

Media Release

Hon Jacinta Allan MP
Premier



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BOOSTING VICTORIA'S WORKFORCE TO BUILD NEW HOMES

The Allan Labor Government is boosting the planning and building workforce to ensure it has the feet on the ground to build the 800,000 new homes Victoria needs over the next decade.

Premier Jacinta Allan, Minister for Planning Sonya Kilkenny and Minister for Skills and TAFE Gayle Tierney today launched the recruitment campaign for 90 new planners to deliver the bold reforms announced in Victoria's landmark *Housing Statement*, clearing the backlog of applications in the system.

The planners, to be based in the Department of Transport and Planning, will work in partnership with councils to support planners at a local level, deliver the state's planning priorities and make good decisions faster.

The team will work to clear the backlog of around 1,400 planning permit applications for multi-unit housing that have been sitting with councils for more than six months waiting for a decision. Some 550 of those applications have been waiting for more than a year.

Of these, 78 projects have a development cost of more than \$10 million – and would deliver around 4,900 new homes for Victorians who need them.

The Labor Government is also ensuring the construction industry has a pipeline of skilled workers to build thousands of new homes, lifting eligibility restrictions for the Free TAFE program so all Victorians can access government-subsidised training in more than 80 in-demand courses.

Since introducing Free TAFE in 2019, more than 153,000 students have saved more than \$394 million in tuition fees – with courses in fields like Building Surveying, Building and Construction, Civil Construction, Plumbing and Services and many more delivering the workers that will help the state reach its building target.

Through initiatives like Apprenticeships Victoria's Big Build Apprenticeships program, a range of opportunities will give newly trained Victorians the chance to earn and learn through practical work on Government construction projects.

Quote attributable to Premier Jacinta Allan

"Having applications stuck in the system doesn't get homes built. Right now, the system just isn't working like it should – that's why we're hiring 90 new planners to clear the backlog and make good decisions faster."

Quote attributable to Minister for Planning Sonya Kilkenny

"The status quo is not an option. Our bold reforms to the planning system will give industry the certainty it needs to get on with building the 800,000 new homes we have to build in Victoria over the next decade."

Quote attributable to Minister for Skills and TAFE Gayle Tierney

"To ensure Victoria has the skilled workers to meet housing demand, we are investing in Free TAFE and apprenticeship opportunities to remove the financial barriers for Victorians studying construction and getting more Victorians on the worksite, sooner."