



Victorian Budget  
**2026/27**

**26**  
**27**

# **Easier. Safer. More Affordable.**

Gender Equality  
Budget Statement



# ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

The Victorian Department of Treasury and Finance acknowledges that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are the First Peoples and Traditional Custodians of Australia, and the oldest continuing culture in human history. We proudly acknowledge Victoria's Aboriginal communities and recognise the value and ongoing contribution of Aboriginal people and communities to Victorian life. We pay our respect to Elders past and present and emerging.

As we work to ensure Victorian Aboriginal communities continue to thrive, the Government acknowledges the invaluable contributions of generations that have come before us, who have fought tirelessly for the rights of their people and communities towards self-determination. We reflect on the continuing impact of government policies and practices and recognise our responsibility to work together with and for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples towards improved cultural, social and economic outcomes.



*'lim-ba nindee thana warn-ga-ilee'*  
(Preserve our Dreaming Lore) – Gunnai Language  
Bitja (Dixon Patten Jnr) Yorta Yorta, Gunnai,  
Gunditjmara and Dhudhuroa of Bayila Creative

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Budget Paper No. 1 – Treasurer's Speech  
Budget Paper No. 2 – Strategy and Outlook  
Budget Paper No. 3 – Service Delivery  
Budget Paper No. 4 – State Capital Program  
Budget Paper No. 5 – Statement of Finances  
(incorporating Quarterly Financial Report No. 3)

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## Foreword

### A message from the Treasurer and the Minister for Women and Girls

This year marks a decade of Gender Equality Budget Statements in this state, and our fifth year of gender responsive budgeting.

Gender responsive budgeting runs an equality ruler across all Budget decisions, to build a fairer future for all Victorians.

It evaluates how policies and budget proposals affect different genders differently and holds governments accountable for their gender equality promises.

It helps drive change, such as increased workforce participation for women, which has risen from 58.3 per cent to 62.9 per cent over the past decade in Victoria.

More than 425 000 women have found work over the last decade. This represents a 30.4 per cent increase in the number of women in work in Victoria. The share of women in work has grown by 5.3 percentage points over the last decade, and at 60.2 per cent remains near the recent historical highs.

The Victorian Government has led on policies that help women work, keep them safer and address their health.

In this milestone year, we look back at what we have achieved during the decade of this reform.

In the workplace, we've broken down barriers for women in industries traditionally dominated by men, with strategies to open doors across the manufacturing and construction sectors.

Since 2018, the Victorian Government has invested \$8 million to increase the number of women in trade, non-trade and professional roles across the civil, commercial and industrial sectors.

To keep women and girls safe, we've funded our Women's Safety Package, including helping more women and children experiencing family violence into safe and secure accommodation.

We've passed legislation to restrict non-disclosure agreements in sexual harassment cases to stop the practice of misusing them to silence victims and protect offenders.

Women's health needs haven't always been met – now that's changing.

We're working hard to address the gender pain gap, with our Inquiry into Women's Pain hearing from 13 000 women, girls and health workers.

We've dispensed over half a million free pads and tampons across over 600 venues – a \$23 million investment over four years to tackle period poverty and address the stigma that surrounds periods.

Through Chemist Care Now, we're making it easier for women to refill the pill and get care for conditions like urinary tract infections without a visit to the GP. From July, Victorian women will be able to save time and get the pill at one of the 850 participating pharmacies without a script.

By keeping gender equity central to all our decisions, we are building in better outcomes for all – so that every Victorian can be their very best.



Jaclyn Symes MP

**Treasurer  
Minister for Industrial Relations  
Minister for Development Victoria  
and Precincts**



Gabrielle Williams MP

**Minister for Women and Girls  
Minister for Transport  
Infrastructure  
Minister for Public and  
Active Transport**

*Any references to a woman, women or girls are intended to include those assigned female at birth and anyone who identifies as a woman, though they may have a different sex at birth.*

# Gender equality in Victoria

## A decade of reform

### Understanding gender responsive budgeting

From healthcare to education, policies and programs affect genders differently.

Understanding systemic biases and how people move and function differently in society allows us to better tailor the programs and services we provide to all Victorians.

Gender responsive budgeting looks at decisions about spending to:

- ▷ Identify how investments in areas like health, education, transport and social services affect different groups
- ▷ Focus resources on the people who need them the most and those who experience existing inequalities
- ▷ Ensure new projects and programs benefit the whole community.

This doesn't mean we're creating separate budgets for women and men. Gender responsive budgeting tackles gender equality by reducing bias in all policy and funding decisions.

It means we're making smarter – and fairer – decisions by understanding the different ways people use and benefit from government investment.

### Building on best practice

Gender responsive budgeting is being increasingly adopted around the world to shape policies and improve gender equality. The number of OECD countries practising gender budgeting has almost doubled in recent years, from 35 per cent in 2016 to over 60 per cent in 2022.

In 2020, Victoria became the first jurisdiction in Australia to enshrine public sector gender equality laws through the *Gender Equality Act 2020*, a landmark step in breaking down discrimination and gender barriers in the workplace.

The Victorian Labor Government then further embedded its commitment to gender equality by building gender responsive budgeting into legislation.

By ensuring that every Victorian – regardless of gender – is at the heart of our decision-making, we're building a stronger, fairer future for all.

Every Victorian budget must now include a statement about gender equality, and the Treasurer can also request Gender Impact Assessments for any matter concerning the *Financial Management Act 1994*. This puts gender equality at the centre of sound financial management.

These two pieces of legislation are historic firsts for Australia.

Gender responsive budgeting is a powerful tool for shaping investments that have real world outcomes for gender equality, through policies, programs and projects that work better for all Victorians.

We are proud to continue our work on gender equality, as we continue to expand on the advancements of the last decade.

We have had a chance to share the insights we have developed at Women Deliver – one of the largest gender equality conferences in the world. Held at the Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre in April, it allowed Victorian experts to share our best practice – and learn from other jurisdictions.



**A FAIRER VICTORIA**

**For every Victorian**

The Allan Labor Government knows that equality is non-negotiable.

Through the *Victorian Budget 2026/27*, we continue to invest in gender equality. We will do so by continuing the Joan Kirner Leadership Program that promotes the participation, leadership and recognition of women.

In 2023, *Our equal state* – Victoria’s roadmap for action and investment in gender equality – recognised that gender inequality exists alongside other forms of discrimination, such as homophobia, transphobia, racism and ableism.

So we are also investing \$19 million to strengthen the health, wellbeing and community connectedness of vulnerable cohorts.

# The Victorian Budget 2026/27

\$4.8 billion invested in this year's Budget will help strengthen gender equality in Victoria

With a decade of work focused on gender equality, the Allan Labor Government continues to work towards improving the lives of all Victorians.

The *Victorian Budget 2026/27* invests in gender equality in Victoria across the following areas:

- ▷ **Women's health**  
\$1 billion to support the recommendations from the Government's *Bridging the gender pain gap* report and continuing to create a fairer and more equitable health system for all Victorians
- ▷ **Improving economic equity**  
\$990 million to continue improving women's workforce participation and providing more opportunities for fulfilling careers
- ▷ **Helping with the cost of living**  
\$544 million to ease cost of living pressures for those who need it most
- ▷ **How we get around**  
\$312 million towards safer, more frequent and more accessible transportation across Victoria
- ▷ **Until every Victorian is safe**  
\$1.7 billion to continue creating a safer Victoria by giving victim survivors of family violence and vulnerable families safe places to turn to for support and helping more people into housing and secure accommodation
- ▷ **First Peoples women**  
\$181 million to work alongside Treaty and self-determination to ensure that First Peoples women are empowered in their choices.

Of the total funded initiatives in the Budget:

- ▷ More than 150 have been assessed as having a positive impact on gender equality
- ▷ 16 initiatives, with a combined investment of \$935 million, are expected to have a significantly positive impact. They will help improve gender equality at a statewide level, change attitudes, or reduce gaps in outcomes, access or participation.

These investments improve gender equality by:

- ▷ Increasing opportunities for women's workforce participation through more accessible childcare and early education options
- ▷ Supporting family violence victim survivors
- ▷ Making healthcare safer, more targeted and more accessible for women and gender diverse people.

The total investment towards gender equality is now over \$19 billion over five successive Budgets.



## Women's health

### Bridging the gender pain gap

For too long, women's health has been overlooked and under diagnosed.

This was demonstrated to be true in the Allan Labor Government's landmark Inquiry into Women's Pain.

More than 13 000 women and girls shared their experiences to demand women's pain is taken seriously.

In response to this inquiry we have already funded the roll out of the green whistle – a pain-relieving inhaler – for procedures to insert intrauterine devices at the 20 specialised women's reproductive and sexual health hubs across the state.

This also included introducing a Women's Pain Standard across the public health system, empowering women to understand the level of care they should expect when managing their pain.

We are continuing to roll out a network of dedicated women's health clinics to deliver free, specialised care for everything from pelvic pain to managing the symptoms of menopause.

Currently 15 women's health clinics are operational across Victoria, with five new clinics scheduled to open in the second half of 2026, including:

- ▷ Ararat, led by East Grampians Health Service
- ▷ Bacchus Marsh, led by Western Health
- ▷ Heidelberg, led by Austin Health and Mercy Health
- ▷ Prahran, led by Bayside Health and based at The Alfred
- ▷ Parkville (a dedicated Kids and Teens clinic), led by The Royal Children's Hospital.

This Budget invests a further \$10 million in preventative sexual health support for Victorian women, providing funding for peer-led health and wellbeing services and women's health organisations.

### GENDER RESPONSIVE BUDGETING IN ACTION

#### Australia is on track to eliminate cervical cancer by 2035

After the introduction of Australia's human papillomavirus (HPV) school vaccination program in 2007, cervical cancer diagnoses dropped to zero in women under 25 in 2021. This is a first since national records began more than 40 years ago.

HPV is linked to more than 99 per cent of cervical cancer cases. And while people diagnosed were almost exclusively women, carriers of HPV are not.

The majority of people carrying an HPV virus will be asymptomatic – and possibly never know that they even had it.

The most common sign of being a carrier will show up as an abnormal finding on a cervical screening test.

Ensuring that the HPV vaccine continues to be funded for *all* young people through our essential vaccine schedules is what puts us in line for being the first country to eliminate cervical cancer.



## Affordable and accessible

Accessible and high-quality public healthcare services are an important way to ensure that women can look after their health and receive the care they need.

That's why we're providing more affordable and accessible healthcare, including:

- ▷ \$133 million to deliver hospital-level care in patients' homes through home visits and virtual care
- ▷ \$49 million to support collaborative care in communities, more equitable access to service delivery, and increased consistency of quality and safety of care
- ▷ \$30 million for new and existing mental health and Hospital in the Home beds to provide acute, hospital-level care in a patient's home
- ▷ \$10 million to continue operating nine urgent care clinics to treat patients who require urgent, non-emergency care, free of charge
- ▷ \$10 million for mental health and wellbeing care, including the statewide outreach service for young people and mental health group-based parenting support for regional Victorians
- ▷ \$5.1 million to continue to support timely discharge for vulnerable older Victorians, reducing pressure on public health services by supporting hospital bed flow
- ▷ \$4.9 million to provide health supports at a local level, making it easier for Victorians to have access to healthcare closer to where they live.

We're investing \$284 million to open and operate local hospitals – making it easier to get free public healthcare in your community – as well as supporting and expanding emergency departments.

This includes:

- ▷ \$95 million for Werribee Mercy Hospital emergency department expansion
- ▷ \$45 million to open expanded acute care capacity at Angliss Hospital
- ▷ \$19 million to open Pakenham Community Hospital
- ▷ \$7.1 million to operate the new PET scanner at Goulburn Valley Health
- ▷ \$2 million to support early transition work at the New Melton Hospital.

This funding will also support the expanded University Hospital Geelong paediatric emergency department, and community hospitals in Craigieburn, Cranbourne and Mernda.

We will continue caring for vulnerable Victorians with:

- ▷ \$34 million for the continued operation of Local Public Health Units to support a strong public health protection network
- ▷ \$23 million to maintain delivery of the Home and Community Care Program for Younger People, which enables independent living for people with disability outside of the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS), alongside funding to continue to assist people with disability accessing allied health services within their NDIS package
- ▷ \$6.5 million for prevention of suicide, supporting people and communities impacted by suicide
- ▷ \$5 million to support the aids and equipment needs of Victorians, including those with permanent or long-term disability, with women with disability being more likely to require assistance with mobility and daily activities related to care
- ▷ \$777 000 invested in mental health services for diverse and marginalised communities.

We're creating cultural change by raising awareness and implementing safeguards in healthcare for people born with variations in sex characteristics, with \$5.5 million to fund education, care and support for people born with variations in sex characteristics, their families and healthcare professionals.

## WORLD-CLASS PREGNANCY CARE FOR THE WEST

### Maternity services

The Allan Labor Government is appointing a Chief Midwife, to make sure that maternity care in Victoria is world leading.

This Budget is delivering \$299 million to support families, including \$249 million for maternity services in Melbourne's booming western suburbs, where there are more births than anywhere else in Victoria. These include:

- ▷ 32 new postnatal beds to support pregnancy and postnatal care for up to 3 300 more women each year
- ▷ 9 new cots in the special care nursery, providing care for more than 300 babies each year who need extra monitoring and observation
- ▷ 1 500 extra sonography appointments each year at Joan Kirner Women's and Children's hospital, saving women money on private scans
- ▷ Increasing capacity for births through collaboration across western metropolitan health services.

### Helping mums and babies

- ▷ Public fertility services in Victoria have helped bring 350 babies into the world, removing costs of up to \$10 000 per round of IVF as a barrier to families needing IVF and other reproductive services
- ▷ This Budget provides \$43 million to ensure Victorian families have continued access to public fertility services care at the Royal Women's Hospital and 10 satellite sites across our state.

### Early parenting

Early Parenting Centres provide practical, hands-on help and mental health support to new parents, from birth up to age four. From sleep to feeding, they deliver day programs and overnight help to families needing support – all for free. This Budget invests \$6.8 million to continue this important help for families at the Hastings Early Parenting Centre, one of 10 new centres across our state.

## HELP FOR KIDS – BIG OR SMALL

This Budget also invests \$109 million to deliver more specialist paediatric appointments and planned surgeries for children and young people.

It'll mean children and young people, including girls, get specialist care and treatment faster in a world-class public health system that families can rely on.

## Improving economic equity

### Leading on women's workforce participation

We know that one of the biggest barriers to economic equity is workforce participation. And we know that some of the biggest barriers to workforce participation are caring responsibilities.

Women continue to shoulder the majority of unpaid work and care in Australia. Advancing women's economic equity and closing the gender pay gap are critical to achieving gender equality and a fairer, more prosperous society.

ABS data shows women are more likely to be the primary carers of children as well as their ageing parents.

Over the past eight years, this Labor Government has invested around \$8.2 billion in Best Start, Best Life reforms to early childhood education and care. This includes \$498 million in the *2026/27 Budget* to continue building and expanding kindergartens and government-run childcare centres.

We promised to deliver 50 government-run Early Learning Victoria centres in communities that need them most – making childcare and kinder easier to access. Four centres opened in 2025, another 14 opened this year and a further six are on track to open in 2027.

These centres give parents – particularly mums – choices about returning to work that they wouldn't have without this important investment.

This Budget invests \$9.8 million to continue the Building Blocks Inclusion and Improvement Grants, helping kinders to upgrade their facilities and provide inclusive spaces to young children.

We are also continuing to deliver Free Kinder for three and four-year-olds and progressively rolling out expanded hours of four-year-old kinder.

Free Kinder saves families up to \$2 700 per child on fees every year and enables parents to return to the workforce.

We are also providing \$24 million to support increased workforce participation by delivering high-intensity outside of school hours care at 35 specialist schools across the state. This program supports students with intensive care needs, before and after school, helping their families with trusted, quality care.

We know that 70 per cent of primary carers are women, and around 25 per cent of primary carers are caring for their parents. The peak age for a female carer is 55, a time in life when many women may have recently transitioned out of child rearing only to assume caring responsibilities for an elderly relative or friend.

With caring responsibilities in families disproportionately falling to women, a lack of aged care vacancies and carer supports can have detrimental flow-on impacts financially, socially and mentally.

This Budget continues to support residential aged care facilities and services that are needed by ageing Victorians and their carers, including:

- ▷ \$36 million to sustain public sector residential aged care services
- ▷ \$17 million to maintain hospital care at residential aged care facilities, allowing them to be cared for in their own home.

Disproportionate caring responsibilities for people with disability also often fall to women. This means they usually work less, spend more time travelling to important therapeutic supports, and take on more of the emotional and mental care that goes along with it.

To help support carers and young people in their care, this Budget provides \$3.2 million to continue to deliver early childhood intervention services such as inclusive education and therapy supports for some cohorts who are not eligible for the NDIS.



This Budget also provides to develop the workforce of tomorrow, with:

- ▷ \$244 million for training, including Free TAFE priority courses. Free TAFE has already helped more than 130 000 women to get the skills they need for the job they want
- ▷ \$87 million for the TAFE Services Fund, improving student completion rates, training access and upgrading TAFE facilities
- ▷ \$24 million to alleviate workload pressures on teachers, who are more likely to be women, with workload stress
- ▷ \$21 million for critical school workforce reforms that support paid placements for those studying to be a teacher
- ▷ \$8.2 million to build Victoria's AI specialist workforce and embed AI capability in businesses. The program has a target to include 50 per cent women, supporting them for careers in tech
- ▷ \$5.8 million for safer and fairer apprenticeships, including personalised support for women apprentices and trainees through the Apprentice Helpdesk
- ▷ \$5.4 million to provide more job security to local government workers
- ▷ \$5 million to make TAFEs more accessible for people with disability and additional needs.

### **GENDER RESPONSIVE BUDGETING IN ACTION**

The Trade and Tech Fit career expo gives girls the chance to explore career pathways into industries ranging from plumbing to robotics.

More than 140 schools and 3 700 women, girls and gender diverse participants attended in 2025 – and more than half of them said they were more likely to consider a career in trades or tech.

This Budget provides funding of \$989 000 to continue the Trade and Tech Fit career expo in 2027.

By actively targeting under-represented groups in gender-segregated industries, we can help to break down assumptions about gendered work.

### **BACKING REGIONAL WOMEN LEADERS**

We're investing \$279 000 to continue the Rural Women's Network Leadership and Mentoring Program, helping to empower the next generation of women leaders in regional Victoria.

## Helping with the cost of living

### Providing support where it is needed

While Australia's gender pay gap is narrowing – having reduced by 7.5 per cent over the last decade – women still earn less on average than men, and they are much more likely to head up single parent households. This means they are disproportionately affected by cost of living pressures.

This Budget delivers important cost of living relief, with free travel in April and May and half-price fares for the rest of the year. This \$433 million investment makes public transport more affordable. This is on top of free public transport for people aged under 18 on all Victorian public transport services, which kicked in on 1 January 2026.

This Budget also invests \$11 million to strengthen food security across Victoria, with grants for community organisations to provide food relief and make sure they can get it to those who need it most.

We are also delivering \$150 000 to strengthen the Country Women's Association of Victoria's capacity to deliver aid and financial relief for women, children and families in need, and \$2.7 million towards continuing financial counselling services.

We recognise that due to historical gender norms, mothers are more likely to be in charge of domestic costs such as childcare, education and extracurricular activities. This pressure is compounded by entrenched gender pay gaps and the over-representation of women in precarious employment.

One way the Allan Labor Government is working to improve career pathways and break down gender norms is by enshrining the right to work from home in law. Legislation to be introduced to the Parliament would protect the right to work from home at least two days a week, when reasonable, from 1 September 2026.

To further assist with the immediate cost of living burdens traditionally borne by mothers, this Budget will continue supporting families with the cost of raising kids, by providing:

- ▷ \$28 million for the Affordable School Uniforms program to reduce the financial burden on parents
- ▷ \$16 million to continue and expand the Glasses for Kids program to more classrooms, delivering free vision screening and glasses for kids who need them. Since it was introduced, Glasses for Kids has delivered more than 68 000 vision screenings and 13 700 pairs of glasses – saving families money and time on appointments
- ▷ \$15 million to continue to give children under 16 free admission to Melbourne Zoo, Healesville Sanctuary, Kyabram Fauna Park and Werribee Open Range Zoo on weekends, public holidays and during school holidays
- ▷ \$14 million for School Breakfast Clubs so kids can start every day with a free, healthy breakfast
- ▷ \$11 million for approximately 55 000 more Get Active Kids Vouchers to help eligible families cover the cost of sports enrolment and any included equipment, enabling more kids to play the sport they love. This program also encourages women and girls to participate in sport
- ▷ \$7.4 million for Kinder Kits to help every three-year-old starting kindergarten to learn through play
- ▷ \$3.6 million so kids can learn a second language through the Early Childhood Language Program
- ▷ \$1.1 million to continue the Energy Assistance Program where over half the participants are women and which has already helped more than 15 000 households save almost \$3 million on their energy bills through access to bill relief
- ▷ \$964 000 to provide free books in Prep Bags to help instil a love of reading at home as kids start school.



## How we get around

### Travel looks different for women

Gender responsive budgeting ensures that when designing our cities, we consider the potential gender impacts so we can make sure our transport system is accessible – no matter who you are, or when you need it.

It's why this Labor Government has invested in a world-class public transport system delivering more than 3 400 additional weekly train services, 290 new weekly tram services and 24 000 new bus services to get Victorians where they need to be quicker.

Our public transport networks should meet women's different travel needs and journeys. We're getting this done by making public transport safer and more reliable, including:

- ▷ \$105 million to deliver new and improved bus services and to maintain ferry services across Victoria
- ▷ \$92 million for more trains, more often, increasing services outside of peak hours, so more women can 'turn up and go'
- ▷ \$76 million to improve the safety and accessibility of Melbourne's tram network, including making it easier to travel with prams
- ▷ \$29 million to upgrade suburban roads and intersections in metropolitan Melbourne to improve network efficiency, safety and travel time for road users, including illuminated school zone lights and safer school and pedestrian crossing developments

In Victoria, and internationally, women are more likely to rely on public transport. Women are also more likely to feel unsafe using public transport at night than men. This affects their decisions about how they travel, or if they go out at all. This Budget helps women feel safer on our transport network, with:

- ▷ \$7.5 million to improve connections and safety on Victoria's public and active transport network
- ▷ \$2 million to deliver safer stations, including upgrading CCTV cameras at Little River.



## Until every Victorian is safe

### Continuing to support our nation-leading family violence service system

The Allan Labor Government is working to build a future where every Victorian can feel safe, respected and free from violence.

Since the Royal Commission into Family Violence in 2016, the Labor Government has implemented all 227 of its recommendations to create a nation-leading family violence service system. Investment from this Budget will continue to support community safety and help keep Victorians safe from gendered abuse, violence and harm.

This includes:

- ▷ \$74 million for family violence response activities, including safe and secure accommodation responses, case management, therapeutic supports and interventions for people using violence
- ▷ \$23 million to continue the Central Information Point, which provides information about perpetrators so family violence practitioners can assess risk and keep women and children safe
- ▷ \$10 million to upgrade Victoria's mental health, alcohol and other drugs facilities and create safer, more respectful environments
- ▷ \$2.2 million for Sexual Assault Services Victoria to make sure the system responds appropriately to victim survivors.

### Keeping families together and children safe

Entrenched gendered inequities place higher responsibility for caregiving on women – and this means women access family services at an overwhelmingly higher rate than men.

That's why this Budget will also invest \$382 million to continue providing support to vulnerable children and help keep families together. This includes:

- ▷ \$165 million to continue and expand intensive family support services, to make sure children who are at risk of abuse or neglect are safe
- ▷ \$126 million to modernise the digital systems that support services for vulnerable children, young people and families
- ▷ \$71 million for child protection and care services, including:
  - residential care placements to support children and young people
  - continuing support for the family violence national framework
  - supporting children and young women at risk of sexual exploitation through the St Kilda Gatehouse Young Women's program
  - support for the Melton kinship carers support group.
- ▷ \$15 million to increase allowances for kinship, foster and permanent carers
- ▷ \$5.1 million to strengthen the Social Services Regulator's collection and management of data under the Reportable Conduct Scheme, to enable better intelligence and stop child safety information falling through the cracks.



We are also continuing to support vulnerable people in our justice system, including victim survivors of family violence and sexual assault, who are overwhelmingly women. This includes:

- ▷ \$347 million to ensure serious consequences for perpetrators of violent crime and to keep the community safe
- ▷ \$9.5 million for Blue Light Victoria to mentor children and young people at risk of offending
- ▷ \$8.7 million to support continued delivery of the Victims of Crime Financial Assistance Scheme
- ▷ \$7.1 million for cybercrime and digital forensic data storage and software to help combat technology-facilitated crime
- ▷ \$6.3 million to continue the Victims' Legal Service, a dedicated statewide specialist legal service for victims of crime
- ▷ \$3.9 million to facilitate the early resolution of trial cases at the County Court
- ▷ \$2.6 million to maintain Victoria Legal Aid's Independent Family Advocacy and Support (IFAS) service to support parents and primary carers in the child protection system
- ▷ \$2.5 million for the Victims of Crime Commissioner to continue improving victims' experiences in the justice system
- ▷ \$1.2 million to maintain the Women and Mentoring Program

- ▷ \$882 000 to continue running the Tuning into Respectful Relationships program in the corrections system, helping end the cycle of violence against women.

Every Victorian deserves the dignity of a safe, secure and stable place to call home. Family and domestic violence is a leading cause of homelessness, and while this can be experienced by people across all ages, genders and backgrounds, it mainly affects women and children. It's why this Budget continues to support more Victorians including victim survivors of family violence into housing with:

- ▷ \$774 million of \$860 million to support an expansion of the Social Housing Growth Fund, which in combination with additional dedicated funding for First Peoples, will support the delivery of more than 7 000 new social housing homes
- ▷ \$26 million for additional emergency accommodation and nine new outreach teams to expand support for rough sleepers and help connect them to the help they need
- ▷ \$6.1 million to support vulnerable renters to maintain tenancies – helping stop them from becoming homeless.

## First Peoples women

### Self-determination for First Peoples

Victoria has signed Australia's first Treaty with its First People.

Treaty is a practical way to deliver practical change, giving Aboriginal Victorians a say over the policies and programs that affect them.

The effects of entrenched disadvantage are felt more heavily by Aboriginal women than Aboriginal men, or non-Aboriginal people. This Budget invests in initiatives that disproportionately benefit First Peoples women, helping them to achieve better outcomes, through:

- ▷ \$86 million of the \$860 million Social Housing Growth Fund to support more First Peoples including women to access safe, secure and appropriate housing
- ▷ \$35 million which includes support for Aboriginal-led public intoxication reform
- ▷ \$31 million to support the construction of a new, purpose-built facility for Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-operative. The new facility will provide clinical services, social and emotional wellbeing services, early years and development services, maternal and child health, family, disability and aged care services
- ▷ \$13 million for The Nest to provide culturally safe, early intervention supports for Aboriginal children and their families facing mental health challenges.

To help close the gap in justice outcomes for First Peoples women, this Budget delivers:

- ▷ \$7.8 million for the Magistrates' Court of Victoria to operate a dedicated Koori Hearing List
- ▷ \$6 million to progress implementation and coordination of recommendations from the Yoorrook Justice Commission
- ▷ \$2.9 million for Aboriginal community-based justice solutions to reduce the over-representation of Aboriginal people in the Victorian justice system and prevent Aboriginal deaths in custody.



Photo credit: Laura Thompson (Gunditjmara),  
Clothing The Gaps, Aboriginal Social Enterprise.





Victorian Budget  
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Gender Equality  
Budget Statement

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