

Focused On What Matters Most

Victorian Budget 2025/26

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COMMUNITY SAFETY COMES FIRST IN BOOST TO JUSTICE SYSTEM

The Allan Labor Government is focused on what matters most: keeping families safe and delivering tough consequences for those who break the law.

The *Victorian Budget 2025/26* invests more than \$2 billion in additional funding for the criminal justice system, courts and emergency services – backing the work of our frontline police and emergency services and increasing capacity in our prisons and youth justice centres.

Ramping up the corrections system for our tough new laws

The Labor Government introduced Australia's toughest bail laws to put a stop to serious offending while out on bail – and now, more repeat alleged offenders are remanded, not getting bail.

This Budget will invest \$727 million to ramp up the capacity in our prisons and youth justice centres – bringing more prison beds online to deal with the increasing number of alleged offenders being denied bail.

The Budget expands the capacity of the youth justice and adult corrections systems and supports the opening of the new Western Plains Correctional Centre, which ramps up operations mid-year.

In total, almost 1,000 additional adult prison beds will open across the system, and a further 88 beds will open at youth justice facilities at Cherry Creek and Parkville.

The Budget will also recruit a further 320 new roles in youth justice and 400 new roles in adult corrections.

Through this Budget, we're also supporting our hardworking Victoria Police members as they face new and growing challenges in their fight against crime.

That includes introducing Australia's first machete ban, coming into effect in September, along with new powers already in place for police to search for dangerous weapons. The Budget delivers \$13 million to implement the ban, including the installation of drop-off boxes for people to hand in their machetes.

We've also introduced the toughest laws anywhere in Australia to smoke out the illegal tobacco trade and keep Victorians safe – building on the work of Victoria Police who are targeting serious organised crime involvement in illicit tobacco through Taskforce Lunar.

The Budget includes more than \$46 million to establish a tobacco licensing scheme to break the business model of organised crime, delivering boots on the ground to crack down on those breaking the law.

The new regulator will deter the sale of illicit tobacco, prevent unfit individuals from entering the industry, and strengthen intelligence gathering to support Victoria Police and other law enforcement in shutting down illegal operations.

A modern, efficient court system

We know a modern justice system needs modern facilities, and this Budget invests \$114 million to open the new Wyndham Law Courts in Werribee later this year – delivering critical services in Melbourne’s growing western suburbs.

The law courts will house the Magistrates’ Court, Children’s Court, Specialist Family Violence Court, Koori Court and the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal. The courts will provide critical diversionary, Aboriginal and family violence services for our rapidly growing west.

The Budget also includes \$5.9 million to continue the Online Children’s Court with three judicial registrars and support staff, ensuring quick hearings for young people and their families in the youth justice and child protection systems.

Reducing reoffending and stopping crime before it starts

We’re continuing to reduce reoffending by tackling the root causes of crime – with \$19.5 million to continue employment hubs in medium-security prisons, transitional services for people leaving custody and a range of legal and family support services.

Victoria Police’s Embedded Youth Outreach Program will receive a further \$3.8 million to continue at Dandenong and Werribee – helping reach more at-risk young people and get them back on track.

An additional \$106.4 million will strengthen the Youth Justice system, including more intensive oversight of high-risk young people, family support workers as well as in-house rehabilitation services that address behaviour using effective, evidence-led approaches.

While Victoria has one of the lowest rates of Aboriginal people in custody, we know that maintaining support and connection to culture while incarcerated is crucial to rehabilitation – which is why the Budget includes almost \$22 million for a new self-determined grants program to support First Nations people on remand and on bail.

A further investment of almost \$14 million will back investment in Aboriginal community-based justice solutions, like the Victorian Aboriginal Legal Service’s regional hubs at Mildura, Bendigo, Morwell, Warrnambool and the western suburbs, as well as helping Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations to deliver Koori women’s and men’s diversion programs.

The Budget also provides more than \$28 million to continue counter-terrorism and other initiatives to combat violent extremism. This includes tailored programs that provide early intervention for young people at risk of radicalisation.

The Budget includes \$3.5 million towards expanding the City of Melbourne’s Safe City Camera Program — bringing on more than 100 new CCTV cameras to help everyone feel safer on our streets.

Supporting victims

It’s vital that victims are protected from further trauma when seeking justice through the courts.

It's why this Budget invests a further \$3.2 million to continue online hearings for people seeking family violence intervention orders, and more than \$15 million to ensure security officers can be placed at the entrances and exits of dedicated Specialist Family Violence Courts – providing extra peace of mind.

The Budget also continues our support of victims with \$284 million for the new Financial Assistance Scheme to help the recovery of people impacted by violent crime, without needing to go to court.

Community legal centres are at the frontline of our justice system, helping thousands of Victorians to understand and pursue their rights. The Budget supports their crucial work with an additional \$43.3 million – helping more Aboriginal and multicultural Victorians, people experiencing family violence and other victims of crime.

Strong emergency services

Victorians are relying more on their emergency services as natural disasters become more frequent and intense – it's why this Budget backs our emergency services so they can continue to support us in times of need.

More than \$35 million will go to ensuring our emergency services have the modern facilities they need to support Victorians.

This includes delivering a new VICSES Footscray Unit as well as delivering new CFA stations at Winnindoo and Hoddles Creek. It will also deliver two satellite CFA stations at Wendouree and Hampton Park to help local brigades respond to increased demand.

Almost \$7 million will go to Marine Search and Rescue to improve training and operations, and deliver two new vessels – keeping more Victorians safe on our waterways.

The Budget includes \$40 million for a rolling fleet replacement program for Fire Rescue Victoria – ensuring firefighters get new fire trucks to keep doing what they do best.

It also includes \$17.4 million for Fire Rescue Victoria to upgrade its cyber security program, boosting network security to protect it and the community from any harm caused by cyber incidents.

Triple Zero Victoria is the frontline of the frontline, with call-takers receiving nearly three million calls for help last financial year — that's a call every 11 seconds.

The Budget includes an additional \$25 million for Triple Zero Victoria to recruit 50 more call-takers and dispatchers so it can continue to meet growing community demand.

It also includes more than \$10 million to keep our State Control Centre running 24/7 — because disasters can happen at any time.

Communities need their local emergency services more than ever before. To make sure they have what they need to keep Victorians safe, we're investing every dollar raised by the Emergency Services Volunteer Fund back into our emergency services.

This year's Budget builds upon the \$30 million for VICSES volunteer training and wellbeing programs, more than \$53 million to modernise the VicEmergency app and the central database for our emergency services EM-COP, and more than \$62 million to double the popular Volunteer Emergency Services Equipment Program (VESEP) announced at the mid-year budget update.

This is a Budget that is focused on what matters most – keeping communities safe.

Quote attributable to Attorney-General Sonya Kilkenny

"We're supporting our tough new bail laws with the capacity our system needs – while also helping offenders get back on track and away from crime."

Quote attributable to Minister for Police, Victims, Community Safety and Racing Anthony Carbines

"We're the first in Australia to ban machetes. This Budget will support Victoria Police to get these dangerous weapons off our streets."

**Quote attributable to Minister for Corrections, Youth Justice and Casino, Gaming and Liquor Regulation
Enver Erdogan**

"Our tough new bail laws mean more people charged with serious offences are remanded – so we're boosting the system and also helping offenders return to the community as productive, rehabilitated Victorians."

Quote attributable to Minister for Emergency Services and Natural Disaster Recovery Vicki Ward

"Our dedicated emergency service workers including volunteers put themselves on the line to protect Victorians every single day. This Budget backs them with the resources, training, and support they need to keep communities safe."