

# Media Release

**Jaclyn Symes MLC**

Leader of the Government in the Legislative Council

Attorney-General

Minister for Emergency Services



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## NAZI HATE SYMBOLS NOW BANNED IN VICTORIA

Victoria has become the first Australian state or territory to ban the public display of the Nazi symbol in recognition of its role in inciting antisemitism and hate.

The *Summary Offences Amendment (Nazi Symbol Prohibition) Bill 2022* was passed today which makes it a criminal offence for a person to intentionally display the Nazi symbol (the Hakenkreuz, often referred to as the Nazi swastika) in public.

Anyone who intentionally displays the Nazi symbol in public will face penalties of up to almost \$22,000, 12 months imprisonment or both.

This landmark passing sends a clear message that the dissemination of Nazi and Neo-nazi ideology through the public display of the Nazi symbol has no place in Victoria.

The Bill recognises the cultural and historical significance of the swastika for the Buddhist, Hindu, Jain and other faith communities as an ancient and sacred symbol of peace and good fortune. The Bill does not prohibit the display of the swastika in such religious and cultural contexts.

The ban will be supported by a community education campaign to raise awareness of the origins of the religious and cultural swastika, its importance to the Buddhist, Hindu and Jain communities and its distinction to the Nazi symbol.

The legislation will come into effect in six months to allow for time to implement this campaign. This has been brought forward after consultation with affected groups and their feedback.

The Government undertook extensive consultation with religious, legal and community groups on the offence, including to understand the religious use of the swastika and ensure exceptions are in place for appropriate displays of the Nazi symbol, such as for educational or artistic purposes.

The Government will continue to monitor the use of hate symbols and may consider the inclusion of additional symbols at a later stage.

### Quotes attributable to Attorney-General Jaclyn Symes

*"The Nazi symbol glorifies one of the most hateful ideologies in history – its public display does nothing but cause further pain and division."*

*"It's a proud moment to see these important laws pass with bipartisan support – I'm glad to see that no matter what side of politics, we can agree that this vile behaviour will not be tolerated in Victoria."*

### Quote attributable to Minister for Multicultural Affairs Ros Spence

*"These laws are part of our unwavering commitment to challenge antisemitism, hatred and racism wherever and whenever they occur."*