

VICTORIAN STATE ELECTION 2026

SAFE+EQUAL

Safe and Equal is the independent peak body for Victorian organisations specialising in family and gender-based violence, from prevention through to response and recovery, representing more than 134 member organisations delivering this work across the state.



Because of what Victoria built, thousands of children who would have grown up in violence didn't. You get to decide how many more can have that.

Victoria's decade of reform is working — and it's not finished. Police recorded 106,430 family violence incidents in 2024–25, a reminder of how much is still being asked of a system that sustained investment has made stronger than ever. Here's what it will take to keep that progress moving.

1. Children and young people



At least 40% of specialist case management clients are children and young people, who face distinct challenges accessing support as victim survivors in their own right. A guaranteed \$33 million a year, quarantined as part of core investment, would fund effective, skilled services designed around their needs.

A further \$12 million annually over five years for ten multidisciplinary demonstration projects — building workforce capability and system-wide learning about what works for this cohort.

2. Safe housing and long-term recovery



Family violence is the leading cause of homelessness for women and children, who should never have to choose between violence and having nowhere safe to go. At least doubling specialist refuge capacity and delivering 83,000 new social housing dwellings for victim survivors over the next 25 years, would close much of this gap.

Case management is highly effective, but many victim survivors need longer-term, holistic support to rebuild their lives — including therapeutic care, peer-to-peer support, and pathways back into education and employment.

3. Justice and early intervention



Most victim survivors don't qualify for publicly funded legal support and can't afford a private lawyer, leaving a legal assistance sector that needs additional investment to meet demand. As coercive control laws come into force, victim survivors also need protection from misidentification — through legislative safeguards, public awareness and attention to the concerns of overpoliced communities.

Commit \$15 million over five years in public awareness campaign and targeted community engagement, developed with sector and centring women's voices.

An additional \$20 million investment in early intervention would let services reach people at risk before crisis point, coordinating with schools, healthcare, social services and legal services along the way.

4. Sustainable investment in the sector



Core investment for specialist family violence services needs to grow to \$554 million a year from 2026–27, delivered through five-year minimum funding cycles so services can plan and retain skilled staff rather than face repeated funding cliffs. **Economic modelling shows that fully meeting demand would return \$2.8 billion in benefits to Victoria — six times the cost of investment.**

We are asking government to sustain and allocate a further \$20 million to a dedicated five-year investment focused on preventing violence before it starts — not just responding after it happens. That means changing the attitudes that allow violence against women to take root in the first place, including the prejudice and discrimination (such as racism, ableism, homophobia and transphobia) that make some women more vulnerable than others. This kind of cultural change doesn't happen overnight — it requires steady, long-term funding, not one-off grants.

Victoria already has a network of these prevention programs in schools, councils, women's health and specialist family violence services, plus community-led programs for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, migrant and refugee, disability and LGBTIQ+ communities, with growing focus on elder abuse. Without long-term funding, this progress stalls just as demand grows.

None of this holds without a skilled, well-supported workforce — through job security, fair pay, professional development and attention to wellbeing.

Sustained investment in Safe and Equal itself — as the peak body coordinating this work, providing policy analysis, advocacy, practice leadership and workforce training across the sector — is part of what makes this progress hold.

Victoria leads the nation on tackling family violence. Every other state is watching what we do next — and the next government has the chance to keep it that way.

Spend \$554m to realise \$2.8b in benefits to victim survivors and the state, and help to bring down the \$8.9b family violence already costs Victoria every year.