

Focused On What Matters Most

Victorian Budget 2025/26

Hon Lizzie Blandthorn MP

Minister for Children
Minister for Disability

The Hon Natalie Suleyman MP

Minister for Veterans
Minister for Youth

Vicki Ward MP

Minister for Equality

The Hon Natalie Hutchins MP

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

Ingrid Stitt MP

Minister for Multicultural Affairs

The Hon Ros Spence MP

Minister for Carers and Volunteers

Tuesday, 20 May 2025

KEEPING FAMILIES, CHILDREN AND COMMUNITIES CONNECTED

The Allan Labor Government is focused on what matters most: delivering real help for those doing it hardest, and more support for the frontline services that keep families and communities connected.

The *Victorian Budget 2025/26* delivers more than \$1 billion to continue making our state fairer, stronger and more inclusive – for every Victorian.

Relief for those doing it hardest

No one should go hungry. And yet the cost of living means more Australians are relying on the help of food relief charities.

That's why this Budget delivers \$18 million to expand food relief right across Victoria – bringing our total investment in food security to more than \$74 million since 2020.

An investment of \$9 million will double our Community Food Relief Program, delivering grants to support frontline organisations. This funding will also strengthen local food delivery networks including Foodbank – enabling them to deliver more than 480,000 kilograms of food to hundreds of organisations across Victoria.

We're also doubling support for the Regional Food Security Alliance and the state's six regional FoodShares, located in Albury-Wodonga, Geelong, Bendigo, Shepparton, Mildura and Warrnambool – helping regional communities to access food relief where they need it.

A further \$3 million will support Foodbank's GROW program, diverting surplus farm produce that would otherwise go to waste to emergency food programs – providing free, Victorian-grown produce to Victorian families.

An investment of more than \$5 million will also support Good Shepherd to provide more Victorians with access to no interest loans for whitegoods and other essentials through an expansion of the Good Money Program.

An extra \$4 million will help Mortgage Stress Victoria deliver support to Victorians struggling to pay their mortgage, through their expert team of lawyers, social workers and financial counsellors.

Keeping women and children safe

Last year, we delivered the Women's Safety Package – aimed squarely at changing laws, changing culture and delivering new support for victim survivors to target family violence at every stage.

This Budget continues that work, with \$123 million to support women and victim-survivors.

That includes investing in family violence and specialist sexual assault services – including the Sexual Assault Crisis Line – which provides critical face-to-face and after-hours support for victim-survivors.

The investment includes nearly \$17 million to support our nation-leading family violence risk assessment and information sharing scheme, equipping close to 400,000 workers with the tools to identify family violence early. Funding will also support the children's information sharing scheme, helping to keep kids safe and well.

We're also continuing to support the workforce that keeps children and families safe, with \$14 million to continue a range of programs that support our frontline child protection workers.

Nearly \$25 million will be invested to further enhance Aboriginal led service delivery, including by expanding the nation-leading Community Protecting Boorais program, which allows for Aboriginal-led investigations of child protection reports.

This funding will also support the important work of the Aboriginal Children's Forum and the Victorian Aboriginal Children and Young People's Alliance.

Helping families stay connected and strong

Being a new parent is an amazing experience, but it can also be one of the most stressful.

It's why we're delivering another \$22 million for our Early Parenting Centre network, helping mums and dads manage those early days with bubs, with access to specialised sleep, behaviour and health support.

Local mums and dads in Melbourne's north will soon have access to these vital services closer to home, with an additional \$5 million for the new Northcote Early Parenting Centre – one of 12 new or upgraded Early Parenting Centres we're delivering across Victoria.

We are also focused on keeping vulnerable children safe. This Budget delivers nearly \$272 million into child protection and family services to better protect kids, and continue to deliver early intervention and more help for parents.

Making sure we continue to protect our most at-risk children and young people, we're delivering more than \$90 million to support kids in out-of-home care and continue vital support for carers.

This Budget also continues our work to support young people, with \$20 million for programs that help young Victorians find connection – whether that's to education, work or their community.

This includes funding for six Community Support Groups, providing support to South Sudanese, Somali and Afghan young people, as well as the Le Mana Pasifika Project. This funding will also continue the delivery of case management and alcohol and other drug outreach in partnership with the Youth Support and Advocacy Service.

More than \$7.5 million will continue the innovative Living Learning program with Melbourne City Mission and Hester Hornbrook Academy – helping to support young people, at risk of disengaging, to finish their education.

Investing in our diverse state

We know that the best outcomes are achieved when Aboriginal communities design and deliver the services Aboriginal families rely on.

That's why this Budget invests more than \$148 million for Aboriginal communities to deliver programs and services – because we know that when we listen to First Peoples about the policies that directly affect them, we can make real, practical change.

This investment includes more than \$50 million in First Peoples' self-determination and support. The funding includes more than \$5 million to extend the Aboriginal Community Infrastructure Program to build or upgrade community infrastructure, with projects identified by Aboriginal organisations and communities.

This Budget invests more than \$13 million towards our promises under the National Agreement on Closing the Gap, and more than \$3 million to continue supporting First Nations organisations and events.

Modern, multicultural Victoria is built on a simple promise: whoever you are, whoever you pray to – you're safe and welcome here in this state.

That's why we're investing in our multicultural communities with more than \$20 million to ensure that all Victorians feel a sense of belonging and are supported to share and celebrate their heritage and culture.

This Budget will support our newly arrived migrant and refugee communities with more than \$3.6 million to ensure these communities are given the support they need to make their home here in Victoria.

We're making sure migrant workers and international students in Victoria are protected and supported with \$7.6 million to continue the operation of the Migrant Workers Centre.

Our multicultural seniors will also benefit from more than \$2 million to ensure they're able to build stronger community connections.

Our multicultural and multifaith communities will be supported with \$5.6 million to build or upgrade facilities, connect with culture and traditions, and foster positive community engagement. An additional \$1.3 million will support the completion of the Vietnamese Museum of Australia – bringing our total contribution to almost \$10 million.

Veterans have given so much to our nation. This Budget strengthens our support, with an additional \$3.2 million to back the work of the Shrine of Remembrance in honouring our veteran community, and help veterans to find good secure jobs through the Public Sector Veteran Employment Program.

This Budget maintains important services for Victorians with disability to ensure they get the support they need, investing \$24 million in programs, including advocacy.

Equality is not negotiable in Victoria and this Budget continues to deliver the first whole-of-government LGBTIQ+ strategy, *Pride in our future* – driving inclusion for communities and building a safe, equal Victoria for everyone.

This year's investment will continue delivery of the QHub program, which provides critical support for young LGBTIQ+ people and their families in western Victoria. We are also continuing to deliver peer support programs for trans and gender diverse communities with Transgender Victoria.

This is a Budget that is focused on what matters most – making sure no Victorian goes hungry, and delivering the frontline services that keep families, children and communities safe and connected.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Children and Disability Lizzie Blandthorn

"We're on the side of families when and where they need it most – caring for new parents as they care for their child, and investing in our child and family services so every Victorian grows up safe and supported."

"We're making sure Victorians with a disability get the support they need and deserve."

Quotes attributable to Minister for Carers and Volunteers Ros Spence

"No one should have to choose between putting food on the table and paying the bills – we are making sure Victorians don't go hungry by supporting the vital work of food relief organisations."

"This Budget doubles our support for food relief programs, making sure more families doing it tough can get the support they need."

Quotes attributable to Minister for Treaty and First Peoples, Prevention of Family Violence and Women Natalie Hutchins

"Victoria leads the nation in our efforts to end family violence, but that work is far from over – this investment delivers more programs and services to support victim-survivors and to stop violence before it starts."

"We know that when we listen to First Peoples about the policies that directly affect them, we can make real, practical change – that's why this Budget continues to invest in self-determination and Closing the Gap."

Quote attributable to Minister for Equality Vicki Ward

"Equality is not negotiable in Victoria and our work continues to support the rights of all LGBTIQ+ Victorians to be who they are and love who they love."

Quote attributable to Minister for Multicultural Affairs Ingrid Stitt

"We're ensuring that every Victorian, regardless of their culture, background, faith or identity, feels safe, welcomed and celebrated here in our state."

Quotes attributable to Minister for Veterans and Youth Natalie Suleyman

"Veterans have given so much to our nation and this Budget delivers more funding for the Shrine of Remembrance and our employment support program. Honouring their service and supporting them to make a successful transition to civilian life."

"We're backing young Victorians with the support, opportunities and services they need to thrive – because when young people are engaged and empowered, our whole community benefits."