

# Media Release

**Jaclyn Symes MLC**

Leader of the Government in the Legislative Council

Attorney-General

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## **CRACKING DOWN ON CAREER CRIMINALS AND ORGANISED CRIME**

The Allan Labor Government is cracking down on organised crime and career criminals – targeting them with tough new laws aimed at depriving crime bosses of the use and enjoyment of their unexplained wealth.

As part of a new Bill introduced into the Victorian Parliament today – authorities will be able to target senior crime figures who play a pivotal role in moving money and property, and plan crimes by exploiting underlings to commit offences while they reap the financial benefits.

Under the changes, criminals will be forced to prove how they acquired their wealth through legitimate means or face losing it entirely.

The Bill will give Victoria Police and the Director of Public Prosecutions (DPP) additional powers to disrupt organised crime.

Authorities can already confiscate wealth that police and the DPP believe has been illegally acquired. However, these existing pathways both depend on the person having the wealth on them or a direct link to criminal activity – for example, owning or having a controlling interest in an expensive house or car in their name.

The Bill will introduce a third pathway for authorities called an ‘unexplained wealth order’ – for example if police believe an asset in a partner’s name was purchased due to proceeds from crime, they could seize it.

The changes will for the first time also capture consumable wealth and wealth that has been gifted, disposed of or expended – such as the hiring of a yacht or a hotel penthouse, or adult services.

The new orders will allow the DPP to apply to a court for an order if there are reasonable grounds to suspect that a person’s total wealth exceeds their lawfully acquired wealth by at least \$200,000.

If a person can’t satisfy a court that they have lawfully obtained their wealth, a court may order them to pay the State the value of anything they cannot prove was lawfully acquired.

Courts will have a discretion not to make an unexplained wealth order if it would be ‘manifestly unjust’ to do so.

This Bill complements earlier work by the Labor Government such as the *Major Crime and Community Safety Legislation Amendment Act 2022*, which expanded powers around cyber-crime, cryptocurrency seizures and electronic and specialist search powers.

### **Quotes attributable to Attorney-General Jaclyn Symes**

*“This strengthening of our unexplained wealth laws is all about disrupting organised crime and making sure there’s no pay day for criminals.”*

*“It doesn’t matter if you spend your money on yachts, mansions or fancy hotel rooms – if you get it from doing a crime, we’re going to take it off you.”*

### **Quote attributable to Minister for Police Anthony Carbines**

*“We’re sending a message to organised crime bosses who think they can continue their dodgy deals – prove your wealth has been lawfully acquired or you will lose it.”*

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