



Victorian Budget
2025/26

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Focused On What Matters Most

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. 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

Victoria has published a Gender Equality Budget Statement as part of the State Government Budget papers every year since 2017.

Not only does this mark the ninth Gender Equality Budget Statement – this year, it’s being delivered by the State’s first female Treasurer.

Gender responsive budgeting allows us to place a fairness lens over every decision our Government makes.

Not only does it allow us to analyse these decisions in real time, it plays a vital role in building a fairer and more equal future for Victorian women and girls.

In recent years, we’ve seen the gap between men and women’s labour force participation narrow – as we encourage more women into the workforce, including through our early education reforms.

It means women’s workforce participation in Victoria has reached 63 per cent – which equates to about an extra 425 000 women entering the workforce in the last 10 years. This is a real and tangible example of what can be achieved when governments prioritise policies that break down barriers and support women’s inclusion.

The Allan Labor Government is at the forefront of that change.

We are encouraging greater workforce participation through our landmark Free TAFE reforms, which have enabled more women to access the education, training and support they need to get well-paid and secure jobs.

We are building more homes closer to public transport and amenities – ensuring that women have both a place to live and access to economic opportunities.

We’re investing in women’s health to help make sure they can get the care they need, when and where they need it – because good health is the foundation for full participation.

We’re alleviating period poverty and making it easier for women to participate more fully – by rolling out free pads and tampons across our state.

And we are making Victoria a safer place: changing laws, changing culture and shaping a future that is free from violence for women and girls.

Of course, that work is far from over.

It’s why with this Budget, we’re making targeted, meaningful investments to create a more equal Victoria – one where women have access to good jobs, quality healthcare, affordable homes, and safe communities.

By ensuring gender equity is at the heart of our decisions, we’re focused on what matters most – building a stronger, fairer future for every Victorian.



Jaclyn Symes MP

Treasurer
Minister for Industrial Relations
Minister for Regional Development



The Hon. Natalie Hutchins MP

Minister for Women
Minister for Government Services
Minister for Treaty and First Peoples
Minister for Prevention of Family Violence

Introduction: Gender equality in Victoria

Victoria uses gender responsive budgeting to deliver better outcomes for women and girls.

Building on world's best practice

Gender responsive budgeting enables governments to shape their policies and investments to improve gender equality.

That's why in 2022, Victoria joined other leading international jurisdictions in using gender responsive budgeting.

Today, 61 per cent of OECD countries – including five of the seven largest economies in the world: Canada, France, Germany, Japan and the United Kingdom – practise gender responsive budgeting.

And we know: gender responsive budgeting delivers real results.

In France, gender responsive budgeting helped to monitor the participation of girls in STEM courses at school and women in sport competitions to inform ongoing policy development.

In Japan, it helped to raise awareness of the need to allocate funding to support women with the cost of pads and tampons to alleviate period poverty – something we're already doing here in Victoria.

And in Victoria, we are continuing to use gender responsive budgeting to ensure fairer outcomes for Victorian women and girls.

Understanding gender responsive budgeting

Government spending on services and infrastructure doesn't always benefit everyone equally.

When governments understand these differences, we can design and fund public services that work better – for all Victorians.

How it works

Gender responsive budgeting looks at decisions about spending to:

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

This doesn't mean we're creating separate funding streams for women and men.

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

GENDER RESPONSIVE BUDGETING IN ACTION – APPRENTICESHIPS

Gender responsive budgeting seeks to understand the effects that policies, programs or services have on Victorians from all walks of life.

One of the ways we are doing this is by continuing to support Victoria's apprentices and reform the apprenticeship system.

Women are less likely to undertake an apprenticeship than men, and where they do, they can face challenges with sexism and structural barriers like inequitable care responsibilities. This limits the opportunity for women to pursue a career in trades.

With that understanding, Apprenticeships Victoria is working with industry to break down barriers to women completing their apprenticeship. That includes continuing to support priority cohorts, including women, to address workplace harassment, mental health and wellbeing.

And we've seen some success – with increased participation of women in the apprenticeship system, including on our Big Build projects where female apprentice representation is almost double the state average.

Putting gender responsive budgeting into law

Our Government made history with the passage of the *Gender Equality Act 2020*. This was a landmark step in breaking down discrimination and gender barriers in the workplace.

And last year, Victoria embedded gender responsive budgeting into legislation by amending the *Financial Management Act 1994*.

Both pieces of legislation are Australian firsts.

This reform allows the Treasurer to request Gender Impact Assessments for any matter concerning the *Financial Management Act 1994*. This will help decision-makers understand the gendered impacts of policy proposals – putting gender equality at the centre of sound financial management.

We're proud that we've published a Gender Equality Budget Statement every year since the *2017/18 Budget* – and now every Budget in the future must include a statement about gender equality.

Victorian Government as a leader

The Victorian Government is leading by example in advancing gender equality.

Achievements since last year's Budget:

Since the last Budget, we have continued to advance gender equality and support better outcomes for women.

We have improved Victoria's healthcare system to meet the needs of women and girls by:

- ▲ Continuing to establish 20 women's health clinics across our state, with five clinics opened in 2024 and a further five clinics set to open in 2025. These clinics will deliver free, comprehensive care for women and girls
- ▲ Delivered six further sexual and reproductive health hubs to improve women's access to care, adding to the 14 hubs currently in operation across Victoria
- ▲ Delivering an additional 10 800 laparoscopic surgeries to diagnose and treat conditions like endometriosis
- ▲ Dispensing 25 000 free pads and tampons across nearly 70 public locations, making sure women and girls aren't caught out and delivering cost of living relief.

And we've continued leading the nation in the prevention of violence against women and support for victim survivors of family violence, with:

- ▲ Rollout of our Women's Safety Package to continue targeting the root causes of violence towards women
- ▲ Making non-fatal strangulation a standalone criminal offence to better protect victims of family violence
- ▲ Delivery of the new Safe Workplaces for Women Initiative in partnership with Victorian Trades Hall Council, the Victorian Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the Working Women's Centre of Victoria
- ▲ Support for victim survivors of family violence to have secure and safe housing with homes provided as a part of the Big Housing Build.

Progress has also continued to be made in supporting women's economic opportunities and security through:

- ▲ Releasing *Making it equal*, the Victorian Government's strategy to encourage more girls and women to pursue a career in manufacturing. This work will continue to boost diversity and inclusion in one of Victoria's most male-dominated sectors
- ▲ Delivery of the Fair Jobs Code for the social and community services sector, which has a high number of women workers, to promote job security and fair labour standards.

And for the first time in Victoria's history, more than half of new place names honour women. This brings us closer to our target of 70 per cent of new commemorative place names honouring women, which is the target set out in *Our equal state*.

Our equal state

In August 2023, we released *Our equal state* – Victoria's roadmap for action and investment in gender equality.

We know that gender inequality affects women at every age.

That's why *Our equal state* takes a life-stage approach to gender equality by focusing on children and young people, adults and older adults.

This highlights the gendered gaps in opportunities and expected pathways between women, men and gender diverse people throughout their lives.

The strategy also recognises that not everyone experiences gender inequality in the same way. Gender inequality exists alongside other forms of discrimination and disadvantage. These include racism, ableism, ageism, homophobia, transphobia and classism.

This roadmap outlines a bold plan of 110 actions in five focus areas that the Government will use to continue improving gender equality in Victoria.



Responding to the Inquiry into Economic Equity for Victorian Women

The Inquiry into Economic Equity for Victorian Women, established in 2021, sought to find solutions for persistent problems of economic inequity, such as unequal pay and workplace barriers to women's success.

The Inquiry found systemic undervaluation of women's contributions in the home, workplace and community.

It called for action to break down those barriers – and through *Our equal state*, we've been working to deliver lasting change to improve women's economic security and participation across every part of Victorian life.

Embedding gender equality in policy

We know that thinking about gender impact early in policy design creates better gender outcomes.

This means doing everything we can to break down the structural barriers that hold girls and women back.

But we need to consider gender equality at every stage of the policy process.

That's why this Budget invests \$5.4 million to improve how we measure the impact of our policies and programs. By understanding what works and when, we can create better outcomes for all Victorians.



Since the last Budget, we have continued to advance gender equality and support better outcomes for women.

The *Victorian Budget 2025/26* is addressing the issues that matter to women

\$4.4 billion invested in this year's Budget has been designed to address gender equality in Victoria.

In Victoria, equality is not negotiable.

We are proud of the steps we have taken towards gender equality, to make sure women and girls get every opportunity to be their best.

The Government is investing:

- ▲ **Help with the cost of living:**
\$1.4 billion in targeted support to assist with cost of living pressures, which disproportionately affect women
- ▲ **Investing in women's health:**
\$844 million for services that recognise and respond to the unique health needs of women and girls, ensuring care is inclusive and accessible
- ▲ **Equal economic opportunity for women:**
\$1.2 billion to break down the barriers Victorian women face to full economic participation, and to help women to reskill and train for the jobs of tomorrow
- ▲ **Ending violence against women:**
\$797 million to prevent family violence and keep families safe, including making courts safer for women and children
- ▲ **Supporting First Nations women:**
\$81 million to support self-determination and services to improve the economic, social, health and wellbeing outcomes of First Nations women
- ▲ **Helping more women into housing:**
\$85 million to tackle housing affordability and support people experiencing homelessness – noting women face greater hurdles to renting and buying, and are more likely to access homelessness services, than men.

Of the total funded initiatives in the Budget:

- ▲ More than 150 have been assessed as having a positive impact on gender equality
- ▲ Twelve initiatives, with a combined investment of \$2.4 billion, are expected to have a significantly positive impact. They will improve gender equality at a statewide level, change attitudes, or reduce gaps in outcomes, access or participation.

These investments improve gender equality by:

- ▲ Helping more women afford everyday essentials
- ▲ Continuing to invest in healthcare that responds to women's health and wellbeing
- ▲ Increasing women's economic security by boosting their economic participation
- ▲ Improving conditions in workforces predominately made up by women
- ▲ Working to ensure women's safety by preventing gendered violence
- ▲ Giving a voice to First Nations women through truth-telling and Treaty, and delivering better outcomes in employment, health and justice
- ▲ Considering that women's experience of disadvantage is compounded by other factors, such as ethnicity, disability and age.



Help with the cost of living

Right around the world, cost of living pressures have risen. These pressures affect everyone – but they can impact women disproportionately.

Real help with the cost of living

Lower-income households spend a greater share of their income on essentials like food, housing, utilities and transport – making it harder to stay afloat with rising prices.

And because women still earn less on average than men and are much more likely to head up single-parent households, they are disproportionately affected by cost of living pressures – especially the costs that come from raising children.

This year's Budget includes \$1.4 billion to help ease cost of living for Victorian women and their families:

- ▲ Free public transport for all kids under 18, saving families up to \$755 a year per child
- ▲ Expanding free public transport for Victorians with a Seniors Card on weekends to include statewide travel
- ▲ \$100 Power Saving Bonus for eligible Victorian concession card households
- ▲ \$859 million to continue Free Kinder, saving families up to \$2 600 a year – per child – on fees, and helping more women return to work
- ▲ \$152 million to increase payments for families through the Camps, Sports and Excursions Fund
- ▲ \$18 million in food relief to support those doing it hardest, including women who are more likely to experience food insecurity
- ▲ \$15 million for Get Active Kids vouchers, delivering more than 65 000 extra vouchers from 2025-26, helping even more families with the costs of kids' sport – and encouraging girls and other under-represented groups to get involved
- ▲ \$5.1 million to enable the Good Money network to reach more Victorians, providing financial counselling and no-interest loans
- ▲ \$4 million for Mortgage Stress Victoria, to provide advice, ongoing representation and support to help people stay in their homes
- ▲ Continuing the Energy Assistance Program to help Victorians reduce their energy bills.



Investing in women's health

Women's health conditions are more likely to be overlooked and underdiagnosed.

Women have different health needs

Conducted as part of the Allan Labor Government's landmark Inquiry into Women's Pain, the Women's Health Survey revealed that too many women and girls continue to face challenges when seeking care.

Many said they felt ignored or dismissed by clinicians, who attributed their pain to psychological and personality factors.

They spoke of delayed diagnosis, the high cost of care and the impact of pain on their quality of life, relationships and careers.

Over the past two years, the Allan Labor Government has invested \$24 million to address the women's pain gap, working towards better diagnosis, treatment and support.

This Budget continues that effort, helping to ensure our health system better recognises, understands and responds to the health needs of women and girls.

Ensuring accessible healthcare for every Victorian

We're building a healthcare system that truly supports women – giving them confidence they'll be listened to, and delivering care that is respectful, timely and tailored.

This includes \$18 million to expand free pharmacy consultations for even more conditions.

Previously trialled as the Community Pharmacy Pilot, this initiative has already helped women avoid the time and cost of a doctor's appointment by enabling pharmacists to resupply oral contraceptives and treat straightforward urinary tract infections without a doctor's prescription.

Now, it'll be made permanent – and include many more conditions.

That means pharmacies will be able to help even more Victorians with even more conditions – including allergies, nausea, high blood pressure and mild muscle pain.

We're also covering the cost of consultation fees – giving women more choices for free healthcare.

We're also reducing barriers to care, with:

- ▲ \$634 million to open and operationalise nine new or expanded hospitals, including the opening of the expanded Maryborough and District Hospital with more maternity services to allow more mums to give birth locally, as well as dedicated paediatric zones within the updated Emergency Department at the University Hospital Geelong and the redeveloped Frankston Hospital, making a trip to hospital less stressful for young Victorians and their families
- ▲ \$27 million to continue support for our 12 Urgent Care Clinics, which provide free, timely and accessible care closer to home, particularly for women who are more likely to be primary carers
- ▲ \$22 million to continue free overnight, multi-night and day program help for parents with kids under four at Early Parenting Centres in Ballarat, Bendigo, Casey, Geelong, Whittlesea and Wyndham
- ▲ \$20 million in funding to extend the Home and Community Care for Younger People program, which helps lighten the load of informal carers – who are more likely to be women
- ▲ \$3.4 million in funding to provide support for asylum seekers and newly arrived refugees, including pregnant women who often have more complex conditions.

Improving access to mental health support

Mental health care is important for everyone. But how we receive that care, and what that care is for, can look different for girls and women.

Women and girls experience mental illness at nearly twice the rate of men and boys.

As with mainstream healthcare, women are also more likely to experience barriers to accessing mental health services. That's why we're improving access to mental health care for women and young people with an investment of \$35 million.

This includes \$23 million to expand on the success of our Mental Health and Wellbeing Locals, with seven new Mental Health and Wellbeing Local locations – providing free mental health treatment and support for more Victorians, including women and girls.

The early days of parenthood can be isolating, and rates of postnatal depression are as high as one in five mothers of children under two.

We know how important it is for parents to get support during this time.

That's why this Budget invests in mental health and wellbeing for parents, children and young people, including:

- ▲ \$28 million for mental health and wellbeing support for children and young people, including group-based parenting programs to help parents support their child's emotional and psychological wellbeing
- ▲ \$22 million to continue perinatal health services for new and expectant parents
- ▲ \$10 million to continue supporting services that are led by lived experience. This includes the Satellite Foundation program, which supports young people and children when a family member experiences mental illness.

Mental health is particularly important for the LGBTIQ+ community, with nearly one in two LGBTIQ+ adults being diagnosed with anxiety or depression.

This Budget invests:

- ▲ \$15 million for life-saving support for trans and gender diverse young people, who often don't feel safe using mainstream services. They also experience higher rates of bullying, lack of family support and attempted suicide than the general population
- ▲ \$1.9 million towards the HOPE program, providing peer, wellbeing and clinical support to Victorians following a suicide attempt
- ▲ \$1.5 million to provide mental health support to the LGBTIQ+ communities through the QHub and Trans and Gender Diverse Peer Support Program – to respond to their over-representation in mental health and self-harm statistics.

Equal economic opportunity for women

Gender equality relies on economic equality – because without financial security and opportunity, women will continue to be left behind.

Building better workforces for women

We're investing in better workplaces for women-dominated industries

One in four Victorian workers is employed in the care economy or education sector. And women make up seven in every 10 workers in the education sector, and eight in every 10 workers in the healthcare system.

The Allan Labor Government is making sure women's vital work is recognised and rewarded.

This Budget includes:

- ▲ \$139 million to expand, develop and support Victoria's teaching workforce, including financial support for people studying and teaching, as well as professional resources for teachers and school staff. This funding will also support flexible working arrangements in schools, including women
- ▲ \$109 million to build and support Victoria's child protection, nursing and midwifery workforces with scholarships, education pathways and upskilling opportunities
- ▲ A 28 per cent pay increase for Victoria's nurses and midwives – the largest increase of its kind in Victoria's history – and \$61 million to strengthen nurse to patient and midwife to patient ratios.

The Government is supporting women to work in all sectors of the economy

Ensuring that women have pathways to the jobs of tomorrow provides equal access to opportunity and helps to close the pay gap

We also know that the nature of work is changing. To continue to grow our economy, we need to invest in future workforces now, to make sure we have the skills we need for tomorrow.

That means ensuring that women have equal access to these opportunities – beyond 'typical' gender roles and traditional expectations.

Half of Victorian workers are in an industry aligned to traditional gender roles, like women working in healthcare and education or men working in construction and mining.

Overall, seven in 10 Victorian workers are employed in an industry lacking gender diversity, and three out of five of Victoria's largest industries by employment are not gender diverse.

In the next decade, some of the most in-demand jobs will be in the construction and IT sectors, jobs that women have traditionally been under-represented in.

Victoria's clean economy transition will also create new jobs over the next decade – and many will need Vocational Education and Training (VET) qualifications and STEM skills.



Supporting women into these roles starts early.

By high school, young women report less interest in STEM subjects than young men. Many believe they're not smart enough to study STEM subjects and see STEM as less important to their future career than young men do.

Encouraging girls to build skills and consider careers in STEM will help Victoria develop the skills we need for the workforce of tomorrow, while supporting girls and women into the higher paying jobs of the future.

That's why this Budget invests \$80 million for education programs that allow Victorian students, including girls, to explore career pathways, including trades and STEM.

This includes:

- ▲ \$47 million to drive excellence in maths education, increasing the number of maths teachers, upskilling existing maths teachers and funding free advanced mathematics camps for Year 9 and 10 students
- ▲ \$25 million to stretch high-ability students through the Victorian High-Ability Program and the Victorian Challenge and Enrichment Series, including online classes, excursions and workshops
- ▲ \$9.2 million to continue the expansion of our Tech School network.

We're also investing in tomorrow's workforce today, with:

- ▲ \$171 million to deliver Free TAFE and meet demand for more subsidised training places for Victorians who want to reskill or upskill. This will allow more Victorians, including women returning to work, to access training and improve opportunities
- ▲ \$121 million for the TAFE Services Fund which provides support for students to complete their studies and access job opportunities through student support services and asset maintenance
- ▲ \$44 million to expand places for literacy, numeracy, digital and other key skills training courses, supporting more women to develop foundation skills and digital literacy and increase their employability
- ▲ \$23 million for apprentices and the apprenticeship system, to strengthen the apprenticeship system and help apprentices and trainees to complete their training, including for priority cohorts like women
- ▲ \$1.2 million to continue the Rural Women's Leadership and Mentoring program to reduce barriers for women in the agricultural industry and maintain rural health services targeting farming communities.



Breaking down the barriers to economic participation

Affordable and accessible early childhood education and care are integral to achieving equal economic participation for women

While more men are staying home with kids than ever before, it's still predominately women who take on the role as primary carer.

Not being able to access affordable early childhood education and care can prevent women from returning to the workforce or taking on additional hours. This inequality compounds into lower lifelong earnings and superannuation.

Victoria's early childhood education reforms are delivering up to 15 hours of kinder a week for three-year-olds and four-year-olds across our state. We're also transitioning four-year-old kinder to Pre-Prep, which will provide up to 30 hours of play-based learning a week.

Our investments in Free Kinder are expected to support families of 160 000 children from 2026 – and help more women return to work or study.

We're also opening 50 government-owned and run early learning and childcare centres. These centres will give families choices based on what's right for them – not whether or not they can get the childcare they need.

The four centre locations that opened in 2025 are:

- ▲ Early Learning Victoria Bani Walup in Murtoa
- ▲ Early Learning Victoria Muyan in Sunshine
- ▲ Early Learning Victoria Nyernilang Lar in Eaglehawk North
- ▲ Early Learning Victoria Wimbi in Fawkner.

An additional 14 centres are under construction, due to open next year.

Women are also more likely to provide care for people in their families and community who have health conditions, are elderly or have a disability. Two-thirds of Victorians who report caring for ill or elderly family members as being a barrier to finding work are women.

It's why this Budget invests \$43 million to continue to support children, families and those in the community with disability or complex needs.

Realising equal economic opportunity for women requires addressing barriers for women of all backgrounds

Some women can face multiple and complex barriers to accessing economic opportunity.

Women with disability have lower rates of economic participation and higher rates of unemployment than women without disability.

Similarly, migrant women from diverse backgrounds have lower rates of economic participation and higher rates of unemployment. These women can face additional barriers to accessing childcare and skills and training opportunities, while also being more likely to experience racism and bias.

That's why in this Budget, we're further investing to dismantle the barriers to economic inclusion for all Victorians, regardless of their age, ability or background:

- ▲ \$320 million to complete the statewide rollout of the Disability Inclusion reform to strengthen tailored support for students with disability in Victorian schools
- ▲ \$82 million to support students from diverse backgrounds and with complex needs in school through education programs and support.

Ending violence against women

A fairer future depends on ending violence against women and girls – because everyone should feel safe in their homes and in their communities.

Preventing and responding to family violence

Family violence disproportionately affects women, with nearly one woman killed every fortnight in Victoria. On average, police attend a family violence incident every five minutes.

Women are nearly three times more likely than men to experience violence by a current or former partner. And these figures are exacerbated when combined with other forms of inequality.

Since the Royal Commission into Family Violence, the Government has made substantial investments to prevent and respond to family violence, implementing all 227 of the Commission's recommendations.

This Budget builds on those actions, delivering \$172 million to prevent and respond to family violence, while investing more to keep women and their children safe.

This includes:

- ▲ \$80 million to support victim survivors, including specialised case management, and funding for Respect Victoria to help prevent family and gendered violence
- ▲ \$40 million to embed data-driven risk management into the entire family violence service system so that those who need help, get help
- ▲ \$27 million for sexual assault support services, continuing the after-hours crisis line and specialist treatment services
- ▲ \$24 million for specialised family violence legal services
- ▲ \$1.9 million to continue holding perpetrators to account, including behaviour change programs for male prisoners.

This Budget will also invest \$167 million to provide support to vulnerable families earlier and help keep families together.

We are also streamlining support for victim survivors in our justice system. This includes physical spaces that prioritise safety:

- ▲ \$287 million towards the Financial Assistance Scheme, supporting victims of crime, providing access to counselling, assistance with medical expenses and emergency financial assistance
- ▲ \$114 million towards the operationalisation of Wyndham Law Courts, a new multi-jurisdictional, state-of-the-art facility, which will deliver flagship programs, including the phasing-in of a new Specialist Family Violence Court
- ▲ \$27 million to continue statewide support services delivered by the Magistrates' Court, including a centralised service which provides easier court access and support for victims – particularly women and children
- ▲ \$19 million for dedicated Court Security Officers at Specialist Family Violence Courts, making sure family violence victim survivors feel safe. Funding will also continue the Remote Hearing Support Service, which gives victims the option to attend a family violence intervention order hearing without coming to a court building
- ▲ \$3.2 million for continued funding of the Victims' Legal Service, a specialised legal service for victim survivors.

And because we know poor outcomes for girls start with poor attitudes towards girls, we're delivering \$7.4 million to deliver a Safe Socials Program in partnership with Sexual Assault Services Victoria. Building on our work with the Commonwealth to introduce age limits on social media, this investment will help prevent the spread of unhealthy forms of masculinity and keep young Victorians safe online.

“ Since the Royal Commission into Family Violence, the Government has made substantial investments to prevent and respond to family violence, implementing all 227 of the Commission's recommendations.

Supporting First Nations women

Victoria's Treaty is about creating a fairer future – for all of us.

Closing the Gap

Victoria is on the path to Treaty with First Peoples.

This means ensuring First Peoples have a say over the programs and policies that affect them and their families – from their housing to kids' education to practising culture.

Because when First Nations people make decisions for their families and communities, we see better results.

A further \$13 million will advance our Closing the Gap commitments, which include targets to address economic and social disparities that disproportionately affect Aboriginal women.

The Government began Treaty negotiations with the First Peoples' Assembly in November 2024. The key priorities are supporting reconciliation, truth, education and healing between First Peoples and non-Aboriginal Victorians through tangible, structural change.

With this Budget, we're delivering real action on self-determination, with 11 Budget proposals developed either in partnership with or through community-led decision-making.

Self-determination for First Nations women

First Nations women experience poorer outcomes across health, education and social domains compared to non-Aboriginal women.

Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations (ACCOs) play an important role in providing Aboriginal-led services that are self-determined, helping women feel safe, heard and respected.

To create better outcomes for First Nations women, this Budget invests:

- ▲ \$25 million to support ACCOs and First Nations representative bodies to lead and manage child protection services for First Nations children and families
- ▲ \$16 million to deliver maternal health services in Aboriginal-led health organisations, supporting First Nations women with culturally safe care during and after pregnancy, better coordination between perinatal care and maternal and child health services, and partnering with hospitals that adopt midwifery group practices that lead to better care for First Nations women



- ▲ \$8.4 million to empower Yorta Yorta Traditional Owners to continue to jointly lead the management of their ancestral country, and support First Nations women to lead and participate in caring for Country
- ▲ \$5.4 million for the Aboriginal Community Infrastructure Program and services to First Nations communities, including women-led organisations, programs and services
- ▲ \$5.3 million for a new streamlined kindergarten funding model for ACCOs to set up and run culturally responsive kindergartens and other early years services, for Aboriginal children and their families
- ▲ \$3.8 million for First Nations organisations and cultural events, including Koorie Heritage Trust, Koorie Youth Council and support for First Nations artists through dedicated awards and events
- ▲ \$2.8 million to support Aboriginal-led mental health programs aimed at preventing suicide among First Nations young people
- ▲ \$1 million to recognise First Peoples' land rights and help Traditional Owner corporations negotiate settlements under the *Traditional Owner Settlement Act 2010*, in which First Nations women make up 50 per cent of Traditional Owner corporation board members at the negotiating table.



We're delivering real action on self-determination, with 11 Budget proposals developed either in partnership with or through community-led decision-making.

Helping more women into housing

Every Victorian deserves the dignity of a safe, secure, and stable place to call home. But increasingly, women are missing out.

Building more homes and delivering more support

Truly tackling Australia's housing crisis requires recognition that it affects women differently.

We know women are particularly vulnerable to homelessness. Women over 55 have been the fastest growing cohort experiencing homelessness in Australia.

It's why we're continuing to invest to support more Victorians – especially women – into housing.

This year's Budget delivers:

- ▲ \$61 million for services to help people experiencing or at risk of homelessness
- ▲ \$24 million to help plan a total of 50 activity centres around train and tram stops that will enable an extra 300 000 homes.

This funding takes vital steps towards achieving our goal of increasing the supply of homes in Victoria – including for women and their families.



We're continuing to invest to support more Victorians – especially women – into housing.



Gender responsive budgeting in action

Gender responsive budgeting isn't about funding services just for women. It's about understanding how government decisions can affect women differently.

Female-dominated industries such as healthcare, hospitality, retail and the arts mean women are more likely to work in the evening or have irregular start and finish hours.

In this Budget we are investing in more train and bus services, making sure women can use public transport to get to and from work – no matter what time their shift starts.

We are also upgrading our tram stops, making them more accessible for Victorians with disabilities and parents with prams.



You're in the
FREE TRAM ZONE

PT
Southern Cross
Station

Route To
96 East Brunswick

Half
Tram
Here Stop **122**

Trains

Regional Trains


**Night
Coach**
Friday and Saturday nights
from Southern Cross
Coach Terminal



Victorian Budget
2025/26

Gender Equality
Budget Statement

budget.vic.gov.au



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