

Public Accounts and Estimates Committee 2024-25

The Hon. Enver Erdogan MP
Minister for Victim Support

24 May 2024



Delivering on our commitments

Supports for victims from 1 July 2023 – 31 March 2024



19,655

People were referred to the Victims of Crime Helpline for support



7,996

Victims of crime against the person were supported by the Victims Assistance Program



15,115

Family violence matters referred to the Helpline, including 14,530 L17 male victim referrals from Victoria Police



1,175

Children and their families were supported by the Child and Youth Witness Service



1,225

Total active registrations on the Victims Register



589

Requests for assistance through the Intermediary Program

Victim Support 2024-25 Budget overview

- The Financial Assistance Scheme (FAS) will transform the way victims of violent crime apply for, and access, financial assistance, providing a streamlined and trauma-informed approach that helps victims recover.
- The 2024-25 Victorian Budget provides **\$71.9 million** in 2024-25 to establish the new FAS for victims of crime. This will support payment of awards to victims of crime in the first year, with further investment to be determined based on demand.
- This builds on investment in previous Budgets of more than **\$100 million** provided to support the scheme's establishment and to address the VOCAT backlog.
- This investment will see the Financial Assistance Scheme commence operation before 1 December 2024, in line with legislation.

Putting victims first

Key reforms and achievements



Delivering a new Financial Assistance Scheme for victims of crime

- The Financial Assistance Scheme is due to commence later this year and is in the final stages of preparation.
- The scheme will make a significant difference to victims' experiences of applying for financial assistance by replacing the Victims of Crime Assistance Tribunal.
- It will replace the Tribunal with a more accessible and trauma-informed administrative scheme.



Launching a new Victims Legal Service

- The Victims Legal Service (VLS) launched on 14 March 2023 to provide legal assistance to victims of crime.
- To 31 March 2024, the VLS Helpline has responded to 2,618 enquiries and made 367 referrals for ongoing casework.
- In March this year, the service expanded under an Australian Government pilot program to provide support to victims seeking to protect their confidential communications and to Aboriginal women wanting support in reporting sexual violence to police.



Opening *Garragarrak* Victim and Witness Support Centre

- The new Child and Youth Witness Service and Intermediary Program premises, *Garragarrak*, launched in August 2023.
- The interior was designed to be safe and comfortable for children and young people, inclusive, and be inviting and culturally safe for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients.

Previous funding commitments



More than \$100 million from 2019-20 to 2023-24 to establish the new Financial Assistance Scheme.



\$7.3 million over three years to establish a dedicated Victims Legal Service.



\$9.9 million over four years to secure the future of the Intermediary Program ongoing in the 2021-22 Budget.



We invested in the establishment of a new premises for the Child and Youth Witness Service and the Intermediary Program, including new remote witness rooms and the Virtual Court Support Program.



*Garragarrak Victim and
Witness Support Centre*

Thank you

