

# Media Release

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



Tuesday, 11 May 2021

## A WIMMERA SAFE HAVEN FOR ABORIGINAL FAMILIES

Aboriginal women and children at risk of family violence in the Wimmera region will soon be able to access culturally safe crisis accommodation – giving them the best chance at rebuilding their lives.

Minister for Prevention of Family Violence Gabrielle Williams today visited Horsham to announce \$9.1 million, delivered as part of the *Victorian Budget 2021/22*, to build and operate a local Aboriginal family violence refuge.

The refuge will provide ‘on Country’ crisis accommodation and support for Aboriginal victim survivors and their families living in Horsham and surrounding areas, while also creating eight local jobs.

By establishing an Aboriginal refuge in the region, this investment ensures victim survivors can be safe from violence while maintaining their connections with friends, family, kinship networks, schools, community and culture.

The ‘core and cluster’ accommodation refuge model comprises up to six independent residential units – known as clusters – and an administrative support building – known as the core – on the same property. This model enables women and children to live independently, while also providing access to comprehensive on-site support services.

Victoria’s nation-leading Royal Commission into Family Violence highlighted the need for additional crisis accommodation and support options for Aboriginal Victorians, ensuring culturally appropriate and connected care.

Today’s announcement builds on the more than \$3 billion the Andrews Labor Government has invested to end family violence – more than every other government in Australia, combined.

The Labor Government has implemented more than two thirds of the Commission’s 227 recommendations for system-wide reform, keeping Victorians safe from violence.

The Government is also working to boost Aboriginal self-determination under the ground-breaking Dhelk Dja Agreement, which recognises the importance of whole of family and community approaches to support.

The new service will be operated by an Aboriginal organisation and construction will commence as soon as an appropriate site is identified.

### **Quotes attributable to Minister for Prevention of Family Violence Gabrielle Williams**

*“This model of support is world-leading, making sure that women and their children can live independently while also accessing on-site and culturally safe care.”*

*“We know connection is a huge part of healing. This new refuge will enable victim survivors to stay connected to their kinship networks, community and culture.”*

### **Quote attributable to Minister for Housing Richard Wynne**

*“No one should have to choose between a roof over their head or their own safety. It’s why supporting survivors remains at the heart of our Government’s housing investments.”*

### **Quote attributable to Member for Western Victoria Region Jaala Pulford**

*“A culturally safe refuge in Horsham will not only change lives – it will likely save lives too.”*

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