

Media Release

The Hon Anthony Carbines MP
Minister for Disability, Ageing and Carers
Minister for Child Protection and Family Services



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ENCOURAGING WORKERS TO CONSIDER A TREE-CHANGE

The Andrews Labor Government is boosting help for vulnerable children and families in regional areas with new incentives encouraging Victorians with work experience in human services to relocate and take up child protection roles.

The new Regional Incentives Program offers packages of up to \$20,500 for practitioners who accept child protection roles in regional areas including Sale, Bairnsdale, Bendigo, Shepparton, Ballarat, Swan Hill, Hamilton and Horsham.

The incentives have been created to encourage Victorians with social work, psychology, or welfare-related experience to take up child protection practitioner jobs in the country and help children and families in need.

If eligible, an incentive package may include relocation costs, salary sacrificing and tax benefits.

This is on top of existing financial incentives for child protection practitioners working in rural areas, including five days' professional development leave per year and an extra five days' annual leave and flexible work arrangements.

The incentive pilot supports the Labor Government's aim to recruit more than 280 new child protection practitioners across metropolitan and regional Victoria.

Since September 2021, more than 1,000 people have enquired about child protection roles, 353 have attended information sessions and nearly 70 have applied to become child protection practitioners.

The Government is providing a massive boost for at-risk children, their families and carers with \$1.2 billion for the children and families system in the *Victorian Budget 2021-22* – on top of the unprecedented \$1 billion in the previous year's Budget.

This has included \$171 million to increase the number of frontline child protection staff, bringing the total to more than 1,180 new child protection practitioners funded since 2014.

Visit childprotectionjobs.dffh.vic.gov.au to find out more.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Child Protection and Family Services Anthony Carbines

"This is a great opportunity to make real change – giving some of our most vulnerable kids the best chance at a happy, healthy life."

"If you're looking for a change and have a background in social work, psychology or welfare, I encourage you to consider working as a child protection practitioner in regional Victoria."

"Packages of more than \$20,000 are available if you're willing to move to take up a child protection job – and you'll be able to enjoy the lifestyle benefits of living in regional Victoria."