



State Budget 2009

9h

FROM THE MINISTER FOR HOUSING

Tuesday, 5 May, 2009

HOUSING AND HOMELESSNESS PACKAGE CRUCIAL TO SOCIAL SAFETY NET IN TOUGH GLOBAL TIMES

The Brumby Labor Government is investing **\$104.8 million** in the 2009 State Budget for homelessness and housing initiatives, to stand by those Victorians most vulnerable to the effects of the Global Financial Crisis, the Minister for Housing, Richard Wynne, said.

"The Brumby Labor Government is delivering strong leadership in tough global economic times to secure jobs, see Victoria through and build for the future, with this budget alone securing up to 35,000 Victorian jobs," Mr Wynne said.

"The 2009 State Budget builds on our Government's proud record of investment in social services, to provide a safety net for Victorians."

Mr Wynne said a \$104.8 million investment into homelessness programs would see critical services, including housing support for victims of family violence and mental health programs, expanded for those Victorians in need.

Mr Wynne said **\$36.3 million** would be invested in prevention and early intervention programs to take action before people become homeless.

"Our programs will focus on key points in people's lives when they are at risk of becoming homeless, such as young people leaving care and people being released from prison," Mr Wynne said.

"We will expand support services for people to establish and maintain tenancies. We will also tailor specific programs for children and families, focusing on financial assistance for families and keeping children in school, as well as strengthening of family reconciliation.

"By addressing the causes of homelessness early, we can work to prevent people from becoming homeless."

Mr Wynne said **\$52.6 million** had been allocated to improving and expanding homelessness services, through targeted programs for specific groups, such as women and children experiencing family violence, Indigenous people and young people – as well as strengthening mainstream services.

These measures include psychosocial support packages targeting people with a severe and enduring mental illness who are at risk of homelessness and new investment in the Courts Integrated Services Program, which will target those who are homeless or at risk of homelessness.

Mr Wynne said **\$15.9 million** had been allocated to initiatives to break the cycle of homelessness by focusing on long term sustainable housing.

He said the new funding would help to significantly reduce homelessness through a national strategic approach outlined in the *White Paper on Homelessness: The Road Home*.

Media contact: Dan Ward 9651 5799/0407 138 680

www.premier.vic.gov.au www.budget.vic.gov.au

“The 2009 State Budget funding would help implement programs under the National Partnership Agreement on Homelessness, developed between the Brumby Labor Government and the Rudd Federal Government,” he said.

A range of other initiatives across the 2009 State Budget will also work towards achieving the goals set out in the National Partnership, including: \$15.6 million in new funding targeting homelessness under the Brumby Labor Government’s Mental Health Strategy; and \$1.6 million to assist homeless people, or those at risk through the Court Integrated Service Program; and \$32.5 million in homelessness initiatives announced in last year’s State Budget.

Mr Wynne said the Brumby Labor Government would deliver \$30.4 million over ten years in Commonwealth-funded programs under the new Partnership Agreement on Indigenous Housing.

“We know that improved living conditions for Indigenous people, coupled with the right services and support can lead to more opportunities, particularly training, education, and employment,” Mr Wynne said.

“This new funding will bring the management of Indigenous community housing into line with state programs, helping to improve the quality of housing for Indigenous Victorians.”