



The Hon Natalie Hutchins MP

Minister for Corrections

Minister for Crime Prevention

Minister for Victim Support

Minister for Youth Justice

Thursday, 20 May 2021

BETTER OUTCOMES FOR VICTIMS AND YOUNG PEOPLE

Reforming financial help for victims of crime, ensuring young people remain connected and holding repeat offenders to account are among the measures in the *Victorian Budget 2021/22* aimed at keeping our state safe.

Victims of crime will be supported through a \$54.6 million investment that will improve Victoria's response to victim survivors. The funding will progress the Government's pledge to replace the Victims of Crime Assistance Tribunal with a more accessible and trauma-informed financial assistance scheme.

Funding will also create a new Victims Legal Service through Victoria Legal Aid and community legal centres, and continue the Intermediaries Program, which provides specialist support during criminal legal proceedings so that vulnerable victims and witnesses can understand, participate and provide evidence with greater confidence.

The Budget includes \$165.1 million for initiatives that will keep the community safe and help keep young people away from the criminal justice system.

This includes after-hours services and family therapy support for at-risk young people, treatment programs in the community to address the root causes of offending, and delivering stable and effective custodial centres, including funding to operationalise the new Cherry Creek youth justice facility.

More than \$41.6 million will fund vocational education and training across the prison system, wellbeing support for prisoners on remand, and an extension of the Disability and Complex Needs Service pilot at the Dame Phyllis Frost Centre – breaking the cycle of reoffending as prisoners reintegrate into the community.

Programs aimed at preventing Aboriginal deaths in custody will receive \$33.1 million in funding, including a new regional legal assistance service to meet the needs of Aboriginal communities, the continuation of after-hours family violence support, and expanding Aboriginal-led diversion and residential programs.

This investment will establish a 20-bed Aboriginal Healing Unit at the Dame Phyllis Frost Centre, recognising the need to better support Aboriginal women in custody through healing and rehabilitation in a culturally safe way.

An \$18.8 million boost will help support the implementation of the Royal Commission into Mental Health by providing mental health and wellbeing support for young people in the youth justice system and adults in the corrections system, as well as those in the community at risk of offending.

This includes expanding the HOPE suicide prevention program and providing additional social workers and support staff to engage with prisoners leaving custody. The funding will help these prisoners plan for life back in the community and reduce the chances of them reoffending.

The Budget includes \$14.4 million to increase oversight of high-risk offenders on Community Correction Orders and continue the Court Assessment and Prosecution Service at the Bail and Remand Court.

Crime prevention programs will be boosted with more than \$19.9 million to support a range of measures, including supporting at-risk young people to stay connected to their community and stay on the right path.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Corrections, Crime Prevention, Victim Support and Youth Justice Natalie Hutchins

“The best way to keep our state safe is by addressing crime at its root causes.”

“It’s why we’re delivering a range of support to help children, young people and adults break the cycle of reoffending. Most importantly, we want to prevent at-risk people from ending up in trouble in the first place.”

“This Budget also invests in supporting victims to find justice, access financial help and legal advice as they recover from the impacts of crime and navigate the court system.”