

# Media Release

**The Hon Mary-Anne Thomas MP**  
Leader of the House  
Minister for Health  
Minister for Ambulance Services



Wednesday, 1 January 2025

## WELCOMING THE FIRST LITTLE VICTORIANS BORN IN 2025

Victoria has rung in the New Year, welcoming our newest and tiniest Victorians into the world – with around 40 babies born across the state in the early hours of 2025 and around 6,000 births expected throughout January.

Minister for Health Mary-Anne Thomas visited the Mercy Hospital for Women in Heidelberg where two babies were born in the early hours of this morning – meeting the bubs and their proud parents, and importantly, thanking the hardworking staff who have been caring for Victorians throughout the festive season.

The state's newest bundles of joy follow another busy year for maternity wards across the state, with more than 80,000 births registered in Victoria throughout 2024 – March proving the year's busiest month for births.

It comes as the Allan Labor Government celebrates the arrival of more than 80 babies in 2024 as part of Australia's first public fertility program – helping more Victorians realise their dream of starting or growing their family.

Delivered in partnership with the Royal Women's Hospital, the \$120 million landmark program has already supported more than 4,000 Victorians to begin treatment closer to home – saving families up to up to \$10,000.

Victoria's maternity and newborn services are already some of the safest and highest quality in the world – and in 2024 work began to strengthen services with the introduction of a new maternity taskforce comprising representatives from the Australian Nursing and Midwifery Federation and regional and rural health services.

The Labor Government is also supporting parents when they need it most, opening a further six new or upgraded Early Parenting Centres in 2024 – including refurbished centres at Noble Park and Footscray, and new EPCs in Geelong, Clyde North, Ballarat, and an Aboriginal-dedicated centre in Frankston.

Designed to feel like a home away from home, the centres are accessible to families with children up to four years of age, giving them the specialised support they need to care for their little ones closer to home.

Delivered by a multidisciplinary team including registered nurses and midwives, maternal and child health nurses, mental health professionals, and social workers, services include help with sleep and settling, feeding, and extra care for babies and toddlers with additional needs.

To give our newest Victorians the very best start in life, the Labor Government has also handed out more than 180,000 baby bundles since 2019 to first-time parents and carers.

The bundles contain nursery essentials to support the health, development and wellbeing of their babies, including a nappy bag, sleeping bag, muslin wrap, teething toy, first-aid kit, sun hat, toothbrush, books and key information.

### **Quote attributable to Minister for Health Mary-Anne Thomas**

*"Welcoming a new baby is one of life's greatest joys and it's a privilege to see so many families growing and thriving here in Victoria."*

### **Quote attributable to Acting Minister for Children Ben Carroll**

*"We're making sure all parents have the help they need to start or grow their families – and we wish them a happy and healthy year ahead."*

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