

# Media Release

**Jaclyn Symes MLC**

Leader of the Government in the Legislative Council

Attorney-General

Minister for Emergency Services



Thursday, 26 October 2023

## HELPING HEAL THE HURT OF FORCED ADOPTIONS IN VICTORIA

Victorian mothers who had their babies removed under historical forced adoption practices will soon be able to access a new redress scheme, recognising the profound and enduring impact of these practices.

Attorney-General Jaclyn Symes today announced the Allan Labor Government's fund of more than \$138 million to support an Australian-first historical forced adoptions redress scheme, and to improve post-adoption services.

The announcement follows the eleventh anniversary of the Victorian apology to all those impacted by past adoption practices on 25 October.

Many mothers affected by these historical practices continue to live with the serious, complex and ongoing effects of the experience of forced separation – and the redress scheme will deliver individual support through a redress payment of \$30,000, through counselling and psychological support and individual apologies.

The establishment of this scheme delivers on key recommendations of the inquiry into responses to historical forced adoptions in Victoria.

Extra funding of \$530,000 will help the Victorian Adoption Network for Information and Self-Help (VANISH) over two years to support anyone who was affected by historical forced adoption practices, including adoptees.

A \$700,000 Exceptional Circumstances Fund (ECF) has already provided payments and support to 74 mothers, with an extra \$200,000 provided to community groups to help people access the ECF.

Mothers who received a payment from the ECF will still be eligible to apply for the Historical Forced Adoptions Redress Scheme once it opens.

Eligible mothers affected by historical forced adoption policies and practices in Victoria prior to 1990 can apply for redress under the scheme. Applications open from 1 February 2024, with more information available at [vic.gov.au/redress-forced-adoptions](https://vic.gov.au/redress-forced-adoptions).

### Quotes attributable to Attorney-General Jaclyn Symes

*"I thank those who shared their experiences with the scheme – I can only imagine how difficult it was to revisit that trauma, but those contributions will help many others who have gone through this pain."*

*"While no amount of financial payment or counselling support can compensate mothers for the loss of their child, this scheme is a way to acknowledge the harm and injustices suffered due to these horrific practices."*