

# Media Release

**The Hon Mary-Anne Thomas MP**  
Minister for Health  
Minister for Ambulance Services



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## **BETTER ACCESS AND CHOICES FOR VICTORIANS STARTING A FAMILY**

The Andrews Labor Government's assisted reproductive treatment (ART) reforms are continuing to make it easier for more Victorians to start or build their family.

New laws coming into effect tomorrow mean prospective parents can meet with any counsellor who meets the prescribed requirements – not just those based at registered ART clinics – to complete the counselling required before artificial insemination.

This removes unfair barriers for rural and regional Victorians and gives prospective parents more freedom to choose which counsellor they wish to discuss their journey of starting, or expanding, their family.

The latest reforms also provide more certainty for those opting for donor conception, giving them more say over how the embryo is managed.

These final changes are part of the rollout of ART law amendments that began in September 2019, following the landmark independent review of ART by Michael Gorton AM – a key 2018 election commitment.

They are part of a major push to ensure more Victorians have better access to safer, higher-quality, discrimination-free treatment – supported by guiding principles that are inclusive of all Victorians.

In June this year, a change came into effect that allowed nurses and other trained health professionals to perform artificial insemination under doctor direction and supervision in registered ART clinics, providing more Victorians with easier access to lower cost treatment options.

The change also gives women more choice about who performs the procedure, which may benefit Victorians with specific preferences due to cultural, religious or other personal reasons.

Amendments earlier this year also expanded the family arrangements where a surviving partner can use the eggs or sperm of their deceased partner in a surrogacy arrangement, giving more surviving partners a greater chance of still being able to have a child.

Prior to these changes, the Government had already implemented several other recommendations from the Gorton Review, including removing barriers for separated women to access services and reforming how surrogate mothers are reimbursed.

In addition, the government has removed the requirement to undergo police checks before accessing treatment.

### **Quotes attributable to Minister for Health Mary-Anne Thomas**

*“Victoria has been a world leader in developing assisted reproductive treatments and these reforms are about making them more accessible for all Victorians by removing barriers to people starting or expanding their families.”*

*“These amendments are an important part of ensuring Victoria's assisted reproductive treatment laws are fair, up to date and reflect the expectations of our modern community.”*