

Media Release

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



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VICTORIA LEADING THE WAY TOWARDS GENDER EQUALITY

Victoria has today taken a nation-leading step towards achieving gender equal workplaces in the public sector, with the commencement of the Australian-first *Gender Equality Act 2020*.

The new Act requires 300 public sector employers – including local councils and universities – to report on and improve gender equality in the workplace.

Victoria's inaugural Public Sector Gender Equality Commissioner Dr Niki Vincent is working with public sector workplaces, which employ more than 380,000 people, to close the gender pay gap, improve gender equality at all levels of the workforce and eliminate workplace sexual harassment.

Organisations will also need to undertake gender impact assessments – ensuring that policies, programs and services consider the different needs of Victorians of all genders.

International evidence shows that when compelled to identify gender gaps and develop a plan to address those gaps, organisations take deliberate and positive action.

The Andrews Labor Government is driving gender equality with a \$435 million investment in progressing gender equality and ending family violence, including more than \$13 million to implement the Gender Equality Act.

This funding was part of a targeted range of economic supports that put women at the heart of Victoria's economic recovery as we move through the coronavirus pandemic, including \$150 million to support 6,900 women into job placements, and \$170 million to make kinder free in 2021.

Dr Vincent and the Commission are undertaking extensive consultation with the sector and are providing support to organisations to fulfill their obligations under the Act.

The Commission for Gender Equality in the Public Sector has published detailed guidance and resources on genderequalitycommission.vic.gov.au and will provide training and support to organisations.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Women Gabrielle Williams

"Victoria continues to lead the country when it comes to improving gender equality – this Act will help ensure all genders enjoy equal rights, opportunities, responsibilities and outcomes."

"The commencement of the Gender Equality Act marks an important milestone – but it is not the end of the journey. We will continue driving gender equality in our workplaces and across the Victorian community."

Quotes attributable to the Public Sector Gender Equality Commissioner Niki Vincent

"The Gender Equality Act is the first of its kind in Australia, requiring public sector organisations to show real progress on gender equality in the workplace and our community."

"The Act will have far-reaching benefits, not only for public sector workers who make up 11 per cent of the Victorian workforce, but for the people they serve."

Media contact: Rania Spooner 0436 019 993 | rania.spooner@minstaff.vic.gov.au