

# Media Release

The Hon Daniel Andrews MP  
Premier



Friday, 24 February 2023

## NEW BENDIGO LAW COURTS OFFICIALLY OPEN

Bendigo is now home to the first regional specialist courts in Victoria, offering better access to critical justice services thanks to investment from the Andrews Labor Government.

Premier Daniel Andrews and Attorney-General Jaclyn Symes today officially opened the new \$152 million facility, which starts operating on Monday.

Built over five levels, the Bendigo Law Courts house 11 courtrooms including two hearing rooms, two mediation suites, remote witness facilities, safe waiting facilities, dedicated jury areas and meeting rooms for support agencies and client services.

It features digital technology integrated through court rooms, work areas and public spaces to enable remote hearings and improve the efficiency of court operations.

The design helps everyone who is attending court, with secure entrances and separate sections for judicial staff, vulnerable people, people in custody and operational staff, as well as safe waiting areas.

It also aligns with key recommendations from the Royal Commission into Family Violence by including a specialist family violence court and separate building entrances, remote witness facilities and discrete meeting rooms.

The Bendigo Law Courts will service the Magistrates' Court, Children's Court and the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal as well as the County Court, the Supreme Court and Federal Circuit Court.

The Koori Court and the Assessment and Referral Court will also operate from the new facility, providing access to specialist courts, helping to address offending behavior and reduce reoffending in the community.

The building's façade features Dja Dja Wurrung, Barapa Barapa and Boon Wurrung artist Racquel Kerr's hammered-copper wedge tailed eagle Bunjil soaring high in recognition of the role Bunjil represents overseeing law and people's conduct on country in Djaara culture.

The Dja Dja Wurrung Clans Aboriginal Corporation were closely involved with the project to integrate Djaara culture into the space, including landscaping featuring elements to symbolise a smoking ceremony.

The project is estimated to have created 390 construction jobs and has boosted employment opportunities in Bendigo, with local businesses engaged for trades, office supplies, graphic design and printing, catering and more.

### Quote attributable to Premier Daniel Andrews

*"Thanks to the hundreds of locals who have worked on the construction of these new courts – not only are they safer, more inclusive and more expansive, they will provide ongoing opportunities for businesses across the region."*

### Quote attributable to Attorney-General Jaclyn Symes

*"Victorians should have the best possible access to justice no matter where they live – this new precinct will help regional Victorians get the legal help they need without having to travel to Melbourne."*

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**Quote attributable to Member for Bendigo East Jacinta Allan**

*“The Law Courts have been built with the Bendigo community in mind – from Bunjil taking flight on the façade to the use of local suppliers, creating hundreds of local jobs.”*

**Quote attributable to Member for Bendigo West Maree Edwards**

*“These new courts are a stunning new addition to the Bendigo skyline and will make justice more accessible to more people.”*