

Media Release

The Hon Harriet Shing MP

Minister for Water

Minister for Regional Development

Minister for Equality



Friday, 19 August 2022

SUPPORTING LGBTIQ+ COMMUNITIES TO FIND SAFE HOUSING

The Andrews Labor Government is supporting lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and gender diverse, intersex and queer (LGBTIQ+) Victorians experiencing or at risk of homelessness to secure housing in a safe and respectful way.

The Labor Government has invested \$3 million for a new LGBTIQ+ Homelessness Support Service to assist LGBTIQ+ people who face challenges accessing housing, including young people.

Minister for Equality Harriet Shing and Minister for Housing Danny Pearson announced today that the program will be delivered by the Pride in Place consortium co-led by VincentCare Victoria and Drummond Street Services, in partnership with Uniting and Family Access Network.

The program will help prevent and address homelessness by supporting services to improve the safety of LGBTIQ+ people and strengthen connections between the specialist homelessness service system and LGBTIQ+ support services.

LGBTIQ+ people are more than twice as likely to experience homelessness as the rest of the population due to a myriad of factors including discrimination, family rejection and violence.

The program will include a team of 12 specialist staff working across homelessness services and LGBTIQ+ support services in Victoria – nine in Melbourne and three in Ballarat, so people can access support they need, where they need it.

The specialist staff include initial assessment and planning workers, case workers and people from the LGBTIQ+ community with a lived experience of homelessness. This team will assist LGBTIQ+ people to navigate the specialist homelessness and housing system and connect them to other supports.

This initiative forms a critical component of the Government's long-term strategy to drive equality across the state. Released in February this year, *Pride in our future: Victoria's LGBTIQ+ strategy 2022-32*, aims to ensure outcomes continue to improve for LGBTIQ+ people across the state over the coming decade.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Equality Harriet Shing

"LGBTIQ+ Victorians are more than twice as likely to experience homelessness due to discrimination, family rejection and intimate partner violence – this funding is critical to support the safety of our communities."

"We're ensuring that more LGBTIQ+ people are safe, healthy and included in Victoria, with specialised support and reforms to make sure services are inclusive, accessible, and visible."

Quote attributable to Minister for Housing Danny Pearson

"I am proud that this innovative program will employ specialist workers to support the LGBTIQ+ community access housing services and be supported throughout their entire journey into a new home and beyond."