

Public Accounts and Estimates Committee

Inquiry into the 2026-27 Budget Estimates

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Attorney-General

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Attorney-General

2026-27 Budget Overview

The 2026-27 Victorian Budget provides **over \$189 million** over 5 years for the Attorney-General portfolio.

This investment will continue to support a safe and sustainable justice system, including by:

- Investing and implementing reforms to strength community safety and justice system demand
- Reviewing Victoria's sentencing laws
- Investing and implementing in further court system improvements
- Supporting improved Aboriginal justice outcomes
- Strengthening women's safety



Investment to support a safe and sustainable justice and community safety system

Adult Time for Violent Crime

The *Adult Time for Violent Crime* laws passed Parliament in December 2025 and came into full effect in February 2026.

The 2026-27 Victorian Budget invests **\$85.6 million** over 5 years for Attorney-General portfolio initiatives through the Community Safety Package *Delivering serious consequences and keeping the community safe*.

This funding will support:

- 4 new County Court judges to hear serious violent youth offences and 1 new Children's Court magistrate to respond to increased demand
- installation of new youth custody cells and supporting infrastructure to allow for trials and guilty pleas of young people in the County Court
- additional funding for the Office of Public Prosecutions, Victoria Legal Aid and Victorian Aboriginal Legal Service to respond to increased demand.





Impact of recent Bail reforms

12,164

charges have been laid for the new **commit indictable offence on bail** offence

84% ↑

increase in **bail revocations** in the Magistrates' Court from 2024 to 2025

68% ↑

increase in **bail refusals** in the Magistrates' Court from 2024 to 2025

53% ↑

increase in **bail refusals** in the Children's Court from 2024 to 2025

25% ↑

number of adults on remand since commencement of the bail reforms

64% ↑

number of young people in Youth Justice custody since announcement of the bail reforms

Independent Sentencing Act Review

The Victorian Government has invested nearly \$3 million into an independent Sentencing Act review.



The Review will inform the development of a modern sentencing act that promotes consistency, transparency and community confidence

- The *Sentencing Act 1991* has become **complex** and has not been comprehensively reviewed since it was originally enacted.
- The **Sentencing Advisory Council will review the Sentencing Act** and make recommendations to inform the development of a re-write of the legislation.
- As part of the Review, the Sentencing Advisory Council will:
 - consider how sentencing in Victoria can **reflect community expectations, be modernised** and **better support victims**
 - engage widely with **stakeholders and the community.**
- The Council will deliver the **final report and recommendations in 2028.**



Ensuring courts move quickly

The 2026-27 Budget invests over \$155 million to meet court system demand and enhance access to safer, more contemporary and accessible justice services.



Funding has been provided for initiatives across Victoria's Courts and justice services including:

- A specialist County Court youth list and associated justice services to fast-track serious youth violent offences to be heard in the County Court under the 'Adult Time for Violent Crime' reforms.
- Investment in critical asset maintenance and upgrades, including aging court infrastructure, and case management system upgrades to respond to bail reform.
- Continued fast-tracking of homicide cases at the Supreme Court of Victoria resulting in quick resolution of the state's most serious offences, and support for appropriate early resolution of trial cases in the County Court.
- Support for prosecutions at the state of the art Wyndham Law Courts in Melbourne's Western suburbs.
- Continuing critical legal assistance programs that improve court outcomes for people with criminal law and family division matters and court efficiency through Victoria Legal Aid's Help Before Court and Independent Family Advocacy and Support programs.



Supporting improved Aboriginal justice outcomes

The 2026-27 Budget also invests an additional \$18.9 million in Aboriginal-specific initiatives to reduce the over-representation of Aboriginal people in the justice system.

- **Maintain investment in successful Aboriginal community-led justice solutions**
 - *Professionalising Aboriginal Community Justice Panels Pilot* —welfare and cultural support in police custody
 - *Ngarra Jarranounith Place Residential Diversion Program* —residential healing and behaviour change program.
- **Establish a dedicated Koori Hearing List at the Melbourne Magistrates' Court**
 - Deliver culturally appropriate and timely case management, including applications for bail.

Ending family violence and strengthening women's safety

The Victorian Government continues to deliver system-wide reforms to ensure victim-survivors are safe and perpetrators are held accountable.



Initiatives under the Strengthening Women's Safety Package are on track along with additional reforms to end family and sexual violence

- The ***Justice Legislation Amendment (Family Violence, Stalking and Other Matters) Act 2026*** (the Act) improved Family Violence Intervention Orders (FVIOs) and clarified the stalking offence.
- A **standalone criminal offence of coercive control** will strengthen perpetrator accountability and make clear that family violence is unacceptable.
- The **Landmark Perpetrator Study** will improve early intervention and perpetrator intervention programs.
- Working across government to improve system responses to identify and respond to **predominant aggressors of family violence** (and address misidentification).



Thank you.

