

GETTING THINGS DONE

Victorian Budget 18/19



The Hon Martin Pakula MP
Attorney-General

Tuesday, 1 May, 2018

Stronger, safer, fairer: investing in Victoria's justice system

More judges and magistrates will be recruited and there will be more support for victims of crime thanks to new investments included in the *Victorian Budget 2018/19* that will see a stronger, safer justice system in Victoria.

The Andrews Labor Government will invest \$257.4 million to recruit new judges and magistrates, better support victims of crime, implement counter-terrorism reforms and upgrade courts across Victoria.

The Budget provides \$128.9 million to increase our courts' capacity, including a new Supreme Court judge, two new County Court judges and 18 new magistrates. These new resources will reduce delays that can increase trauma for victims and their families.

Fifteen magistrates will go to the Magistrates' Court to meet growing demand, and three magistrates will establish the new Bail and Remand Court in the Melbourne Magistrates' Court.

The new Bail and Remand Court began operations this week and will hear bail applications after hours and on weekends, in line with recommendations from the Coghlan Bail Review.

To support the operation of the specialist Court and the new magistrates, Victoria Legal Aid will receive \$37.3 million over four years to deliver more legal services, including duty lawyers and grants of legal aid.

The Budget also provides \$21.8 million for the Office of Public Prosecutions, to recruit more prosecutors and support the prosecution of the most serious crimes. This is on top of \$97 million for new police prosecutors and extra staff.

To keep Victorians safe, the Budget delivers \$20.9 million to implement counter-terrorism reforms, including \$6.8 million for the justice system.

This includes strengthened legislation, a presumption against bail and parole for certain offenders, and expanding the Preventative Detention Order scheme to continue detaining and monitoring serious perpetrators. It also includes support for Corrections and other staff to better identify and manage the risks of violent extremism.

The Budget also provides:

- \$7.2 million for the Victims Assistance Program to provide enhanced support to victims including through case management and recovery support, the Victims of Crime Helpline and support workers
- \$2.9 million to extend the intermediary scheme, which involves communication specialists helping children and vulnerable people provide evidence to police and in court
- \$5.4 million for the Office of the Public Advocate to provide additional guardianship and investigation services for people with disability. The Independent Third Person program will also be expanded to provide more support for people with disability in police interviews
- \$5 million to support the work of the Victorian Institute of Forensic Medicine
- \$20 million will be delivered for the next stages of acquiring land for the Werribee and Bendigo law court developments. \$5 million will support safety and security upgrades for the Echuca Law Courts
- Court Services Victoria will also receive \$3 million to plan for the state's future court infrastructure needs

Media contact: Nathan Motton 0477 771 882 | nathan.motton@minstaff.vic.gov.au

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Quotes attributable to Attorney-General Martin Pakula

“We’re funding more judges, more magistrates and more prosecutors to meet growing demand, and we’re setting up a Bail and Remand Court in line with a recommendation from Justice Coghlan.”

“Our investments mean victims of crime and vulnerable Victorians will get more support through our justice system.”