

Public Accounts and Estimates Committee

Budget Estimates Hearings

The Hon. Enver Erdogan MLC
Minister for Victim Support

Thursday 15 June 2023



Delivering on our commitments

Supports for victims from 1 July 2022 – 30 April 2023



13,737

Calls were made to the **Victims of Crime Helpline** for support



13,571

Victims of violent crime, including 8,153 referrals, were supported by the **Victims Assistance Program**



19,451

Victims referred by Victoria Police to the Helpline, including **15,346** police referrals for **male victims of family violence** (known as L17 referrals)



1,220

Children and their families were supported by the **Child Witness Service** (many of these cases relating to child sexual abuse)



339

Victims joined the **Victims Register** to receive information about an offender after conviction



526

Victims received assistance through the **Intermediary Program**

Victim Support

2023-24 Budget Overview



Additional **\$17.39 million** to commence operation of the **Financial Assistance Scheme (FAS)**, bringing investment to **over \$100 million**.

The Financial Assistance Scheme (FAS) will transform the way victims of violent crime apply for, and access financial assistance, providing a streamlined and trauma-informed approach that helps victims recover.

The 2023-24 Victorian Budget provides **\$10.78 million** over four years to operationalise the new FAS for victims of crime.

The 2023-24 State Budget also provides **\$6.62 million** over two years to support the Victims of Crime Assistance Tribunal to finalise pending applications, and support successful transition to the FAS.

This latest funding combined with allocations from previous budgets will see more than **\$100 million** provided to support the scheme's establishment.

Putting victims first

Key reforms and achievements



Delivering a new Financial Assistance Scheme for victims of crime

- The Victims of Crime (Financial Assistance Scheme) Act 2022 was passed in May 2022
- The Scheme is due to commence in 2024
- The Scheme will make a significant difference to victims' experiences of applying for financial assistance by replacing the Victims of Crime Assistance Tribunal with a more accessible and trauma-informed administrative scheme



Launching a new Victims Legal Service

- The Victims Legal Service was launched on 14 March 2023 to provide legal assistance for applications to the Victims of Crime Assistance Tribunal and on Restitution and Compensation Order matters
- The service is a partnership with Victoria Legal Aid, Aboriginal Legal Services and Community Legal Centres
- To 31 May 2023, the service has assisted 481 victims and provided 182 referrals for ongoing case work



Opening the new Child Witness Service and Intermediary Program premises

- The Child Witness Service and Intermediary Program began operating in a new, co-located premises in March 2023
- The interior was designed in consultation with stakeholders to be safe and comfortable for children and young people, inclusive, meet Rainbow Tick accreditation requirements and be inviting and culturally safe for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients

Previous funding commitments



More than **\$100 million** since the 2019-20 State Budget to establish the new Financial Assistance Scheme.



\$9.9 million over four years to secure the future of the Intermediary Program ongoing in the 2021-22 Budget.



\$1.8 million to establish the new, co-located premises for the Child Witness Service and the Intermediary Program, including new remote witness rooms and **\$0.5 million** for the Virtual Court Support Program.





Thank you.

