

# Media Release

**Jaclyn Symes MLC**

Leader of the Government in the Legislative Council

Attorney-General

Minister for Emergency Services



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## HELPING ADOPTED VICTORIANS RECORD THEIR BIRTH HISTORY

The Andrews Labor Government is listening to Victorians who were adopted, including those subjected to historic forced adoption, by changing the law to give adoptees the choice to include both their birth and adoptive parents on their birth certificates.

Legislation introduced today will create integrated birth certificates, allowing the names of an adopted person's birth parents, adoptive parents and the date of their adoption to be included on their certificate.

Under current law, a post-adoption certificate listing only adoptive parents is the only legal birth certificate available to adopted people.

The change will enable adopted people aged 18 years and older who wish to update their records to access a certificate that better represents their own story.

The Government is investing \$64,000 to support the change, which delivers on a recommendation of the Parliamentary Inquiry into Historical Forced Adoption in Victoria.

The Victorian Registry of Birth, Deaths and Marriages will begin work to develop integrated certificates, which are expected to be available by late 2023.

The Government has announced more than \$4 million to shape a redress scheme in response to the forced adoptions inquiry, aiming to address the grief and trauma experienced by women who gave birth between 1958 and 1984 and were subjected to cruel and damaging forced adoption practices.

The response fully acknowledges this shameful part of our history and the experiences of people who have suffered and are still suffering.

### Quotes attributable to Attorney-General Jaclyn Symes

*"We are not waiting to begin the important work in response to the recent inquiry into adoption practices. This is a meaningful change we can start to make right now to help people who were adopted to tell their stories."*

*"We know we can't change the past but we can try repair the damage caused. This is something that victims of forced adoption have asked for – we're putting their voices and wishes at the centre of this process."*