for emergency services is at an all-time high, with Triple Zero call-takers and dispatchers dealing with unprecedented call volumes.

But every Victorian should have confidence that when they call for emergency care, someone will come to help.

That's why this Budget invests in practical and immediate measures to cut wait times, expand emergency departments and get Victorians the help they need, when they need it most.

In addition to recruiting and training more paramedics, we are relieving pressure on our emergency response systems:

- We're investing \$333 million to add nearly 400 new staff to increase Triple Zero call taking and dispatch capacity for Triple Zero services, including ambulances, and training more operators to allocate calls across the state
- We're expanding the emergency departments at Casey Hospital and Werribee Mercy Hospital with \$236 million to at least double their current capacity and get patients home from hospital sooner

- We're enhancing our fleet management system and improving rostering and support functions at Ambulance Victoria with \$99 million to meet the growing demand for ambulance services
- We're investing \$12 million in Ambulance Victoria to establish a second mobile stroke unit in Melbourne's south-east, so that stroke victims can get the urgent care they need without delay.



## BUILDING AND UPGRADING VICTORIA'S HOSPITALS

The pandemic has reminded us of what matters most – the health and wellbeing of the people we love.

Our hospitals and local health services have been at the frontline of the pandemic, and now we're ensuring they're at the forefront of our Budget.

This Budget invests \$2.9 billion in health infrastructure, including building a new hospital and upgrading existing ones.

We're investing more than \$900 million in a new tertiary hospital for Melbourne's west.

The new Melton Hospital will include a 24-hour emergency department, over 100 medical and surgical beds, an intensive care unit, maternity and neonatal services and more mental health services and outpatient care.

Building a local hospital also means local jobs – not only in construction but in running the hospital after it opens.

This Budget also provides more than \$500 million to deliver the Barwon Women's and Children's Hospital.

We'll make sure that the Maternity Assessment and Short Stay unit, Special Care Nursery, birthing suites, and operating theatres can see more patients and give more support for paediatric outpatients. And we will build a new inpatient tower.

We're upgrading regional hospitals too, with a record \$300 million boost for the Regional Health Infrastructure Fund for projects ranging from operating theatre refurbishments to equipment upgrades. Since the program began in 2016, we have funded over 480 projects and with this expansion our investment will total \$790 million.

This Budget also means more life-saving equipment for hospitals and funding for upgrades and improvements across our health services.

- \$35 million for the Medical Equipment Replacement Program for items like CT scanners, digital X-Ray units and ultrasounds
- \$25 million for the Metropolitan Health Infrastructure Fund for a range of upgrades like refurbishment of consultation rooms or wards
- \$20 million for the Engineering Infrastructure Replacement Program for items like aging generators, emergency lighting or nurse call systems.

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This Budget provides more than \$500 million to deliver the Barwon Women's and Children's Hospital for Geelong's rapidly growing population





## COVID CATCH-UP

Victorians need access to life-saving and life-changing elective surgery without lengthy wait times.

Unfortunately, the pandemic has disrupted elective surgery care for many patients.

To tackle this, we're investing \$1.5 billion to increase surgical activity beyond pre-pandemic levels by providing 40 000 extra surgeries in the next year, building up to a total of 240 000 surgeries annually by 2024.

As part of this plan, we will establish Rapid Access Hubs and draw on the capacity of private hospitals to deliver public surgeries.

This includes transforming Frankston Private Hospital into a public surgery hub that will perform up to 9 000 public surgeries a year once it's fully operational.

We're also recruiting up to 2 000 ex-pat and international healthcare workers through a global workforce recruitment drive.

This Budget provides significant investment to further take the pressure off our hospitals and hardworking healthcare professionals, including:

- \$2.4 billion for more emergency staff and to support new wards as they open
- \$698 million for the Better at Home program to continue the delivery of healthcare through the use of home-delivered and virtual care, so more people can be treated at home
- \$7.2 million to strengthen community-based healthcare in 20 registered community health services by ensuring GPs and providers are better coordinating patient care.



## MANAGING THE PANDEMIC INTO THE FUTURE

Together, Victorians have achieved incredible things over the past two years.

Along with countless acts of kindness and support for each other, Victorians got vaccinated in record numbers.

As we move into this highly-vaccinated phase of the pandemic, we need to keep managing COVID-19 to minimise disruption and reduce the pressure on our hospitals and health workers.

That's why we are continuing to invest in the preventative measures that work – vaccines, testing and PPE, as well as COVID-19 care in and out of our hospitals.

This Budget delivers \$4.2 billion to support our ongoing pandemic response.

To ensure that COVID-19 patients have the best chance of a full recovery, we are spending \$522 million to support our hospitals to treat COVID-19, and a further \$110 million on specialised care pathways and continuing our 28 general practitioner respiratory clinics.

Our investment in prevention includes \$284 million for PPE and \$258 million to vaccinate more Victorians including 5 to 11-year-olds and to expand our booster program.

And because accessible and free testing has helped Victorians return to school, work and normal life, we are investing \$1.1 billion to purchase and distribute free rapid antigen tests to schools, hospitals, Victorians with disability and other priority cohorts.

We are also providing \$40 million to support local public health units, which have been so crucial over the pandemic.

As well as showing how resilient Victorians are, the pandemic has also reminded us that we are home to some of the brightest minds and most innovative thinkers.

That's why this Budget is supporting the delivery of a new mRNA manufacturing facility.

This investment will bolster Victoria's capacity to produce life-saving vaccines and build on our reputation as a state that is at the forefront of medical research and innovation.

## SPECIALIST CARE FOR VICTORIANS

Our Pandemic Repair Plan invests in the early detection, prevention and treatment of some of our most common health conditions, ensuring that our healthcare investment is spent where it makes the most difference.

This Budget delivers \$20 million for additional breast cancer screening across new and existing services – and \$1.2 million for catch-up vaccination against the Human Papilloma Virus for young Victorians to prevent and detect early common cancers affecting women.

We are also investing to support better outcomes for people experiencing substance abuse and addiction. This includes \$36 million to construct a 30-bed Alcohol and Other Drugs residential facility in Mildura, building the capacity to provide specialised care for Victorians in need.

This Budget also invests \$8.3 million for the Aboriginal Maternal and Child Health (MCH) program to better connect with Aboriginal organisations, so families have the choice of accessing MCH services at their local Aboriginal community-controlled organisation.

## BUILDING A MENTAL HEALTH SYSTEM THAT WORKS

The Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health System told us, when it comes to accessing mental healthcare, Victorians often struggle to access the mental health support they need until it's too late.

Last year, we promised we'd fix our broken mental health system by building a new one from the ground up.

In the *2020/21 Budget*, we invested \$869 million to lay the foundation for a new mental health and wellbeing system, and we provided extra funding for mental health services throughout the pandemic.

This was followed by a record investment of \$3.8 billion in last year's Budget to support Victorians and speed up these nation-leading and life-saving reforms.

This Budget builds on these investments with \$1.3 billion to take the next steps in this process, including:

- \$218 million to operationalise 82 new beds in Victoria's mental health system and other priority initiatives
- \$196 million to replace and expand the mental health facility at Goulburn Valley Health in Shepparton, and to purchase land and undertake further planning to deliver additional acute mental health beds in regional Victoria
- \$124 million for the next stage of redevelopment of the Thomas Embling Hospital to deliver critical supporting infrastructure, additional parking and the bed replacement program

- \$65 million to deliver an electronic mental health and wellbeing record, information exchange platform, and an online portal to support mental health and wellbeing services
- \$62 million for upgrade works across intensive care areas of Victoria's mental health facilities, creating dedicated spaces to improve the separation of vulnerable patients, including providing for gender-based separation
- \$54 million to deliver treatment, care and support for people with a co-occurring mental illness and substance use or addiction in all Adult and Youth Area Mental Health and Wellbeing Services
- \$29 million to support the implementation of new mental health and wellbeing legislation, and to deliver an independent review of compulsory treatment criteria
- \$10 million for the Mental Health and Alcohol and Other Drug Facilities Renewal Fund to help acute and community-based facilities to deliver the best, recovery-oriented services for Victorians
- \$5 million to help plan the Victorian Collaborative Centre for Mental Health and Wellbeing – bringing together people with lived experience, researchers and clinicians to establish best practice in mental health and wellbeing services.

### Community mental health services

When our mental health system fails Victorians in need, it fails their families and carers too. Instead of feeling supported, loved ones are often left searching in an overburdened and understaffed system.

This Budget invests \$12 million in mental health and wellbeing support for regional families whose children are accessing acute care, and providing group-based parenting sessions to Victorian parents who need somewhere to turn while navigating the system.



We also know that local support systems are so important in improving mental health outcomes, which is why we're investing in Victoria's community mental health services. That means bringing together locals who know their communities best and can develop new solutions to improve and build community resilience, social connection and inclusion.

There is an extra \$9.1 million to establish Social Inclusion Action groups in 10 local government areas to build on the success of local community mental health groups in these areas.

We know that the earlier we reach someone struggling with their mental health – the better. This Budget provides a \$21 million package to support suicide prevention initiatives, including aftercare services and an 18-month pilot of a statewide peer call-back service for families, carers and supporters of people experiencing suicidal behaviour.

We are also investing \$20 million to support broader approaches to eating disorder care and support. This includes funding to expand services with 15 dedicated beds to provide more care to Victorians with an eating disorder. We'll also fund a statewide eating disorder strategy and invest in existing programs – because no one should have to go it alone.

### **Victoria's mental health workforce**

In addition to these key reforms, we are investing in our mental health workforce because building a new mental health system requires a lot of people.

We're investing a record \$372 million in our mental health workforce – supporting clinical training for the existing workforce and additional jobs where they're needed most, on top of the approximately 580 extra places we have already delivered.

That's training for more than 1 500 mental health workers, including more than 100 psychiatrists, 300 psychologists and 400 mental health nurses, so they can give the very best care.

## **SUPPORTING OLDER VICTORIANS**

We all deserve to be looked after in our later years.

In this Budget, we're investing to ensure that Victorians are treated with respect as they age.

We're continuing to provide important funding to the Elder Abuse Prevention Network, to raise awareness of elder abuse and help prevent it from occurring in the first place.

We're also continuing our financial counselling services to prevent financial abuse, as well as supporting elderly Victorians living in bushfire-affected communities.

Key investments delivered in this Budget include:

- \$146 million to build three new public sector residential aged care facilities in Camperdown, Mansfield and Orbost including planning funding to redevelop the Bright and Heywood aged care facilities
- \$30 million for places in public residential aged care so older Victorians receive the high-quality care and comfort they deserve
- \$3 million for a range of initiatives to support social recovery programs for older Victorians and carers, including continuation of the reimagined Victorian Seniors Festival, COVIDSafe live performances in aged care facilities and tailored employment support for carers
- \$2.9 million to continue the Elder Abuse Prevention Network, addressing family violence for older Victorians and stopping it from happening
- \$800 000 for the design and planning of a new 60-bed public sector residential aged care services facility with 30 specialist mental health beds, and a 30-bed dementia unit at the Mornington Centre.

# Creating decent, secure jobs

*Every Victorian deserves the security and dignity of a good, stable job with a decent wage.*

A job is about more than just a pay cheque – it means being able to provide for your family and plan for the future.

That's why the Andrews Labor Government is building local, buying local and hiring local.

This Budget is helping every Victorian find the fair and decent jobs they deserve.

Since November 2014, our economy has generated 560 000 new jobs, including more than 80 000 jobs in regional Victoria.

When the pandemic hit our shores we responded with record investment to protect Victorian lives and livelihoods. We had a plan to create 400 000 jobs by 2025, with a target to deliver half of them by 2022.

Today, Victoria has already far exceeded our goal – with employment rising by 280 000 since September 2020. We are well on track to reach our target of 400 000 jobs by 2025.

We now want to do even more, creating more opportunities for Victorians to find a job and giving them the training they need for the future.

We're backing local businesses and keeping Victorians in work, with more than \$13 billion in COVID-19 related support provided to businesses since March 2020.

This Budget also provides \$353 million to help our creative and major events industries bounce back.

We're focused on building jobs in the industries of the future, in areas such as advanced manufacturing, medical research and renewable energy.

And since 2014 our infrastructure agenda has supported, or will support, more than 191 000 jobs. This includes 14 000 jobs supported by new infrastructure projects announced in this Budget.

From schools to hospitals, roads and rail – we've strengthened our economy by delivering the projects that had been in the 'too hard' basket for too long.

We're investing in the services Victorians need, and in the Victorians we need to deliver them.

Whether that's a job in our mental health workforce or a role supporting children and families, we're creating thousands of opportunities for Victorians doing work that matters.

And not only are we creating more jobs, we're making them fairer too.

The Andrews Labor Government is piloting Australia's first *Sick Pay Guarantee* – where participants in casual or insecure work in select industries won't be forced to choose between a day's pay and looking after their health.

This Budget is helping create more jobs and opportunities for the future.

And it gives every Victorian the chance to succeed.



## **COST OF LIVING**

We know that Victorians are paying too much for their energy bills – that’s why we’re stepping in to help families get the best deal. We’re giving a once-off \$250 payment for all Victorian households that use the Victorian Energy Compare (VEC) website – the Victorian Government’s independent price comparator website – to search for the cheapest electricity deal. Typically, households can save \$330 on energy bills annually by using the website and switching their retailer or plan – meaning that Victorians can save up to \$580 through this initiative.

This is on top of targeted programs to support Victorians with:

- Children starting three-year-old kinder receiving a Kinder Kit to help parents support their children’s early learning
- Free 30-day public transport travel passes to students experiencing crisis to ensure they can continue to travel to school and support services
- Additional rebates will be provided by Solar Victoria to eligible households, including renters, to install battery storage systems and solar panels on their homes.
- The VCAL reforms will save many Victorian families up to \$1 000 by cutting out-of-pocket costs, with students no longer having to pay for essential learning materials for VET studies.

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# Building a world-class education system

*A good education is the foundation of a good life.*

And we're committed to giving our kids the very best lives we can.

We're creating a state where every student can learn and achieve – regardless of where they live or the barriers that stand in their way.

We're building schools where our kids don't just learn, they excel – with world-leading classrooms, great teachers and the very best resources on offer.

Every Victorian family, wherever they live, deserves a good quality school. That's why, since 2015 we've made significant investments in new schools, upgrades and improvements across the state.

This Budget brings our total investment in improving and building new schools to more than \$12.8 billion over the past eight years. To help better meet the needs of local families, this Budget invests \$1.8 billion in building new schools and upgrading existing schools.

The Andrews Labor Government is making a big investment in upgrading special schools in this Budget. This means that since we took office eight years ago, every single special school in Victoria will have received funding for a major upgrade – because students with disability deserve the same opportunities as every other student in Victoria.

We've funded doctors in schools, put mental health professionals on campuses, and provided free breakfast to kids who would otherwise go without.

We're also giving our youngest Victorians the best foundation possible, by extending universal kindergarten to all three-year-olds.

And we're investing to transform VCE and VCAL to help students graduate into a great job and a rewarding future.

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## Because we're building the Education State – for every Victorian child







## READY FOR SCHOOL

### Early years investment to support strong foundational education

This year, we reached a huge milestone for our youngest Victorians.

Children across the state gained access to at least five hours of funded three-year-old kindergarten each week, scaling up to 15 hours by 2029.

That \$5 billion investment over the decade is helping set our kids up for brighter futures and better outcomes. And around a quarter of families are supported to access kinder at low or no cost.

This Budget builds on that investment, with \$15 million to deliver Kinder Kits to kids starting three-year-old kinder in 2023 and 2024. This box of books and other educational items like locally-made puppets and games, will ensure their learning can continue when they're at home.

This Budget also invests \$131 million to continue four-year-old kindergarten services, including important support for rural and small services, and continued help for disadvantaged children to access kindergarten.

Other investments in early childhood in this Budget include:

- \$19 million for the LOOKOUT program, which supports children in out-of-home care to access kindergarten and transition to school, and to support vulnerable children and their families with an experienced and qualified facilitator through the Access to Early Learning program
- \$17 million to assist children with significant disability or complex needs to participate in kindergarten through the Kindergarten Inclusion Support program
- \$12 million to make kindergarten facilities and activities more accessible for children with disability, including funding new ramps and sensory equipment
- \$5.5 million to continue the Early Childhood Language Program to deliver learning in another language in kindergartens, along with further professional support and training for teachers
- \$4 million to provide targeted outreach support for children and families from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, so that they aren't held back from learning and families are fully supported and included in their child's development
- \$2.2 million to provide free or low-cost kindergarten for vulnerable children, including children holding a humanitarian or refugee visa.

### Supporting students where they need it most

The Andrews Labor Government is investing in Victorian kids and ensuring that regardless of the barriers they face, every child can access the education they need and deserve.

More kids at risk of disengaging with school and support services will be identified and supported with a \$37 million boost to the Navigator Program. This includes a pilot to extend the program, which will lower the age of eligibility to young people aged 10 to 11 years.

And a \$21 million investment will continue to deliver the Active Schools program, providing advice and resources to ensure that Victorian students have the skills, confidence, and motivation to be active for life.

## EXCELLENCE IN EDUCATION

The Andrews Labor Government is supporting every student to realise their potential.

This means responding to changing needs after the pandemic, increasing mental health support in schools, and reforming VCE and VCAL pathways.

This Budget invests in the tools our schools need to give young Victorians a great education and a bright future.

Key initiatives include:

- \$131 million for extra literacy and numeracy support for students who need it most, including individualised support for those in middle years who need help catching up
- \$37 million to continue the Student Excellence Program, supporting high-ability students to reach their full potential through more challenging study and opportunities
- \$24 million to support the English as an Additional Language program, giving students who do not speak English at home more English language support at school so they don't fall behind
- \$17 million to extend the Primary Mathematics and Science Specialists initiative to train an additional 100 government primary school teachers as mathematics specialists
- \$5.2 million to establish the Regional Blended Learning Hub, so regional students can study subjects their school previously couldn't provide.

As kids spend more time online, this Budget is also investing \$3.7 million to support students to be cyber safe and secure learners.

And in 2023, we will be undertaking the biggest reform to the VCE since its inception.

With the new VCE Vocational Major and Victorian Pathways Certificate replacing VCAL, we're creating one certificate to give every senior secondary student more choice, and ensure they have the skills they need for post-school education or work.

This Budget is investing \$277 million to deliver this transformation of Victoria's senior secondary system.

This transformation includes:

- \$88 million to increase the teaching workforce and support schools to hire more vocational teachers and support staff, to help students access vocational and applied learning
- \$86 million to introduce an expanded offering of vocational and applied learning pathways and certificates in government secondary schools, to ensure that every senior secondary student has access to quality vocational and applied learning, no matter which government school they go to
- \$69 million to expand statewide the Head Start school-based apprenticeship and traineeship model to support students to complete their senior secondary certificate while progressing towards a qualification
- \$34 million to deliver professional learning for government school teachers to implement the new curriculum and support for non-school senior secondary providers to transition to the new framework.





### Supporting our teachers

Victoria's teachers have gone above and beyond during the pandemic.

They ran classes online, supported students from home, and innovated to keep kids engaged and learning.

We heard from teachers that if they have more time to prepare lessons, plan, and mark work, their teaching will improve – that's why this budget will invest \$779 million to recruit around 1 900 teachers. That means more time for each teacher to prepare and focus on each student and their needs.

To further support our school workforce, this Budget provides additional investment of \$173 million. This funding will help grow the supply of teachers, encourage them to work in remote and challenging locations, and give them access to the best training and resources.

This includes:

- \$104 million to upgrade school software so students, staff and administrators can connect better and faster
- \$33 million to continue and expand the delivery of employment-based teacher education degrees for postgraduate students
- \$14 million to expand the teacher financial incentives program and extend international teacher incentives and supports
- \$10 million to continue the Secondary Mathematics and Science Initiative including to train 50 mathematics and 25 science out-of-field teachers in priority curriculum areas.

## MAJOR UPGRADES FOR CLASSROOMS AND SPECIAL SCHOOLS

We committed to opening 100 new schools across our state by 2026, and we're well on our way to delivering on this promise.

This Budget will build another 13 schools across our state, bringing the total number of new schools to 75 since 2019.

Students with special needs should also have the same opportunities as every other student in Victoria.

So we are helping make our schools even more inclusive for students with disability and special needs by upgrading another 36 special schools – meaning since 2015 we have upgraded every special school in the state.

We're continuing to build and improve schools around the state, to ensure all our kids have the learning environment they need to succeed.

Because we're committed to ensuring high-quality schools for every child, wherever they live and whatever their needs.

And this investment won't just deliver great schools – it's also helping create jobs in construction and related industries across the state.

Key investments include:

- \$581 million to build 13 brand new schools, and funding to complete additional stages at four schools
- \$560 million to upgrade 65 schools across Victoria including \$326 million for 36 special schools, improving educational outcomes through world-class classrooms and learning facilities
- \$247 million for essential maintenance and compliance and the Accessible Buildings Program
- \$92 million for new relocatable buildings to relieve pressure at schools that are reaching their capacity and to provide additional functional spaces for learning
- \$56 million to expand capacity to meet enrolment growth at two established area schools ahead of the 2025 school year
- \$42 million to fund minor capital works and priority projects at Victorian schools.





# Metro schools





## NEW METRO SCHOOL CONSTRUCTION

The following new schools (interim names listed below) will be constructed:

- Aintree Secondary School
- Aintree Specialist School
- Alexander Boulevard Primary School
- Black Forest East Primary School
- Brookfield Primary School
- Lockerbie Central Primary School
- Lollypop Creek Secondary School
- Lollypop Creek Specialist School
- Merrifield South Primary School
- Officer Brunt Road Primary School
- Riverdale Secondary School
- Tarneit North Primary School
- Truganina North Primary School

The following schools will build additional stages:

- Aintree Primary School
- Aitken Hill Primary School
- Gaayip-Yagila Primary School
- Truganina North Secondary School (Interim Name)

## METRO SCHOOL UPGRADES

- Banyan Fields Primary School
- Bentleigh Secondary College
- Bittern Primary School
- Bundoora Secondary College
- Coldstream Primary School
- Diggers Rest Primary School
- Doreen Primary School
- Hawthorn West Primary School
- Kingston Heath Primary School
- Laburnum Primary School
- Merri Creek Primary School
- Moonee Ponds West Primary School
- Mordialloc Beach Primary School
- Mount Pleasant Road Nunawading Primary School
- Pascoe Vale Primary School
- Reservoir High School
- Sandringham East Primary School
- St Albans Heights Primary School
- The Patch Primary School
- Wantirna College
- Westgarth Primary School
- Yarra Primary School

## METRO LAND ACQUISITION FOR NEW SCHOOLS

- Cardinia
- Casey
- Hume
- Melton
- Whittlesea
- Wyndham

## METRO SPECIAL SCHOOL UPGRADES

- Ashwood School
- Aurora School
- Berendale School and Katandra School (merger)
- Broadmeadows Special Developmental School
- Burwood East Special Developmental School
- Croydon Special Developmental School
- Dandenong Valley Special Developmental School
- Eastern Ranges School
- Glenroy Specialist School
- Hume Valley School
- Jennings Street School
- Merriang Special Developmental School
- Montague Continuing Education Centre
- Mornington Special Developmental School
- Naranga School
- Northern School for Autism
- Officer Specialist School
- Peninsula Specialist College
- Springvale Park Special Developmental School
- Waratah Special Developmental School
- Warringa Park School – Warringa Crescent & Bethany Road Campuses
- Western Autistic School

## SCHOOL UPGRADES: GROWTH FOR 2025

- Kambrya College
- Staughton College



New school – construction



School upgrade



School upgrade (growth for 2025)



Special school upgrade

# Regional schools



## REGIONAL SCHOOL UPGRADES

- Benalla P@12 College
- Darley Primary School
- East Loddon P@12 College
- Grasmere Primary School
- Mount Rowan Secondary College
- Wedderburn College
- Yinnar Primary School

## REGIONAL LAND ACQUISITION FOR NEW SCHOOLS

- Greater Geelong

## SPECIAL SCHOOL UPGRADES

- Bass Coast Specialist School
- Belvoir Wodonga Special Developmental School
- Bendigo Special Developmental School
- Cobram and District Specialist School
- East Gippsland Specialist School
- Hamlyn Views School
- Hampden Specialist School
- Mildura Specialist School
- Nelson Park School
- Skene Street School Stawell
- South Gippsland Specialist School
- Swan Hill Specialist School
- Verney Road School
- Warragul & District Specialist School

**Belvoir Wodonga Special  
Developmental School**

**Warragul & District  
Specialist School**

**East Gippsland  
Specialist School**

**Yinnar  
Primary School**



School upgrade



Special school upgrade

# Made in Victoria

*We're building Victoria's future by investing in Victorian jobs and industry. Because when we back homegrown businesses and innovation, every Victorian benefits.*

## SUPPORTING VICTORIAN MANUFACTURING

To keep Victoria moving forward, we're investing in the industries that will create jobs for years to come.

That's why we are delivering an mRNA manufacturing facility, the first in the southern hemisphere.

This will bolster Victoria's capacity to produce life-saving vaccines and build on and support the resurgence of Victoria as a manufacturing hub. And we're helping to establish Victoria's very own rapid diagnostics manufacturing facility too.

This facility will produce up to 50 million COVID-19 rapid antigen tests every year and create more than 70 local jobs for Victorians, protecting us from global supply shortages and opening new export markets for our state.

### Supporting Victorian industry

The Victorian Industry Fund prioritises areas that are strategically important to Victoria's economic recovery, generating new investment and jobs for Victorians. The \$120 million fund will also support the advancement of domestic manufacturing, in addition to other high priority sectors for the state.

This includes a new \$40 million Victorian Industry Investment Fund to provide grants to support rapidly growing businesses, including supply chains that underpin economic resilience.

A further \$40 million will be provided for targeted financial incentives to attract business investment into Victoria, in line with the Victorian Government's International Investment Strategy.

We're also delivering \$20 million for an equity investment pilot fund that will attract young, highly-innovative companies looking to grow in areas that align with Victoria's priority strengths, such as medical technology, creating more jobs right across our state.

The \$7 million Low-Carbon Manufacturing Grant Program will help Victorian manufacturers compete globally for renewable energy components, supporting Victoria's transition to net zero and all the jobs this will create.

We're also boosting training, with \$4.5 million for 300 Digital Jobs for Manufacturing internships to help train, support and prepare the Victorian workers who will support these industries.

Funding of \$1.5 million is provided for the Defence Science Institute to support defence research and development in Victoria.

The \$2.6 million Defence Industry Workforce Development program delivers additional internship programs to train Victorians to leverage opportunities in the defence manufacturing industry.

Another key step in further developing an advanced manufacturing capability is \$1.5 million in funding to explore the co-location of the CSIRO agrifood research and development capability with AgriBio at La Trobe University.





## BETTER, SAFER JOBS

Every Victorian has the right to go to work, earn a good wage, and return home safe.

And no one should ever have to put a day's pay before their health, or the health of a loved one.

That's why the Andrews Labor Government is working to fix inequalities faced by workers in every corner of our state.

This Budget provides \$246 million to fund the *Sick Pay Guarantee* pilot, which supports casual or insecure workers in select industries that don't provide for sick or carer's pay.

Over 150 000 Victorians in insecure work will be able to participate in the guarantee, providing up to five days' sick pay every year at the national minimum wage. This builds on the \$163 million we've invested in this Budget to support workers through the pandemic through the Test Isolation Payment and Pandemic Leave Disaster Payment.

And we're providing \$6 million to ensure the Victorian Wage Inspectorate continues to have the power and resources it needs to fight wage theft in our state.

More than \$5 million will be dedicated to the establishment of a support service for workers in the gig economy, as recommended by the landmark Inquiry into the Victorian On-Demand Workforce.

The Latrobe Valley Authority will continue to support the Valley and Gippsland transition to long-term, sustainable jobs and industries and help ensure that local communities benefit most.

This includes supporting young people through the Ladder Step Up program and giving communities and workers the skills and support they need to find secure jobs in new industries.

## STRENGTHENING INDUSTRY

We're investing \$28 million over two years to support and improve the building and construction industry, and create new investment opportunities for Victorian businesses.

We will also deliver a new Building Monitor to help protect consumers from dodgy outfits and better regulate the industry.

And we will establish an Office of the State Building Surveyor to oversee the industry and protect Victorian customers wanting to build a home of their own.

### Supporting business

The Regional Jobs and Infrastructure Fund will support economic growth and development in regional and rural Victoria with \$30 million funded in this Budget.

This investment will create and retain jobs, grow and diversify regional economies, and work in partnership with the private sector to identify new opportunities for investment.

This Budget also includes \$10 million to deliver the Business Acceleration Fund, to cut red-tape and streamline regulations, saving precious time for businesses and the Victorians who run them.

This builds on the \$75 million invested in the *2020/21 Budget* Regulatory Reform Package, which will continue to deliver an estimated \$200 million in benefits to businesses every year.



## **SUPPORTING ARTS AND TOURISM TO RECOVER**

Melbourne is the creative and events capital of the nation.

And tourism helps grow regional economies right around the state.

From local music venues and small tourism operators, to the big events that draw tens of thousands of people to Victoria.

When the visitors stopped and the curtains closed, the Victorians who relied on these industries took a real hit.

Which is why, with this Budget, we're continuing to help our arts and tourism industries to get back on their feet.

We are investing \$17 million to restore and improve access to a range of iconic heritage and tourism sites across the state including the Werribee Park Mansion, Point Nepean Forts and Lighthouses at Cape Otway, Cape Schanck, Point Hicks and Wilsons Promontory.

## **Investing in creative industries**

The Andrews Labor Government has always championed Victoria's creative industries.

Throughout the pandemic, we supported artists with measures like Victoria Together, which helped connect Victorians and gave work to creative talent through online content and music.

This Budget invests \$246 million to help our creative industries bounce back even stronger than before.

It includes \$6 million in affordable creative spaces for artists, and activating underutilised spaces run by local governments for local artists and creatives.

And the Go West Festivals Fund will commission stage shows and support jobs for artists from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, taking the arts sector in our western suburbs to a whole new level.

This will sustain and grow jobs that deliver the world-class creative experiences Victorians and visitors come to our state to enjoy.

It will also ensure that the cultural capital of Australia continues to support and foster emerging local artists and performers.



## **Investing in Victoria's cultural institutions**

More visitors to Victoria means more jobs for Victorians.

We're kickstarting Victoria's creative industries by supporting our galleries, museums and arts centres to do what they do best – put on a show.

With this Budget, the Andrews Labor Government is investing \$127 million in Victoria's arts organisations and cultural institutions to be vibrant, strong employers and speed up business recovery.

This includes \$32 million in funding to help support the National Gallery of Victoria (NGV).

This will fund Summer Programming and the NGV Triennial, bringing new major exhibitions and major tourism numbers to our state.

And with this Budget, Victorians can look forward to visiting our outstanding exhibitions and visitor experiences for many years to come, with a \$17 million creative infrastructure package that will fund repairs, restoration and planning at some of our state's best theatres and galleries – creating local jobs in the construction and trades sector.

That includes upgrades for Theatre Works and the National Theatre in St Kilda, the Castlemaine Art Museum, Footscray Community Arts Centre and planning for the Tarneit Performing Arts Centre, and the Dandenong Arts Precinct.

## **Investing in tourism**

The Andrews Labor Government is supporting Victoria's visitor economy with \$111 million to attract more tourists and promote Victoria to the world.

These initiatives will boost our tourism industry as international borders reopen and our visitor economy bounces back. They will support more tourism, accommodation and hospitality jobs in every corner of the state.

A \$2.6 million investment will continue to attract a pipeline of national business events to Melbourne and regional Victoria. These events play a vital role in supporting local jobs and the state's economic recovery during off-peak seasons.

In addition, the \$4.4 million events recovery and support program will re-establish Victoria's calendar of world-class events as we recover from the pandemic.

We're also funding small- to medium-sized community events in Greater Melbourne, to help local neighbourhoods and communities come together after so much time apart.

## **Support for tourism operators**

This Budget provides funds for the Emerald Tourist Railway, including the implementation of the Puffing Billy Master Plan. This will support the continued attraction of tourists to the railway and sustain local jobs.

Funding will also enable the Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre to relaunch activities this year, delivering more events with a strong workforce.

Funding of \$5 million is provided to assist in the sustainable management of Victoria's alpine resorts, ensuring they can continue to be enjoyed by the community.



## SKILLING VICTORIANS

The Government is investing in the skills and training Victorians need to find decent, secure jobs.

This Budget provides \$12 million to continue and expand the Apprenticeship Support Officers program which will help provide apprentices and employers with tailored support, ensuring more Victorians complete their training and take up a job they want.

Funding will target learners most at risk of dropping out including female apprentices.

The Government is investing \$83 million to support and strengthen TAFEs as they sustainably transition to a new funding model and expand coordination of practical placements for TAFE students.

This builds on our significant previous investment in TAFE, helping students access more TAFE courses and get trained for a wider variety of jobs.

This Budget provides \$4.1 million to add Diploma and Advanced Diploma courses in Auslan to our successful Free TAFE program, making it easier for students to get the qualifications they need to support Victoria's deaf community.

Nearly \$800 000 is also allocated to provide an accessibility review of all Victorian TAFE campuses to help people with disability access the training and skills they need to succeed.

And \$10 million to establish new Skills Solutions Partnerships will help address skills shortages in priority areas through collaboration with government, industry, TAFEs and dual sector universities.

## OPEN TO THE WORLD

Victoria has so much to offer the world.

From our highly-skilled workforce, to our growing technology and innovation sector, and world-class food, wine and produce.

International investment and exports are key to attracting new opportunities and fulfilling our state's trade potential.

The Andrews Labor Government is investing \$20 million to support trade and identify opportunities for Victorian businesses as borders reopen across the world.

We will establish a new Victorian Government Trade and Investment office in Paris to create opportunities for Victorian businesses to further expand into European markets in key trade sectors.

This investment includes \$2 million to support international students by providing them with access to public transport through the International Student Travel Pass.

It also includes \$6.5 million to support the Trade Mission Program and ensure that key trade attraction facilities continue to engage and involve Victorian industries and generate jobs.



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# Bringing the Commonwealth Games to our regions

*Big sporting events bring Victorians together.*

And there is no better place to hold the 2026 Commonwealth Games than Victoria – the home of Australian sport.

For the first time, the Games will be hosted across Victoria's regions – with regional hubs in Ballarat, Bendigo, Geelong and Gippsland. Other regional towns and cities are now able to register their interest in hosting activities as part of the Games.

The regional hubs will host athletes, officials and fans following an Opening Ceremony at the iconic Melbourne Cricket Ground, using Melbourne as the gateway to regional Victoria.

Beyond the field of play, we will put on a show for Victorians and visitors alike – pulling out all the stops to feature cultural festivals, local business and great entertainment.

Melbourne hosted the first Olympic Games in the southern hemisphere in 1956, and regularly hosts world-class major events such as the Formula 1, Australian Open, Melbourne Cup Carnival and the Boxing Day Test – to name just a few.

With Victoria 2026, we'll be promoting regional Victoria to the world – because it has so much to offer.

We successfully hosted the Commonwealth Games in 2006, and we are now pleased to be bringing the Commonwealth Games back to Victoria in 2026.

And it will deliver the additional benefits of creating local jobs and housing and boosting regional economies. That's why this Budget includes funding of \$2.6 billion so Victoria is ready to host the Commonwealth Games in 2026.

Victoria will deliver a world-class Commonwealth Games that leaves a lasting legacy in every corner of our state.

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We will deliver  
a world-class  
Commonwealth  
Games that  
leaves a lasting  
legacy in every  
corner of our state



# Getting Victorians home sooner and safer

*We haven't wasted a day in getting on with the road and rail projects Victorians need to get home safer and sooner.*

The Andrews Labor Government has invested \$97 billion in planning, building, operating and maintaining transport assets, including new trains, trams, tunnels and roads.

That includes getting on with the projects we promised: the Metro Tunnel, the Level Crossing Removal Program, the Suburban Rail Loop, the West Gate Tunnel, the North East Link and the Melbourne Airport Rail.

And our regional network is the backbone of our state, connecting communities to work, study and to each other.

Our investments in the Regional Rail Revival program and regional road improvements are providing more reliable transport options for growing communities and helping regional Victorians make it home safe.

These infrastructure investments are also creating jobs.

Our Big Build program supports jobs and has provided a career path for apprentices, cadets and trainees – giving Victorians the confidence that if they learn a trade, there will be a job for them on one of our major projects.

We'll partner with any Commonwealth Government willing to support Australia's most important infrastructure projects and will keep advocating for Victorians to get their fair share.

## SWITCHING ON THE BIG BUILD

The Andrews Labor Government is powering ahead with rail projects right across the state – slashing travel times and supporting thousands of jobs.

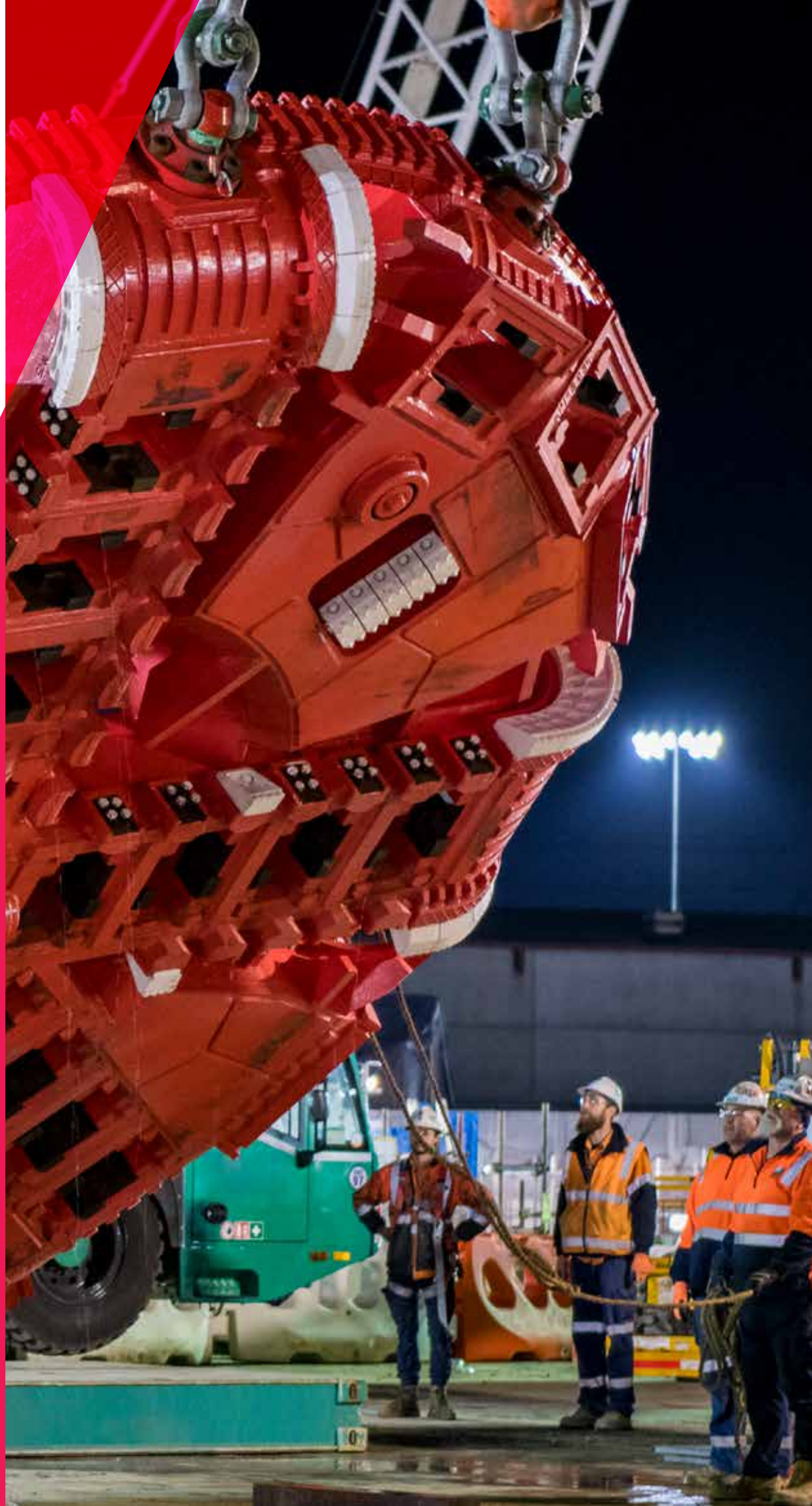
The Budget provides \$383 million to operate new transport infrastructure delivered as part of the Big Build, including level crossing removals, rail extensions, train station upgrades and road upgrades.

Train timetable service upgrades are being introduced across both regional and metropolitan rail networks following the completion of major projects including the Cranbourne Line Upgrade, the Waurin Ponds Station upgrade, Wyndham Vale corridor upgrades, and the Pakenham level crossing removals.

This funding also includes preparing for day one of the Metro Tunnel, including recruitment and training of train drivers and other critical staff, maintenance of new assets and the development of wayfinding and customer information.

Victorians will experience a more accessible and comfortable public transport network with \$158 million for accessibility and safety upgrades at train stations and tram stops, including critical CBD tram stop upgrades to provide better connections and access to the Metro Tunnel when it opens.





## IMPROVING OUR PUBLIC TRANSPORT SYSTEM

Since 2014, we have invested \$59 billion to keep our public transport moving – and with this Budget, we'll keep building a public transport system that every Victorian can rely on.

The Government is investing a further \$265 million into the state's unprecedented pipeline of new and upgraded trains and trams – built and maintained in Victoria for Victorians, supporting thousands of jobs in local manufacturing.

In a boost for regional Victoria, this Budget includes 12 brand-new VLocity trains built and maintained in Victoria for the regional rail network and new stabling facilities at Bairnsdale for VLocity trains on the Gippsland line.

A further \$248 million will be invested in Victoria's regional rail network to keep people and goods moving, including a package of V/Line organisational improvement projects to support the reliability and efficiency of regional passenger rail operations, and major periodic maintenance and routine maintenance works on freight rail corridors across the state.

We're delivering \$109 million to improve Victoria's suburban and regional bus services and bus stops, connecting people to education and work and filling gaps in the network.

Suburban and regional train stations will be upgraded to improve accessibility and safety with a \$58 million investment, including on the Dandenong and Mernda lines, and at Woodend and Warrnambool. The upgrades will include better signage, new passenger shelters, boarding ramps, CCTV, and bicycle parking facilities.

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We're building  
a public  
transport system  
that every  
Victorian can  
rely on





## BETTER, SAFER ROADS

The Andrews Labor Government is getting every Victorian home sooner and safer by continuing to invest in road upgrades across the state.

We have invested \$35 billion since 2014 to expand the road network and deliver the critical maintenance work that ensures our roads are safe.

This Budget includes \$213 million for the Mickleham Road 1.6-kilometre road upgrade, creating a safer journey for the thousands of drivers who use the road every day.

The project will deliver bus priority lanes at intersections, to help cut travel times for every commuter.

We're also investing \$126 million for road upgrades in metropolitan Melbourne, including installing traffic lights, planning and development work, and other road improvements.

Regional Victorians know better than most how important it is to have safe and reliable roads.

Which is why this Budget is investing \$101 million in regional road upgrades. These works include intersection upgrades, new overtaking lanes and new roundabouts on key regional roads and highways across the state, from Wodonga to Shepparton to Bairnsdale and Portland.

Safe roads are well-maintained roads, which is why the Andrews Labor Government is spending \$780 million in 2022/23 on road maintenance works across the metropolitan and regional road network.

Works include routine maintenance, road resurfacing and bridge strengthening. This will ensure the roads we use today are safe and sound in the decades to come.

We're also focusing on road safety, because any death on our roads is tragic. This Budget includes \$263 million to continue to deliver Victoria's 2021-2030 Road Safety Strategy and the first three-year Road Safety Action Plan.



## SUBURBAN RAIL LOOP

The Suburban Rail Loop (SRL) is the single biggest transport investment in Victoria's history.

The 90-kilometre rail line will link every major rail line from the Frankston Line to the Werribee Line via Melbourne Airport, better connecting Victorians to jobs, retail, education, health services and each other.

Three transport super hubs at Clayton, Broadmeadows and Sunshine will connect regional services, so passengers outside Melbourne won't have to travel through the CBD to get to employment, world-class hospitals and universities in the suburbs.

The SRL will also deliver decades worth of local jobs, with up to 24 000 jobs supported across Victoria during the delivery of the SRL from Cheltenham to the Melbourne Airport.

In August 2021, we released the Business and Investment Case, which showed the project stacks up – every dollar invested will return \$1.10 to \$1.70 to the Victorian community.

The SRL East Initial and Early Works alone will create up to 800 direct jobs, with construction commencing in 2022.

Earlier this year, we released an expression of interest to the market for the SRL East tunnelling packages.

The first tunnelling package will deliver around 16 kilometres of twin tunnels between Cheltenham and Glen Waverley – the longest in Victoria's history.

The second will complete the SRL East corridor, with tunnels from Glen Waverley to Box Hill.

And the SRL East Community Projects Fund will invest in projects identified by local community groups and councils to create new green space, walking tracks, bike paths and local projects that benefit the entire community.

We know that SRL train stations will be a focal point for communities, and the Andrews Labor Government is committed to ensuring they become hubs that deliver the important services and community spaces that Victorians deserve.



## REMOVING LEVEL CROSSINGS

When we set an ambitious target to remove 50 dangerous and congested level crossings by 2022, some said it couldn't be done.

But by the end of this year, we will have removed 68 – and we're not slowing down.

By 2025 the Andrews Labor Government will remove 85 dangerous and congested level crossings – getting rid of boom gates that have slowed down Victorians for decades.

The 10 new sites announced in July last year will create jobs for 2 100 people and another 1 900 workers will support the manufacturing supply chain:

- Warrigal Road, Mentone
- Parkers Road, Parkdale
- Keon Parade, Keon Park
- Bedford Road, Ringwood
- Dublin Road, Ringwood East
- Coolstore Road, Croydon
- Webb Street, Narre Warren
- Station Street, Beaconsfield
- Brunt Road, Beaconsfield
- Calder Park Drive, Calder Park.

We're also building five new stations at:

- Croydon
- Keon Park
- Narre Warren
- Parkdale
- Ringwood East.

While removing these level crossings is critical, we have put local communities at the heart of delivering these projects.

Right now, in suburbs across Melbourne, there are new sports facilities, open spaces and bike paths delivered as part of our community-focused approach to removing level crossings.

Because we know that for new infrastructure to be effective, it needs to benefit the entire community.



# A fairer Victoria

*A fairer Victoria means supporting every single Victorian – regardless of who you are, where you're from, or what you believe.*

It means providing the support and opportunity that people need to succeed.

This Budget delivers significant reform and investment to promote equality, tackle disadvantage, and improve fairness across our entire state.

This means providing homes for those who need them, progressing a treaty with Aboriginal Victorians, supporting our LGBTIQ+ community, and putting equality at the forefront of our decision making.

We're investing in a more equal state for every single Victorian.

## HOMES FOR VICTORIANS

Having a home is so much more than just a roof over your head.

It gives you the base you need to hold down a job, or to study and get a good education.

It's a place where you can start a family of your own and create a great future for your kids.

And it means belonging to a community of people – it gives security and opportunity.

A home is the foundation of a better life, and our Government is so proud to offer thousands of Victorians the chance to achieve exactly that.

In October 2021, the Government launched its \$500 million Victorian Homebuyer Fund, a shared equity scheme that has already helped over 900 Victorians to buy a home and approved more than a further 1 400 to start house hunting.

In the 2020/21 Budget, we invested a record \$5.3 billion to deliver more than 12 000 new homes, including 2 000 dwellings for Victorians living with a mental illness.

Government intends to work with the community housing sector to make available a further \$1 billion in low interest loans and government guarantees to community housing agencies to deliver social and affordable housing.

This is expected to create up to 6 000 new social and affordable houses, providing accommodation for some of our most vulnerable Victorians.

## Tackling homelessness

We're providing the programs and services that Victorians experiencing homelessness need to stay off the streets and find a safe, secure place to call their own.

We're investing \$75 million to provide tailored homelessness support, and focus our delivery model on prevention, early intervention and sustainable housing.

We're investing \$9.4 million to continue critical homelessness programs around Victoria.

This includes support for the Homelessness After-Hours Service, to help people seeking accommodation outside of business hours to find a safe place to sleep and avoid being left to sleep rough.

In the last year alone, the Homelessness After-Hours Service has provided emergency accommodation for thousands of Victorians in need.





## FIRST PEOPLES

The foundation for a fairer Victoria starts with a fairer future for our First Peoples.

Our Government has funded almost \$1.6 billion in programs and services to support and assist Victoria's Aboriginal community, including over \$400 million in this Budget.

This includes work to support self-determination and further the treaty process between First Nations' Peoples and the State.

We're continuing to support our nation-leading treaty process with an investment of \$151 million.

Other initiatives include:

- \$36 million to deliver assessments for the protection of cultural significant Aboriginal Victorian sites
- \$7.2 million to continue the Aboriginal Children and Families Innovation and Learning Fund, which provides grants to Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations to undertake research that will allow them to better do their work
- \$5.8 million to continue joint land management of the Barmah National Park in partnership with the Yorta Yorta people
- \$5.8 million to deliver educational programs in schools that support learning and understanding of self-determination for Victorian Aboriginal communities
- \$3.9 million to support returning water to Traditional Owners for cultural, spiritual and economic use
- \$2.8 million to support the delivery of a Certificate IV in Teaching a First Nation's Language, to help increase the number of Aboriginal language teachers in Victorian classrooms
- \$2.2 million to support the Lake Tyers and Framlingham Aboriginal Trusts to strengthen their independence and support emerging leaders
- \$947 000 to deliver Aboriginal community events that foster continue greater public awareness of Victorian Aboriginal culture and history
- \$748 000 to deliver the Traditional Owner Settlement Act Forum that supports Aboriginal communities to negotiate traditional owner land rights that help communities realise the full benefit of their native title settlements.





## EQUALITY FOR ALL VICTORIANS

Equality is not negotiable in Victoria.

Regardless of who you are, who you love, or who you want to be, everyone deserves to be treated with respect and decency in our state.

The Andrews Labor Government has delivered on its commitment to release Victoria's first whole of government LGBTIQ+ Strategy.

And this Budget provides expanded funding to create a more inclusive state – where Victorians can be themselves and celebrate their diversity.

In this Budget we are committing \$15 million to strengthen the health, wellbeing, and social and economic outcomes of LGBTIQ+ Victorians.

This includes continuing the LGBTIQ+ Grants Program, to help support even more community organisations and LGBTIQ+ groups to grow and expand their work.

We're proud to once again support the Pride Events and Festivals Fund, and provide funding for four years of the Melbourne Pride festival.

We will trial Safe Spaces for LGBTIQ+ youth in Western Victoria, including referral services and greater access to targeted medical and emotional supports.

And now that the Victorian Pride Centre is fully operational, we're continuing to invest in the services and programs that it supports, including a specialist LGBTIQ+ legal service and the Trans and Gender Diverse Community Health Program.

These services will better support LGBTIQ+ Victorians with specialist care and advice from workers and professionals who understand their community and their needs.

We are also leading the nation when it comes to gender equality, and we're drawing on international best practice to make sure this Budget supports the needs of all Victorians.

Gender responsive budgeting will ensure that Government investment helps address and advance women's needs and aspirations. That means greater investment to support gender equality, more targeted policies that consider the needs of all Victorians, services that are better targeted to the needs of women, and increased transparency and accountability across government.

Following on from the introduction of the *Gender Equality Act 2020* we're prioritising gender equality in this Budget.

This focus will help us identify areas that need extra support so we can achieve our equality goals.

The *2022-23 Budget* invests around \$940 million in initiatives primarily focussed on improving outcomes for women.

Our Government has always backed equality, and this Budget does exactly that.

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## Equality is not negotiable in Victoria



## INVESTMENT IN EARLY INTERVENTION

From family violence to child protection and mental health – the Andrews Labor Government has a record of delivering for the Victorians who need it most.

And we know that the key to meaningful change for families and communities is early support when people first reach out for help – well before they reach a crisis point. Intervening early not only helps individuals and their families – it reduces the need for more acute and costly services.

The Government invested \$324 million in early intervention in the *2021/22 Budget*. Building on last year's investment, this Budget delivers an additional \$504 million for early intervention initiatives.

Investments this year support students in crisis, those suffering mental ill health, persons exiting prison and those experiencing homelessness.

### **A new system with community based services at its core**

We're providing early access to substance use illness or addiction treatment as part of acute mental healthcare – meaning people get serious support early, rather than ending up in the emergency department during a crisis.

This Budget includes ongoing support to deliver integrated care, treatment and support for people living with an acute mental illness and substance use illness or addiction.

With this approach, we are ensuring that Victorians suffering from both illnesses receive the care they need in an accessible way.

### **Putting an end to homelessness**

Stable housing is the bedrock of health and wellbeing. This Budget supports people who have a history of homelessness, to help them into the accommodation they need. The assistance provides street outreach and tailored case management to address barriers to exiting homelessness including substance abuse, poor physical and mental health and limited social supports, while also building their capacity to better manage their lives and their residential tenancy.

### **Supporting children at risk**

This Budget will expand the Navigator program, helping an additional 1 400 severely disengaged young people to reconnect with learning.

This includes a trial to lower the eligibility age of the program to 10 to 11-year-olds, so they can get earlier intervention and support during the transition from primary school to secondary school.

### **Reducing re-offending and keeping Victorians safe**

Targeted, earlier services and supports will reduce repeat offending and improve outcomes for over-represented cohorts in the justice system.

With an emphasis on holistic and integrated responses, the initiatives expand effective reintegration and support services, and provide new approaches that foster stronger employment and engagement with family and community, targeted support for people with disability, and safe accommodation to offenders who would otherwise be at risk of homelessness.

# Helping families

*Victorian families deserve to know that when they need help, it will be there. This Budget continues the Government's strong track record in delivering the services families need for peace of mind.*

## SUPPORT FOR VULNERABLE CHILDREN

Every child should grow up feeling safe, supported and loved.

And for our kids to lead happy and healthy lives, they need the very best start possible.

This is why the Andrews Labor Government has invested \$2.9 billion since the *2019/20 Budget* to protect our children and help keep vulnerable families together.

These investments have expanded the child protection workforce, increased out-of-home placements, and provided care for vulnerable families.

This Budget builds on our commitment to support families and children, providing a further \$272 million to improve services and safety. This investment includes:

- \$85 million to meet demand for residential care and continue the Care Hub program, which supports young people who can't live with their families due to abuse or neglect. Care Hub's services help minimise the time young Victorians spend in care, and reunify them with their families sooner
- \$58 million to meet increasing demand for family services, with support for up to 1 000 additional vulnerable families, and to strengthen child protection responses by increasing support staff capacity
- \$7.2 million to support culturally-safe services for Aboriginal children in child protection and the continuation of the Aboriginal Children and Families Innovation and Learning Fund.

## ENDING FAMILY VIOLENCE

Seven years ago, we held Australia's first ever Royal Commission into Family Violence.

Through the courage and conviction of so many Victorians, we started a national conversation about putting an end to this crisis.

We heard the call of thousands of victim survivors. We have made significant headway in delivering change and this Budget will assist us towards meeting all 227 Royal Commission recommendations.

The Andrews Labor Government has invested over \$3.5 billion to protect and support Victorian women and children facing family violence. This Budget invests a further \$241 million to support victim survivors.

This includes:

- \$69 million to continue funding for family violence refuges, build and operate two new women's refuges, upgrade three existing partner agency-operated facilities and purchase six new crisis accommodation properties to support victim survivors
- \$43 million for family violence services, including additional crisis case management for victim survivors of family violence, specialised therapeutic counselling services for children and young people, and financial supports for victim survivors fleeing family violence
- \$30 million including continued support for perpetrators behavioural change programs, including enabling family violence specialists to engage with perpetrators who have gone through Male Behaviour Change Programs so we can understand how to make these services more effective in the future
- \$30 million to expand the capabilities of the Central Information Point, a critical service that collates and shares relevant information about risks posed by known perpetrators and helps keep victim survivors safe.





# Building strong communities

*When Victorians look out for one another, we can overcome anything. Through this Budget, the Andrews Labor Government is supporting communities to be stronger than they've ever been.*

## INVESTING IN VICTORIAN COMMUNITIES

This Budget continues to invest in communities in Victoria's suburbs, with \$50 million to extend the Growing Suburbs Fund.

The Fund will provide grants for local community infrastructure projects, such as health and wellbeing hubs; community centres; arts and cultural facilities; parks and reserves; early education and learning centres; and sport and recreation facilities. Because no matter where you choose to live, work and raise a family – every Victorian deserves a great community.

Other initiatives include:

- \$20 million for Living Local, Shopping Local and local community grants programs to support smaller scale infrastructure in metropolitan Melbourne and regional Victoria. The Fund will deliver projects like new playgrounds, community gardens and upgrades to community centres
- \$750 000 to support the planning processes for Fishermans Bend.

## REINVIGORATING MAJOR ATTRACTIONS

We want to promote everything Victoria has to offer to the world.

Which is why we're rebuilding, upgrading and protecting some of Victoria's biggest attractions.

We're investing a total of \$1.7 billion to transform the Melbourne Arts Precinct and position Victoria as a global arts destination.

This includes an additional \$241 million to build on existing restoration works for the Arts Centre Melbourne, undertake critical maintenance works to the Theatres Building and deliver a range of new food and beverage outlets for visitors.

But being a first-choice destination for tourism means giving visitors something they've never seen before.

Which is why the Andrews Labor Government will deliver the largest modern art and design gallery in Australia – the new NGV Contemporary.

Designs for the gallery in Southbank have already been revealed – and plans include 13 000 square metres of display space for art and design and an expansive rooftop terrace with views of Melbourne's CBD.

A collective of 20 Victorian and Australian-based firms with expertise across architecture, design and engineering will bring the NGV Contemporary to life.

The project will support construction jobs and generate hundreds of ongoing creative sector jobs when it opens.







## LIVEABLE SUBURBS AND REGIONS

### Better living

Every Victorian deserves the opportunity to get out and kick a ball, go for a run, walk the dog or enjoy their much-loved local parks and clubs.

That's why over the past four years, we've invested over \$1.3 billion in community sport and parks to ensure that Victorians have the facilities they need to live active lives.

This Budget provides another \$88 million for sport and recreation including funding to support the Local Sports Infrastructure Fund, Female Friendly Facilities Fund, and the Country Football and Netball Program.

Together, these programs will deliver up to 100 new and upgraded community sport and recreation facilities across the state, giving even more people the chance to connect with their community.

### Multicultural communities

Victoria isn't just proud of its diversity – we consider it one of our greatest gifts.

Because when people come from abroad to make Victoria their home, they bring new perspectives, cultures and traditions – making our state and community stronger.

That's why this Budget invests in our multicultural communities, to help them succeed, and better celebrate everything that's important to them. These investments include:

- \$6.7 million including legal support for asylum seekers and temporary visa holders so they can get the assistance they need as they manage their settlement in Victoria
- \$6.4 million to continue the Multicultural Community Infrastructure Fund so that we can build and upgrade community facilities and places of worship, through projects such as new car parks, kitchens, and meeting spaces
- \$4.4 million to support young members of Victoria's African communities with the delivery of targeted education support programs like homework clubs and community liaison officers who are embedded in schools to support families with their child's learning
- \$3.7 million to support multicultural communities with tailored and translated messaging and programs to support COVIDSafe behaviours, such as vaccine uptake and testing
- \$1.1 million to give our multicultural communities the chance to celebrate the holidays and events that they hold dear, with those they hold close.





## Youth

Young people today, are the future of our state tomorrow. That's why we'll provide:

- \$1.8 million for initiatives that help young people at risk of disengagement. This includes the Empower Youth program, which provides early intervention and case management for vulnerable young Victorians
- \$1.3 million to subsidise 2 000 young people with the accreditation they need to get jobs in the sports and recreation sector, such as swimming instructors
- \$581 000 to strengthen the Koorie Youth Council partnership with government in the design and delivery of initiatives affecting Aboriginal young people, consistent with Victoria's commitment to Aboriginal self-determination.

## A FAIR GO FOR PEOPLE WITH A DISABILITY

The Andrews Labor Government is supporting Victorians living with a disability, to ensure every Victorian can reach their full potential.

An investment of \$15 million in the State Disability Plan will help make our community and facilities more inclusive and accessible for everyone.

Travelling around the state will be made easier for people with disability with the expansion of Victoria's network of around 90 fully accessible restrooms.

And the Change Your Reactions public education campaign will help raise awareness of autism, and promote more positive attitudes towards autistic Victorians around the state.

We're continuing the Disability Liaison Officers Program, and grants to improve infrastructure accessibility at community facilities.

This Budget also invests \$135 million to continue providing vital support to Victorians with disability who aren't eligible for the NDIS – and tailored support through the health, justice and child protection service systems.

## KEEPING VICTORIANS SAFE

The Andrews Labor Government will deliver more police with more resources and more of the fit-for-purpose modern stations they need to keep protecting Victorians.

This Budget provides \$342 million for an additional 502 police and 50 Protective Service Officers (PSOs) over the next two years to meet the growing needs of the state, building on the 3 135 new police officers already on our streets thanks to the Labor Government's record funding for Victoria Police.

The Andrews Labor Government is committed to providing a strong justice system that not only delivers a safer Victoria, but also minimises the chance that those who have been convicted of crimes will reoffend.

Central to this are initiatives designed to support a strengthening of our justice system, and provide resources for areas that require them such as:

- \$215 million to equip frontline police officers and PSOs with conducted energy devices, including body-worn cameras and training, to ensure police and PSOs have additional non-lethal options to safely resolve violent or dangerous situations
- \$47 million to build a replacement fit for purpose 24-hour South Melbourne police station and to build a new police station in Point Cook to serve the growing local community.

## RESPONDING TO EMERGENCIES

Devastating bushfires, floods and natural disasters have highlighted how important it is that our state is prepared, connected and resourced to deliver quick and efficient emergency response.

This Budget ensures the safety of all Victorians by supporting the capacity of our emergency service operators and workforce to look after us, in times of need.

### Preparedness

- \$26 million for the maintenance of VICSES facilities and replacement of vehicles reaching end-of-life, and extra support for volunteers to deal with complex people and behaviours. And a further \$2.7 million to deliver VICSES volunteer training and professional development programs
- \$10 million to deliver energy resilience solutions such as microgrids to targeted locations that are exposed to power outages due to bushfires and extreme weather
- \$2.4 million to continue to support the Powerline Bushfire Safety Program for the Victorian community to reduce the risk of powerlines starting bushfires.

### Recovery

- \$9.4 million to rebuild public roads and ensure the security of energy supply networks in communities affected by the 2021 storm and flood events
- \$714 000 to continue recovery social support services to communities affected by the June 2021 flood and storm event.

### Workforce

- \$42 million to support our Forest Fire Operation Officers to deliver frontline firefighting and planned burning to reduce bushfire risk across the state
- \$36 million to support the State Control Centre's 24-hour operations capability, workforce delivery, data analytics and digital infrastructure
- \$11 million to the Country Fire Authority (CFA) for volunteer driver training, licensing and related emergency vehicle fleet.

## LOOKING AFTER OUR ENVIRONMENT

Every day, our investments in renewable energy push Victoria closer to net zero emissions by 2050.

And our landmark Solar Homes program is helping reduce household power costs for thousands of Victorian families.

This Budget also protects our state's parks, coastlines, trails, wildlife and natural resources to preserve them for future generations.

Over the past eight years, the Andrews Labor Government has invested \$2.2 billion to protect our environment. And this Budget builds on this landmark investment, providing an additional \$215 million to ensure an environmentally sustainable future for our state.

Investments in this Budget include:

- \$57 million to invest in projects that support more efficient use of our water supply, including construction of a fishway at Maffra Weir to improve aquatic biodiversity in the Macalister River and broader Gippsland catchment
- \$28 million for investments in eucalyptus seed collection, upgrades to storage facilities and seed viability testing that will support forest contractors and ensure that forests can be reseeded after major fires, as well as improved forest protection regulations
- \$18 million to repair and upgrade piers and jetties across the state to keep them safe for local communities to enjoy boating and fishing for decades to come, including Hampton Jetty, McLoughlins Beach Jetty and Mornington Fishermans Jetty
- \$17 million to build a safe, healthier and more resilient marine and coastal environment for the community, addressing critical erosion and flood risks, protecting marine and coastal assets and ensuring the adaptation and resilience of coastal communities
- \$10 million for investment in Great Ocean Road management reforms, to prevent and prepare for erosion
- \$5.3 million for a package of wildlife protection initiatives, including funding to shelters rehabilitating injured and orphaned animals.

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# Victorian Budget

## 2022/23

Overview

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Treasury  
and Finance