



Forced adoptions inquiry launched

Today the Legislative Assembly's Legal and Social Issues Committee launches its inquiry into responses to historical forced adoptions in Victoria.

"This inquiry will explore the support services and responses provided to the people in our community who endured the past practice of forced adoption going back several decades," Committee Chair Natalie Suleyman said.

"It is an important opportunity for community members to provide information that will enable the Committee to assess what support has been provided and to make recommendations going forward," Ms Suleyman said.

Forced adoption practices predominantly took place between the 1950s and 1970s throughout Australia, but also occurred outside of this time period.

Through forced adoption, also identified by some as forced family separation, a child's natural parent, or parents, were compelled to give up their baby for adoption without their willing or informed consent. Groups involved included governments, non-government organisations, religious institutions and professionals such as doctors and social workers.

In 2012, the Victorian Government issued a formal apology "to the mothers, fathers, sons and daughters who were profoundly harmed by past adoption practices in Victoria". This followed a recommendation from the 2012 Commonwealth Senate Standing Committee on Community Affairs in its report on the *Commonwealth Contribution to Former Forced Adoption Policies and Practices*.

The National Apology for Forced Adoptions was delivered by the Federal Government on 21 March 2013.

Following the state apology, the Victorian Government committed to providing practical assistance to those affected by these practices.

"The terms of reference for this inquiry are broad, so the Committee will consider all issues raised by community members who make submissions and present at public hearings," Ms Suleyman said.

"We encourage people with experiences and knowledge on this important matter to make a submission."

Submissions to the inquiry are welcome until 3 February 2020. The Committee's final report will be tabled at the end of 2020.

The terms of reference for the inquiry and details on how to make a submission are available from the Committee's [website](#).

Media queries

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Issued: 6 November 2019