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## **ELECTRONIC MONITORING TO KEEP BAILED YOUTHS ON TRACK**

The Allan Labor Government is taking the next step to drive down youth crime and keep Victorians safe, handing courts an extra tool to ensure those who are granted bail get back on the right path – or face tough consequences.

Attorney-General Sonya Kilkenney today visited Youth Justice staff to mark the start of a two-year electronic monitoring trial for select young people on bail.

From today, Children's Courts and the Supreme Court will have the power to impose electronic monitoring and intensive supervised bail for young people in the metropolitan area as part of their bail conditions.

The trial builds on the Government's tough new bail laws, which puts community safety at the centre of all bail decisions and makes remand for young people no longer an option of last resort.

Under the Government's reforms, any young person who poses an unacceptable risk to community safety is expected to be remanded – they should not be out in the community on bail, with or without electronic monitoring.

Up to 50 young people charged with serious offences and who require additional support and supervision to comply with their bail conditions will be eligible for the trial.

The courts will be able to order electronic monitoring for young people on bail aged between 14 and 18 years or if they were aged under 18 years at the time of their alleged offending.

The courts will be required to consider a range of factors, including a report about the young person's suitability prepared by Youth Justice and whether the young person poses an unacceptable risk to community safety.

If they are outside their address after curfew or enter an exclusion zone, the device will generate an alert and Youth Justice will respond – including by referring breaches to Victoria Police for bail cancellation.

Further supports will also be available to these young people – like drug and alcohol services, disability supports and help to resolve complex home situations.

These ensure young people understand the consequences of their actions by having someone doing proactive targeted work with them – reducing their likelihood of reoffending and setting them on the right path.

Most young offenders are already enrolled in a school when they commit an offence but are often disengaged with learning. Electronic monitoring will allow a young person to stay in school, continue in employment and remain connected to their family and community – ultimately keeping everyone safe.

Young people on the trial can be placed in one of 57 alternative education settings in metropolitan Melbourne, with the Department of Education to make the final call on the most appropriate place for young people to go.

The Department will work with school leadership of these alternative education settings to maintain the safety of other students and staff. Schools will be able to report any concerns about behaviour, so that these arrangements can be reconsidered if needed.

The trial and tough new bail laws build on the Government's investment in crime prevention, including funding to Victoria Police to hire nearly 50 youth specialist officers to work in communities with young people and \$40 million for the Youth Crime Prevention Program.

**Quotes attributable to Attorney-General Sonya Kilkenney**

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*“Young people need to take their bail conditions seriously and understand that there are consequences for their actions.”*

*“Electronic monitoring will be an extra incentive for young people to comply with their conditions and gives authorities another way to take immediate and appropriate action if breaches occur.”*