

Media Release

The Hon Gabrielle Williams MP
Minister for Aboriginal Affairs
Minister for Prevention of Family Violence
Minister for Women



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A NEW AGREEMENT ON CLOSING THE GAP

The Victorian Government is acting swiftly on a new national agreement to combat Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander disadvantage by further strengthening the state's Aboriginal community-controlled sector.

Minister for Aboriginal Affairs Gabrielle Williams today announced \$3.3 million over four years to support Aboriginal community-controlled organisations and put them at the heart of reform work.

It makes Victoria the first state to invest funding to the National Agreement on Closing the Gap, which has just been endorsed by all states and territories.

The agreement sets an unprecedented new direction for the Closing the Gap strategy by boosting the role of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-controlled sector – one of four priority reform areas.

Negotiated in partnership with governments and the Coalition of Peaks, the agreement also places a priority on partnership in decision making between governments and Aboriginal communities, making mainstream organisations more culturally safe and responsive to the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, as well as improved data sharing.

The agreement also sets 16 specific targets – and for the first time, in the areas of justice (adult and youth incarceration), social and emotional wellbeing, housing and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages.

Key targets include:

- Reduce incarceration rates for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander adults by at least 15 per cent by 2031
- Increase the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people aged 25-34 who have completed a tertiary qualification to 70 per cent by 2031
- Improve employment or school rates (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people to 67 per cent, those aged 25-64 to 62 per cent) by 2031
- Provide non-overcrowded housing to 88 per cent of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community by 2031.

Outcome 1 is to close the life-expectancy gap for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people within a generation. The latest ABS 2019 data shows an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander man will die on average 8.6 years earlier than a non-Indigenous man, while an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander woman will die 7.8 years earlier.

The agreement complements Victoria's nation-leading work to support the Aboriginal Victorian community, including negotiating Treaty, establishing a truth telling process and progressing self-determination through the Victorian Aboriginal Affairs Framework 2018-2023.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Aboriginal Affairs Gabrielle Williams

"Our collective track record on Closing the Gap falls short of expectations – it's time we did something different."

"For the first time, Aboriginal community-controlled organisations will be empowered to take a leadership role in driving change through the Closing the Gap strategy, by implementing reform and setting a new standard for improving outcomes for all Aboriginal people."

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