

Media Release

The Hon Enver Erdogan MP
Minister for Corrections
Minister for Youth Justice
Minister for Victim Support



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IMPROVING REHABILITATION SERVICES FOR WOMEN IN CUSTODY

Women in custody at the Dame Phyllis Frost Centre (DPFC) will have better access to important rehabilitation services in a culturally safe environment, thanks to investment from the Andrews Labor Government.

Minister for Corrections Enver Erdogan visited the Centre to open new facilities that will increase support services for prisoners to transition back into the community following their release.

The \$189 million purpose-built centre includes 106 new beds, replacing others that are no longer fit for purpose and is designed to help more women get involved with rehabilitation services. It is the first of its kind in Australia, designed in line with trauma-informed care principles.

The upgrade includes a new reception centre designed to reduce the additional trauma that can be experienced by women entering prison, including a body scanner to replace invasive strip searches, digital privacy screens and a cultural space to be seen by an Aboriginal Wellbeing Officer.

It also includes new multi-purpose facilities with more natural light, shared spaces and other design features to improve engagement with education and support programs – as well as more legal and telecourt facilities.

The new facilities will allow out-of-date infrastructure to be decommissioned and supports the implementation of recommendations from the Cultural Review into the Adult Custodial Corrections System.

They support the delivery of several important rehabilitation programs that help women at DPFC get their lives back on track. These include parenting programs, specialist trauma and financial counselling, employment programs and behaviour programs that focus on violent offending and substance abuse.

The DPFC is also home to a VET Centre of Excellence, where participants gain nationally-recognised skills in Food Industry and Hospitality and are connected to major employers for the chance to get a job post-release.

The upgrade created more than 130 jobs during construction, including new opportunities for apprentices and trainees – helping to build the future workforce.

DPFC is one of two women's prisons in Victoria. It accommodates both sentenced and remand populations and offers rehabilitation and support services for women with mental health conditions and cognitive disabilities.

The upgrade forms part of the Labor Government's \$1.8 billion investment from the *Victorian Budget 2019/20* to provide flexible prison capacity, deliver programs to break the cycle of reoffending and keep people out of prison.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Corrections Enver Erdogan

"No one wants to come into contact with our prisons in the first place — but for those who do, we're making sure our facilities reduce trauma, help women stay connected to their lives and get them back on track."

"When we invest in our correctional system to give people in custody support to break the cycle of reoffending, we improve community safety for all Victorians."