



# Historic investment in women's safety and domestic violence support

## Budget 2021-22

*The Australian Government is investing \$600 million from 2021-22 to 2024-25 under the Social Services Portfolio women's safety package.*

## What was announced in the Budget 2021-22?

The Australian Government is investing \$600 million for the Department of Social Services to deliver measures under the women's safety package that will contribute about \$1 billion to the 'towards zero' target to end violence against women and children.

This historic investment across 16 new women's safety measures will build on the work of the Fourth Action Plan of the *National Plan to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children 2010–2022* (the National Plan), and ensure a seamless transition to a new

National Plan to end violence against women and children, starting in July 2022.

## Measures

The new measures include a focus on prevention, financial support, creating a safe online space for women and children, working with perpetrators, support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and other diverse groups, children experiencing violence and building a strong evidence base.

Recommendations from the *Respect@Work* report have been considered and responded to in developing these new measures.

## Key facts

Funding across this package of includes:

## **Financial support for women escaping violence**

1. \$164.8 million over three years (2021-22 to 2023-24). This includes a two-year trial of a new Escaping Violence Payment for women leaving a violent relationship. The Escaping Violence Payment will provide women with access of up to \$5,000 in financial assistance (a cash payment of up to a maximum of \$1,500 and the remainder in goods, services and support from a community service provider or other items needed to establish a home free from violence). It is estimated the program will help up to 12,000 women annually who need financial support to leave a violent relationship. The trial will be demand driven to ensure that all women experiencing financial stress when leaving a violent relationship are able to be supported by the program.

This measure also includes awareness-raising for the No Interest Loans Scheme for Women Experiencing Family and Domestic Violence and the expansion of a Services Australia pilot providing streamlined specialist case management to people experiencing family and domestic violence so they need only tell their story once.

## **Delivering frontline domestic and family violence services**

2. A new, two-year National Partnership Agreement where the Australian Government

will commit up to \$260 million to partner with states and territories to boost local frontline family, domestic and sexual violence services and trial new initiatives during the transition to the next National Plan. This new funding builds on the \$130 million the Commonwealth provided to states and territories as part of its COVID-19 Domestic and Family Violence Response Package. States and territories will be asked to contribute to the agreement reflecting their primary role and responsibilities in the delivery of frontline services.

3. \$12.6 million over three years (2021-22 to 2023-24) to expand the Safe Places emergency accommodation program.

The funding will support new projects, some of which target Indigenous women and children as a priority cohort. These projects are expected to assist about 450 women and children experiencing family and domestic violence each year, including additional safe places in regional and remote areas.

## **Supporting diverse communities**

4. \$29.4 million over four years (2021-22 to 2024-25) to establish the first Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Personal Safety Survey, which will be conducted by the Australian Bureau of Statistics.

The survey will enable us to measure the prevalence of family, domestic and sexual

violence against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and girls. This information is critical to design effective responses to violence to improve the lives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and their children.

5. \$5.8 million over three years (2021-22 to 2023-24) to extend grant funding for organisations providing local-level prevention initiatives in culturally diverse communities and identify opportunities to scale-up the work of these local organisations. There is also funding to support the comprehensive consultations to inform the new National Plan.

In recognition that women from culturally diverse communities can face multiple forms of discrimination and additional barriers to finding appropriate support services, this funding will build the capacity to respond in targeted and appropriate ways.

6. \$1 million in 2021-22 to establish an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Council to represent Indigenous communities. This is to help the government meet the Closing the Gap commitment – that by 2031, the rate of all forms of family violence and abuse against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and children is reduced at least by 50 per cent, as progress towards zero.

7. \$9.3 million over three years (2021-22 to 2023-24) to develop resources that aim to reduce violence against women and girls with disability, and improve service responses when violence occurs.

This is in response to the Disability Royal Commission highlighting that women with a disability experience higher levels of all forms of violence.

### **Responding to emerging issues**

8. \$3.7 million over four years (2021-22 to 2024-25) to create and deliver a training package for emergency services frontline responders.

9. \$3 million over four years (2021-22 to 2024-25) to work with the eSafety Commissioner to provide targeted support for children experiencing technology-facilitated abuse. eSafety research identified 27 per cent of children experience tech-facilitated abuse where family violence is present.

This initiative will include resources to help adults engaging with children such as frontline workers, and educators to identify early warning signs that children may be impacted and work with them on strategies to manage the abuse or seek support.

10. \$10.3 million over two years, to extend to 30 June 2023, the current-pilot supporting women on temporary visas experiencing violence. By extending the pilot from one to

two years, the program is expected to provide direct financial support to more than 2,400 women on temporary visas during the two-year pilot.

The additional funding will be given to the Red Cross and nine legal services providers will receive additional funding to extend the pilot program for a further year and help more women access financial and legal assistance and migration support.

### **Changing perpetrator behaviour**

11. \$9 million for perpetrator programs to change the behaviour of men who use violence, in turn helping to address violence perpetrated by men against women, including:

- \$2.4 million over one year (2021-22) to fund No to Violence for continued national coverage for the Men's Referral Service.
- \$2.4 million over three years (2021-22 to 2023-24) to fund MensLine Australia to continue delivery of the Changing for Good program.
- \$4.2 million to trial a new initiative that identifies and makes offenders accountable for their actions and provides support to victims.

### **Preventing violence before it begins**

12. \$35.1 million for a prevention package to expand national primary prevention campaigns to address new and emerging issues targeted at young

people as well as continuing the award-winning campaign, *Stop It At The Start*.

A fourth phase of the award-winning national primary prevention campaign, *Stop it at the Start*, which will focus on opportunities to act.

*Stop it at the Start* targets the influencers of young people aged 10 to 17 – such as parents, other family members, teachers, sporting coaches, managers and community leaders – and encourages them to reflect on their own attitudes and start conversations about respectful relationships and gender equality.

13. \$5.3 million over three years (2021-22 to 2023-24) to build evidence and develop primary prevention initiatives to respond to sexual harassment, in response to specific recommendations of the Australian Human Rights Commission's 2020 report *Respect@Work: National Inquiry into Sexual Harassment in Australian Workplaces*.

Measures will contribute to an evidence base on sexual harassment research, primary prevention initiatives to increase knowledge of, and change behaviours that drive, sexual harassment, update national media guidelines for reporting violence against women and children, and promote the 1800RESPECT service's confidential information, counselling and support services, with a focus on sexual violence.

**Building the evidence base:  
Knowing what we're up against**

14. \$11.6 million over four years (2021-22 to 2024-25) to establish a comprehensive data and reporting system on family, domestic and sexual violence.

This measure will support the continuation of AIHW's 'State of Play' report on FDSV statistics and scoping for an integrated data set.

15. \$30 million over four years (2021-22 to 2024-25) to provide ongoing funding for Australia's National Research Organisation for Women's Safety, as well as funding for the next rounds of the Personal Safety Survey and National Community Attitudes towards Violence against Women Survey.

Ongoing funding dedicated to national research will ensure there are no data gaps, that we are building robust evidence to inform responses to domestic, family and sexual

violence, and that we can track our progress over time.

16. \$7.4 million over four years (2021-22 to 2024-25) to develop a performance monitoring and reporting framework to underpin the new National Plan to end violence against women in Australia.

We will commence tracking progress against this framework and establish a prototype national family, domestic and sexual violence specialist services data collection, to help better identify demand for services and service gaps.

## More information

For more information about these measures and other Department of Social Services' Budget measures, visit the [Department of Social Services](https://www.dss.gov.au) website ([dss.gov.au](https://www.dss.gov.au)).

For information about the Budget 2021-22, visit the [Australian Government budget](https://www.budget.gov.au) website ([budget.gov.au](https://www.budget.gov.au)).