



Gabrielle Williams MP

Minister for Aboriginal Affairs

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DELIVERING LASTING CHANGE WITH ABORIGINAL COMMUNITIES

The Andrews Labor Government is delivering the vital investments needed to achieve lasting change through truth, healing and justice for Aboriginal people in Victoria.

The *Victorian Budget 2021/22* delivers a record \$448 million investment for Aboriginal people and statewide healing – including \$98 million for Victoria’s commitments to self-determination, truth and treaty alone.

This represents the single biggest Budget investment in Aboriginal communities in Victoria’s history, eclipsing the \$357 million delivered in last year’s Budget – to strengthen self-determination, enhance access to education, provide better housing and health support and improve outcomes for Aboriginal people across every aspect of life.

This includes \$16.9 million for phase two of Victoria’s nation-leading treaty process, including a treaty framework to lay the foundations for substantive treaty negotiations.

Treaty can only be achieved working in partnership with the First Peoples’ Assembly of Victoria – the state’s first and only democratically elected body for Aboriginal people – and this funding ensures greater participation in the Assembly’s next statewide election.

The Budget delivers more than \$58 million for the nation’s first ever truth telling process, the Yoo-rook Justice Commission, which will recognise historic wrongs and address ongoing injustices.

This investment will support the work of the Commissioners, including extensive and culturally safe statewide listening processes, ensuring all Victorians are able to participate in this nation-leading process.

As we continue work on rebuilding our state’s mental health system, a further \$116 million will support the mental health and wellbeing of Aboriginal Victorians.

Importantly, this ensures care for Aboriginal people is being led by Aboriginal people, with dedicated funding for Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations. Not only will this investment support critical care, it’ll also create new jobs.

The Budget also invests nearly \$21 million to support ongoing self-determination initiatives and implementation of the National Agreement on Closing the Gap – including strengthening of the Aboriginal community controlled sector.

Aboriginal organisations will be supported with an investment of almost \$19 million for new infrastructure and innovative new programs to ensure they can continue serving their communities. The Budget also delivers nearly \$5 million for the Koorie Heritage Trust and Koorie Youth Council to continue their vital work.

Traditional Owner aspirations and cultural heritage will be strengthened with \$14 million to protect Aboriginal history and heritage, and increasing Traditional Owner advocacy, engagement and capacity.

An investment of \$39.3 million continues the Koorie Literacy and Numeracy program, expands the Koorie Pre-School Assistants program to four new locations, and continues the Koorie Families as First Educators and Koorie Engagement Support Officer programs.

A further \$22.5 million investment will use the expertise of Aboriginal Cultural Burning in Victoria's land management, contributing to bushfire preparation in local communities.

Funding of \$31.5 million will continue transforming the way services are delivered for at-risk Aboriginal families, increasing the number of Aboriginal children who are case-managed and supported by Aboriginal organisations.

Programs aimed at preventing Aboriginal deaths in custody will also 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.

Aboriginal people will also benefit from an \$90.95 million boost to community-based health services.

This includes funding to help catch up on treatments that many people may have deferred during the coronavirus pandemic including public dental, cancer diagnoses and screening, and maternal and child health.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Aboriginal Affairs Gabrielle Williams

"We are delivering on every one of our commitments to treaty, truth telling and self-determination. Aboriginal communities deserve nothing less."

"These investments ensure we're supporting Aboriginal families today, while we work together on a stronger tomorrow."

"The Yoo-rrook Justice Commission will be unlike anything that has come before. It will compel us to confront our past, acknowledge that pain lives on in our present, and to change – to chart a new, shared future we can all be proud of."