

# Media Release

**The Hon James Merlino MP**  
Deputy Premier  
Minister for Education  
Minister for Mental Health



Thursday, 27 January 2022

## GETTING ON WITH THE THOMAS EMBLING HOSPITAL UPGRADE

The Andrews Labor Government's massive expansion of the state's forensic mental health capacity is another step closer, with a tender now open to appoint a builder for the huge redevelopment of Thomas Embling Hospital.

Minister for Mental Health James Merlino today announced the Labor Government is seeking a builder to deliver the \$349.6 million expansion of the Fairfield hospital, which will implement key recommendations of the Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health system in its infrastructure and design.

The project will address current bed shortages with an additional 82 secure mental health beds, including a dedicated 34-bed women's precinct and a 48-bed medium security men's facility, as well as clinical administration facilities and more car parking.

The project will reduce wait times for mental health assessment and treatment, support the rehabilitation and recovery of patients in a safe and therapeutic environment, reduce incidents of mental health deterioration and self-harm, and increase access to services for women in the system.

The Royal Commission recommended co-design be put at the heart of all new mental health infrastructure – with the experiences of patients, consumers, carers, clinicians and researchers to inform the best facilities for patients and the community.

Work is progressing on detailed designs for the expansion, with final designs to be released and construction to begin on the first stage of the project in mid-2022. The first stage will be complete in 2024, creating around 550 local jobs in construction.

To find out more about the tender process, visit [tenders.vic.gov.au](https://tenders.vic.gov.au).

### Quotes attributable to Minister for Mental Health James Merlino

*"This landmark project will change the way forensic mental health services are delivered in Victoria – with more capacity to make sure Victorian forensic patients get the treatment they need, as soon as they need it."*

*"With designs and the process to appoint a builder underway, we aren't wasting a moment delivering this important project and so many more as we rebuild our state's mental health system from the ground up."*