

# Focused On What Matters Most

Victorian Budget 2025/26

**The Hon Jacinta Allan MP**  
Premier of Victoria

Tuesday, 20 May 2025

## WHAT MATTERS MOST: REAL HELP WITH THE COST OF LIVING

The Allan Labor Government is focused on what matters most – delivering real help with the cost of living and more investment in frontline services.

### Real help with the cost of living

Right now, the global cost of living crisis is hurting Victorian families. They're feeling it in their bills, and in their grocery shop. They're feeling it when they send the kids to school or visit a GP.

The Labor Government is on their side. And that's why this Budget delivers a record \$2.3 billion in cost of living relief.

That includes making public transport free for kids under 18 every day, saving families up to \$755 a year per child.

Free PT means cheaper school runs, more affordable weekends – and gives families one less thing to worry about. This investment will make Victoria the first state to introduce free public transport for kids, with the change beginning 1 January 2026.

Seniors will also benefit from free statewide public transport on weekends. It'll mean Victorians with a Seniors Card can experience even more of our state – without the extra expense.

This Budget invests a further \$18 million to enable pharmacists to treat more Victorians with more conditions – without a trip to the doctor for a prescription. Previously trialled as the Community Pharmacy Pilot, this investment locks it in for good – and makes it even bigger.

That means pharmacies will be able to treat more conditions with medicines usually only available with a GP script – including allergies, type 2 diabetes, asthma, ear infections, smoking cessation support and minor wound care, with additional conditions to be added progressively over the next two years. We're also covering the cost of the consult – ensuring Victorians can access care for free.

This Budget also helps those doing it hardest. That includes a Power Saving Bonus for eligible Victorian households with a concession card – delivering \$100 just in time for winter bills in August.

Funding of \$30 million will support 27,000 homes to install electric heat pumps and solar hot water systems, saving them up to \$400 on their energy bills every year. A further \$12 million will fund the rollout of insulation upgrades under the Victorian Energy Upgrades Program, halving the average cost of ceiling insulation from \$3,000 to \$1,500.

Labor established the Camps, Sports and Excursions Fund in 2015 – making sure no young Victorian misses out on the things that make school fun. This year, it's helping around 200,000 kids who have a parent or carer with a health care or concession card.

Now, we're increasing payments – up from \$154 for primary school students and \$256 for secondary school students – to \$400 for every eligible student, every year.

We're also delivering more than 65,000 Get Active Kids vouchers, which provides up to \$200 towards the cost of kids' sports membership, equipment or uniforms for families with a health care or eligible concession card.

And we're supporting food relief charities and organisations – doubling our Community Food Relief Program.

An \$18 million investment will deliver \$9 million to support frontline organisations through the Community Food Relief Program, \$6 million to double our support for regional FoodShares and \$3 million for Foodbank's GROW program, which will make sure surplus farm produce that would otherwise go to waste instead supports Victorians experiencing food insecurity.

Funding of \$5.1 million will also support Good Shepherd's Good Money program, providing no interest loans to more Victorians – and making sure a stroke of bad luck doesn't have serious financial consequences.

A further \$4 million will expand the reach of Mortgage Stress Victoria to deliver support to even more Victorians, through their team of lawyers, social workers and financial counsellors.

This Budget also continues Free Kinder for three- and four-year-olds, saving families up to \$2,600 a year – per child – on fees.

### **Investing in frontline services and staff**

This Budget also invests even more funding for frontline services – because in a global cost of living crisis, they deliver the support Victorian families rely on most.

It means with this Budget, we're continuing to deliver the biggest investment in frontline staff and services as a share of workforce investment since 2019.

This includes an extra \$11.1 billion to make sure Victorians can rely on great health care.

The Labor Government is investing \$634 million to open and operate nine new or expanded hospitals – including the brand-new Footscray Hospital, the redeveloped Frankston Hospital and the bigger and better Maryborough and District Hospital.

This Budget also invests \$437 million to expand the Victorian Virtual Emergency Department (VVED). The first of its kind in Australia, the VVED provides free expert care from emergency nurses and doctors, from the comfort of home.

The VVED currently delivers free urgent care to more than 550 callers every day. Our investment will significantly increase its capacity – enabling the service to handle 1,750 calls per day by 2028-29, or more than 600,000 calls every year.

Over \$800 million will get Victorians where they need to go, including \$727 million to switch on and deliver services to the brand-new Metro Tunnel, as well as the extra services enabled by its opening.

Funding of \$727 million will run new services through the Metro Tunnel, and more trains, more often along the Sunbury, Cranbourne and Pakenham lines. An investment of \$46 million will deliver extra train services on the Craigieburn, Upfield, Werribee and Sandringham lines – made possible by the extra capacity created in the City Loop, thanks to Metro Tunnel.

A further \$43 million will enable 40 minute services on the Gippsland line to and from Traralgon, with passengers able to transfer to Metro Tunnel services at Pakenham or Caulfield. Regional passengers will also benefit from extra peak hour Seymour services and more carriages on Bendigo weekend services.

We're also launching a Better Roads Blitz — with \$976 million in 2025-26 alone to fix potholes and resurface roads, making it easier for Victorians to get where they're going.

Airport Rail is the project that Melbourne has been waiting for. Now, with a trusted partner in Canberra, we're investing \$4.1 billion to rebuild Sunshine Station into a transport Superhub – the first step in delivering Airport Rail.

And because we want to get this project moving as quickly as possible, this Budget brings forward \$2 billion in funding. Rebuilding Sunshine Station is essential to delivering Airport Rail, delivering extra platforms at Sunshine, a brand-new station at Albion and untangling more than six kilometres of track between West Footscray and Albion.

We're also connecting growing communities in our city's north and west, with \$162 million to improve our bus network.

This includes new and extended bus routes, connecting families in Riverwalk, King's Leigh, Mt Atkinson, Thornhill Park and Mystique estates.

This Budget also continues to invest in our kids and their classrooms, with \$4.9 billion for school and early childhood education.

That includes building two new schools, expanding three existing schools, delivering additional stages for four more schools, acquiring land for future schools and upgrading 35 schools across our state.

But our commitment goes beyond bricks and mortar. That's why this Budget invests \$133 million to drive excellence in reading, writing and maths at every level.

A targeted \$47 million investment will help increase kids' confidence with maths – upskilling existing maths teachers and delivering a new numeracy check for Year 1 students, helping identify students who need extra support early.

It'll also fund free advanced mathematics camps for Year 9 and 10 students and provides experts to support local teachers in regional schools. Funding will deliver a feasibility study for a maths and science school in Melbourne's north-west.

The Labor Government is delivering the toughest bail laws in the country.

To deal with the increasing number of alleged offenders being denied bail, this Budget invests \$727 million to ramp up capacity in Victoria's prisons, delivering almost 1,000 extra adult prison beds and 88 youth justice beds, as well as funding to attract, train and support over 700 new prison officers.

A further \$13 million will support Australia's first machete ban, alongside new powers for Victoria Police to search for dangerous weapons.

This Budget continues the Labor Government's ambition to get more Victorians into a home.

That includes \$61 million to extend the stamp duty concession announced in October 2024, slashing stamp duty on eligible off-the-plan apartments, units and townhouses for another 12 months.

Prior to October 2024, the concession was only available to first-home buyers and owner occupiers – and even then, eligibility was capped based on value.

This extension means that a Victorian using this concession who buys off-the-plan before any construction work starts could pay around \$28,000 less stamp duty on a \$620,000 apartment – with duty slashed from around \$32,000 to around \$4,000.

An additional \$24 million will deliver new planning controls for the 50 recently announced activity centres – ensuring we get the planning right and giving certainty to communities and industry about how these places will grow over the coming decades.

From help with cost of living to more investment in frontline service and staff – these investments will make a real difference to families.

This is a Budget – and a Labor Government – focused on what matters most to Victorians.

#### **Quotes attributable to Premier Jacinta Allan**

*“This Budget is focused on what matters most – delivering real help with the cost of living, backing frontline services and staff, and ensuring that every dollar makes a real difference to Victorian families.”*

*“From free PT for kids to help for those doing it hardest – this is a Budget that delivers cost of living help when it matters most.”*

*“I know the difference frontline workers make every single day – that’s why we’re continuing to support them, so they can keep continue supporting Victorian families.”*