

Media Release

Ingrid Stitt MP

Minister for Mental Health

Minister for Ageing

Minister for Multicultural Affairs



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LISTENING TO COMMUNITY LEADERS TO OVERCOME ANTISEMITISM

The Allan Labor Government is responding to continued concerns of rising antisemitism, with its local escalation and help group (known as LEAH) now in full swing and getting results.

Addressing antisemitism demands bold action at both the state and national levels – but it also requires strong engagement at the local level. That means regular communication, timely updates to the community, and clear pathways to escalate and respond to concerns as they emerge.

Announced as part of a range of measures to strengthen social cohesion, LEAH sees representatives from Jewish community groups meet with local councils and government departments, including the Department of Premier and Cabinet, Department of Justice and Community Safety and Victoria Police.

Based on its initial success and engagement, the Government can confirm that LEAH will keep meeting regularly to discuss current issues within the community so that critical matters are escalated and resolved in a timely manner.

In April, LEAH participants provided advice on how the group can support the Labor Government's response to antisemitism including antisemitic incidents during protests, threats targeting the Orthodox community in St Kilda East and challenges faced by Jewish students on university campuses.

The group recommended improved communication channels for urgent matters and better access to data to identify current support gaps. The Labor Government will now update LEAH's Terms of Reference to reflect this advice and guide future meetings.

LEAH brings together representatives from across Jewish life – including the arts, universities and interfaith relations – with members from key organisations like the Jewish Community Council of Victoria, Community Security Group, and Zionism Victoria.

The LEAH model of direct engagement is a first of its kind and, if successful, can be expanded to support other communities in distress who need targeted, coordinated government support.

Additionally, the Labor Government is working closely with leaders of the Adass Israel Synagogue to support the continuity of their services and their rebuild. With ongoing visits and communication, the Labor Government is working to removing barriers to recovery – and will act if needed.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Multicultural Affairs Ingrid Stitt

"The establishment of the Local Escalation and Help group (LEAH) recognises the importance of listening and meaningful engagement with Victoria's Jewish community."

"Antisemitism has no place in Victoria and the Labor Government will continue to work towards delivering commitments to strengthen social cohesion."