

Media Release

The Hon Richard Wynne MP
Minister for Planning
Minister for Housing



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HEARTS AND HOMES HELPING THROUGH CORONAVIRUS

Victorians experiencing homelessness during the coronavirus pandemic will have their emergency accommodation extended and services will have more time to provide tailored exit pathways.

Minister for Housing Richard Wynne today announced almost \$10 million in funding to keep people experiencing homelessness in their current accommodation and plan their pathway out into more stable long-term housing.

The \$9.8 million package includes additional Housing Establishment Funding (HEF) for agencies to continue placing clients in temporary hotel accommodation and will also create nine data roles to work within newly created Homelessness Emergency Accommodation Response Teams (HEART) throughout Victoria.

Improved data collection will allow the Government to have a greater understanding of the housing and support needs of people in temporary accommodation.

Whether it's family violence or mental health support, financial assistance or disability services – it will mean the driving factors behind a client's homelessness are addressed and they're provided tailored support to exit into housing or homelessness programs.

The funding will also temporarily boost intake systems with nine extra Initial Assessment and Planning (IAP) workers in areas of highest demand across the state.

These roles will coordinate with local services to ensure each person in a hotel has the support they need to achieve stable housing, and identify their best housing options, be that private rental, supported accommodation or social housing.

The funding builds on a series of recent announcements by the Victorian Government to ensure people at risk of or experiencing homelessness are protected and remain safe during the coronavirus pandemic.

This includes nearly \$15 million in emergency housing, isolation and coronavirus recovery facilities, and almost \$90 million for rapid response housing refurbishments and new housing builds as part of a broader \$498 million social housing stimulus package.

Housing maintenance works and upgrades, including shovel ready projects, will increase the range of housing options available to Victorians who need support and will create more than 600 jobs across the state to boost the economy in the wake of the coronavirus pandemic.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Housing Richard Wynne

"Everyone deserves safe and secure accommodation. This additional funding will ensure Victorians experiencing homelessness continue to receive the support and housing they need to stay safe during and long after coronavirus."

"Our Homelessness agencies play a vital role in reducing homelessness across the state. This funding will help them address the reasons behind homelessness, so more Victorians can find housing and have the support they need to stay there."