

Victorian Budget 2021/22

Creating Jobs, Caring for Victorians



The Hon James Merlino MP

Acting Premier
Minister for Mental Health

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Treasurer

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CREATING JOBS AND CARING FOR VICTORIANS

Last year was tough. Now, we are on the road to recovery.

But real recovery won't happen by chance. We need a long-term plan that ensures every dollar of investment is delivering a 'double benefit' – investing in the support people need, and the people we need to deliver it.

It's two sides of the same coin and it's this simple idea that's at the heart of the *Victorian Budget 2021/22*.

In total, this year's Budget will support around 38,000 jobs each and every year over the next four years – helping ensure our state recovers, in every sense of the word.

That includes the Andrews Labor Government's once-in-a-generation reform to build a new mental health system from the ground up. This \$3.8 billion investment will transform the way care is offered in Victoria – with more early intervention, more focus on wellbeing and prevention, more support available in local communities and the creation of a dedicated system for our kids.

With these investments, not only will we be building the mental health system Victoria needs – we'll also be supporting around 3,000 jobs. From nurses, to doctors, allied health and support staff, these new roles will make sure Victorians get the support they need, while also giving thousands more Victorians the security of a job.

This year's Budget also includes \$1.2 billion to protect our children and help keep vulnerable families together. This investment will deliver 246 new child protection practitioners, more support for our carers and bring family services into schools, early childhood education and community health hubs to identify at-risk families early.

As well as improving the lives of Victorian children and families, this funding will also support around 1,000 jobs across our state.

This year's Budget delivers on our promise to introduce kinder for every three-year-old child. Having begun its roll-out in regional Victoria first, \$167 million will see this support delivered statewide for the very first time.

Offering at least five funded hours a week from next year, the program will be scaled up to deliver 15 hours a week for families by 2029 – while also supporting an extra 6,000 roles for early childhood teachers and educators, affording more Victorians a great career teaching our kids.

Since we came to government, our big infrastructure build has delivered the road, rail, schools and hospitals Victorians need – while also supporting 177,000 jobs.

This year's Budget continues that work, delivering \$242 million in the next step towards 'turn up and go' services in Melbourne's south. Separating the Cranbourne-Pakenham and Frankston lines at Caulfield and enabling more trains, more frequent services and making it easier for passengers to change trains, this investment will also support around 600 jobs at the peak of construction.

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A further \$986 million will build 25 new X'Trapolis 2.0 trains. Supporting the gradual retirement of the Comeng fleet, this investment will ensure more comfortable and reliable services for passengers on the Craigieburn, Upfield and Frankston lines.

Better yet, we'll build these new trains here – with major works in Ballarat and supporting around 750 Victorian jobs, in manufacturing and across the supply chain.

We'll continue investing in our kids' future with \$3.5 billion in education, including \$148.2 million to establish the Victorian Academy of Teaching and Leadership, furthering the professional development of our teachers.

This Budget invests \$277 million to put student mental health, health and wellbeing at the centre of our school communities. That includes \$200 million for a new School Mental Health Fund, enabling schools to introduce new support and programs, based on the needs of their kids.

The Mental Health in Primary Schools pilot will be expanded to include 100 schools, putting a Mental Health and Wellbeing Coordinator in every participating primary school and supporting 100 jobs.

We're also continuing our massive school building blitz, with \$1.6 billion to build 13 brand-new schools, additional stages at three further schools and upgrading 52 schools across our state. These investments are expected to support around 3,500 jobs in construction and supply chains – investing in local kids and backing local workers.

As we continue to recover from the pandemic, this Budget delivers \$7.1 billion to continue supporting our hospitals and healthcare system. This includes a further \$1.3 billion to continue our public health response to COVID-19.

An investment of \$1.2 billion from the Labor Government will continue our build and upgrade of local hospitals and health services, including delivering on our commitment to build and expand 10 community hospitals.

Located in Craigieburn, Cranbourne, Pakenham, Phillip Island, Sunbury, Torquay, Mernda, Eltham, Point Cook and the inner-south of Melbourne, these community hospitals will give local families confidence the very best care is available close to home and support around 1,550 jobs at the peak of construction.

This Budget makes good on our promise to build new emergency department paediatric zones at University Hospital Geelong, Maroondah, Casey, Northern and Frankston hospitals – giving local families a safe, dedicated space and supporting 300 local jobs.

We're upgrading Maryborough Hospital, including a new day surgery and birthing suites, and expanding the Angliss Hospital with a new in-patient unit, supporting 330 and 220 jobs respectively.

And because we want to make sure Victorians have the right skills to be ready for these jobs, we're investing \$384 million in our skills sector, including 12,200 extra subsidised training places in our TAFE and training system.

This also includes \$86 million to establish the Victorian Skills Authority, a new anchor organisation that will drive reform of our skills sector and help support more Victorians find work.

The jobs supported in this Budget are more than numbers on a page, they mean tens of thousands of opportunities for Victorian workers. And with it, certainty and security for just as many Victorian families.

That means not only will our investments deliver the support and services our state needs, we'll be getting Victorians back to work to make it happen. With this Budget, we're creating jobs and caring for Victorians.

Quotes attributable to Acting Premier and Minister for Mental Health James Merlino

“There’s a simple idea at the heart of this Budget, and it’s two sides of the same coin – investing in the support Victorians need, and the Victorians we need to deliver it.”

“Whether that’s a job in our mental health workforce or a role supporting children and families, we’re creating thousands of opportunities for Victorians doing work that matters.”

Quote attributable to Treasurer Tim Pallas

“Now more than ever, we need to be smart and strategic. That means not only supporting people in the short-term, but actually investing in their future too.”

“This is a Labor Budget through and through – a Labor Budget that creates jobs and cares for Victorians.”