



Victorian Budget 2021/22

# Creating Jobs, Caring for Victorians

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Budget Paper No. 1 – Treasurer's Speech  
Budget Paper No. 2 – Strategy and Outlook  
Budget Paper No. 3 – Service Delivery  
Budget Paper No. 4 – State Capital Program  
Budget Paper No. 5 – Statement of Finances  
(incorporating Quarterly Financial Report No. 3)

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# CREATING JOBS, CARING FOR VICTORIANS

After a tough twelve months, we are on the road to recovery.

But truly bouncing back – it won't just happen by chance.

We need a long-term plan that truly helps Victorians recover. That's particularly true in our regional communities.

It's why this Budget invests almost \$3.7 billion in our rural and regional communities – and the people who call them home.

That includes building a new mental health system from the ground up.

We all know someone who's struggled with their mental health. And yet this issue hasn't been taken seriously.

It's why with this Budget, we're delivering a once in a generation investment that will transform the way mental health support is offered in our state – including in regional Victoria.

That means early intervention, dedicated help for our kids, and care that's actually available in our country communities.

This Budget invests in more of the services and support Victorians need.

Our investments across the state include:

- » \$3.8 billion to build Victoria's new mental health system and ensure regional communities are getting the care they deserve
- » \$1.6 billion to continue our school building blitz, including upgrades to 17 regional schools making sure our kids have the classrooms they deserve
- » \$1.2 billion to support children and families, including hundreds of new child protection workers and more help for families in need

- » \$986 million to build 25 brand-new, modern X'Trapolis 2.0 trains and supporting infrastructure for our metropolitan network, with major works in Ballarat, supporting close to 750 jobs

- » \$759 million in funding for more paramedics, more triage care and support staff for Ambulance Victoria, as well as targeted funding to improve flow in our busy emergency departments and open new beds across the state

- » \$354 million to continue to address family violence and improve our support for victim survivors

- » \$252 million to provide housing support, including targeted initiatives to address homelessness

- » \$167 million to deliver three-year-old kinder to every corner of our state

- » \$86 million to establish the Victorian Skills Authority, making sure Victorians have the skills they need to find a good, secure job

- » \$70 million to establish public in-vitro fertilisation (IVF) services and help more Victorians achieve their dreams of becoming parents

- » \$50 million to support establishing Victoria's capability to manufacture mRNA vaccines

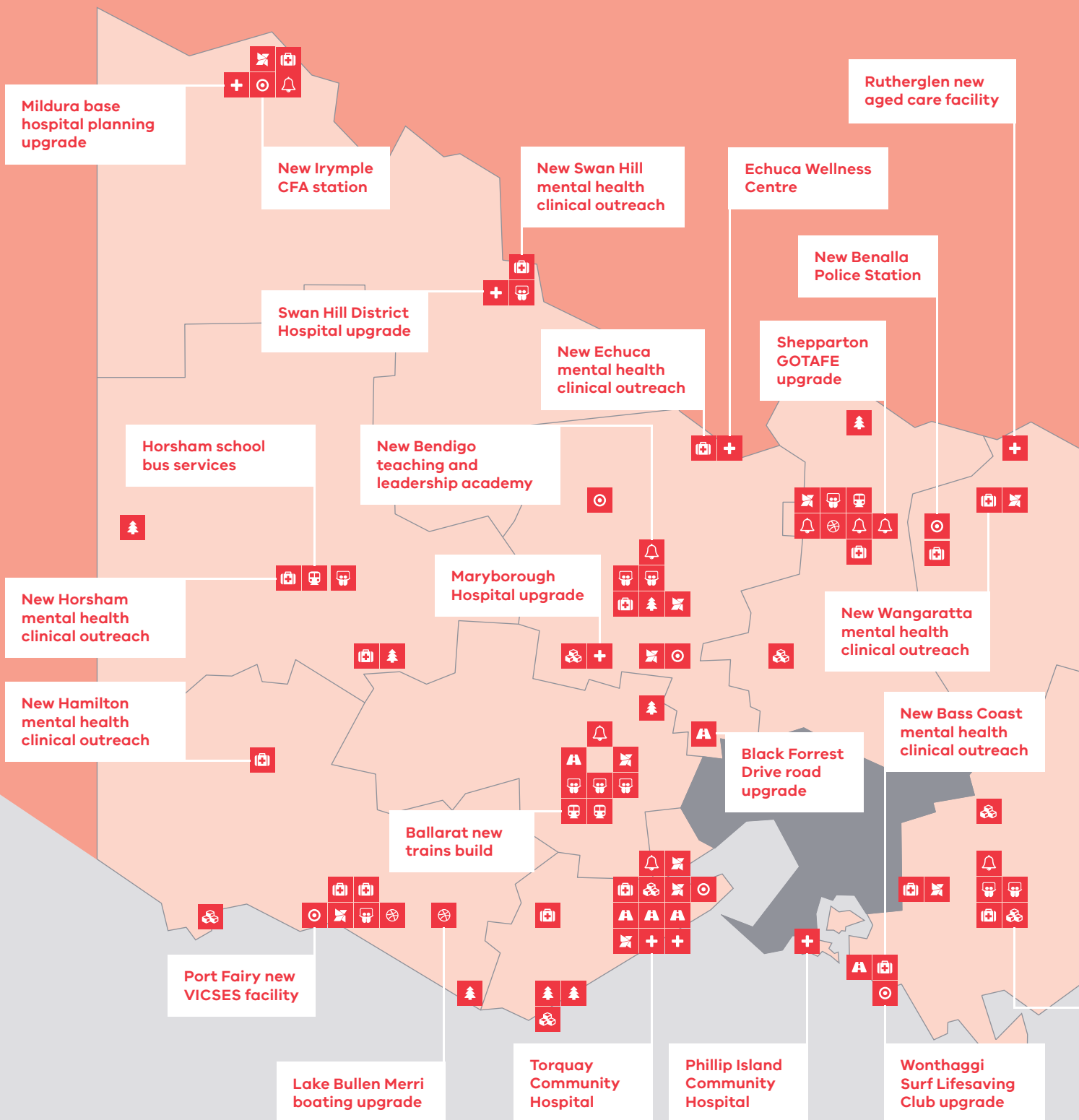
As we make these investments, we'll be supporting an average of 38 000 jobs every year over the next four years.

It's a simple idea that's at the heart of this Budget. Ensuring every dollar of investment is delivering a double benefit.

Making our state stronger and fairer, and getting more Victorians back to work to make it happen.

With this Budget, we're creating jobs and caring for Victorians.

# INVESTING IN EVERY CORNER OF THE STATE



## STATEWIDE

- » \$3.8 billion to transform our mental health system, building the system from the ground up
- » \$3.7 billion to meet demand for hospital services, including more emergency department staff, extra highly specialised therapies, and support for new wards as they open
- » \$3.2 billion for public transport services and infrastructure, including \$986 million to build 25 new X'Trapolis 2.0 trains and supporting infrastructure for our metropolitan network, and \$613 million to support the reliability of V/Line train services and maintain the regional rail network
- » \$1.6 billion for school infrastructure, including upgrades at 52 schools, building 13 new schools and additional stages at three further schools, and expanding six more across the state
- » \$1.3 billion to continue our state's public health response to the pandemic
- » \$1.2 billion to support children and families, including an expansion of the child protection workforce and out-of-home care placements and help for vulnerable Victorian families
- » \$788 million to reduce the impact of bushfires on Victorian communities, the economy and the environment
- » \$759 million in funding for more paramedics, more triage care and support staff for Ambulance Victoria, as well as targeted funding to improve flow in our busy emergency departments and open new beds across the state as part of our \$3.7 billion support for increased hospital demand
- » \$716 million for school programs and support for our teaching workforce, including \$148 million to establish the Victorian Academy of Teaching and Leadership, dedicated to the professional learning and development of Victorian teachers
- » \$556 million to build and expand 10 community hospitals
- » \$386 million for a new Road Safety Strategy to develop new safety technologies, deliver infrastructure upgrades, and other improvements helping to keep Victorians safe
- » \$354 million to support victim survivors and address family violence
- » \$288 million to boost our creative sector – supporting jobs, developing homegrown talent and promoting our people and content to the world
- » \$265 million to plan, upgrade and maintain suburban, rural and regional roads, ensuring a safe and reliable journey for local communities
- » \$252 million to provide housing support, including targeted initiatives to address homelessness
- » \$250 million to protect and preserve our natural environment, including support for volunteers and local community organisations to help conserve our native species and their habitats
- » \$167 million to continue the roll out of universal three-year-old kindergarten, covering the whole state in 2022
- » \$160 million to support Victoria's tourism sector to drive visitation and employment
- » \$86 million to establish the Victorian Skills Authority to champion and strengthen the vocational education and training sector
- » \$70 million to establish public in-vitro fertilisation services to help people who want to become parents achieve their dreams
- » \$50 million to support establishing Victoria's capability to manufacture mRNA vaccines












**New Bairnsdale teaching and leadership academy**

**Lakes Entrance sustainable port infrastructure**

**New Bairnsdale mental health clinical outreach**

**New Central Gippsland mental health clinical outreach**

**Morwell food manufacturing precinct**

-  Arts
-  Education
-  Emergency services
-  Environment and parkland
-  Health
-  Mental health
-  Public transport
-  Regional investment
-  Roads
-  Sport and recreation
-  Strong communities

# BUILDING OUR MENTAL HEALTH SYSTEM

Wherever you live, mental health impacts all of us.

And if you haven't experienced mental illness directly, chances are you've watched someone you love go through it – a parent, a partner, a child, a neighbour or a friend.

Yet Victoria's mental health system is failing. People are deemed not sick enough for help – until they're too sick to be treated anywhere but hospital.

And when you reach out and ask for support – there simply aren't enough professionals there to help.

That's particularly true in our regional communities, with too many people unable to access care close to home.

That's why we established the Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health System. And it's why we're using the Royal Commission's recommendations as a blueprint to build the system from the ground up.

This represents the biggest social reform in a generation.

It started with last year's Budget, which provided \$869 million in the single biggest investment ever in the mental health system.

Now, we're delivering a record \$3.8 billion to transform the way mental health and wellbeing support is delivered in Victoria – making sure services are available in every corner of our state.

Not only will these investments ensure Victorians are getting the help they need, it will also support around 3 000 jobs across our state – including in regional Victoria.

Funding of \$11 million will deliver a Rural and Regional Workforce Incentive Scheme, attracting, training and recruiting more mental health professionals to our regional communities.

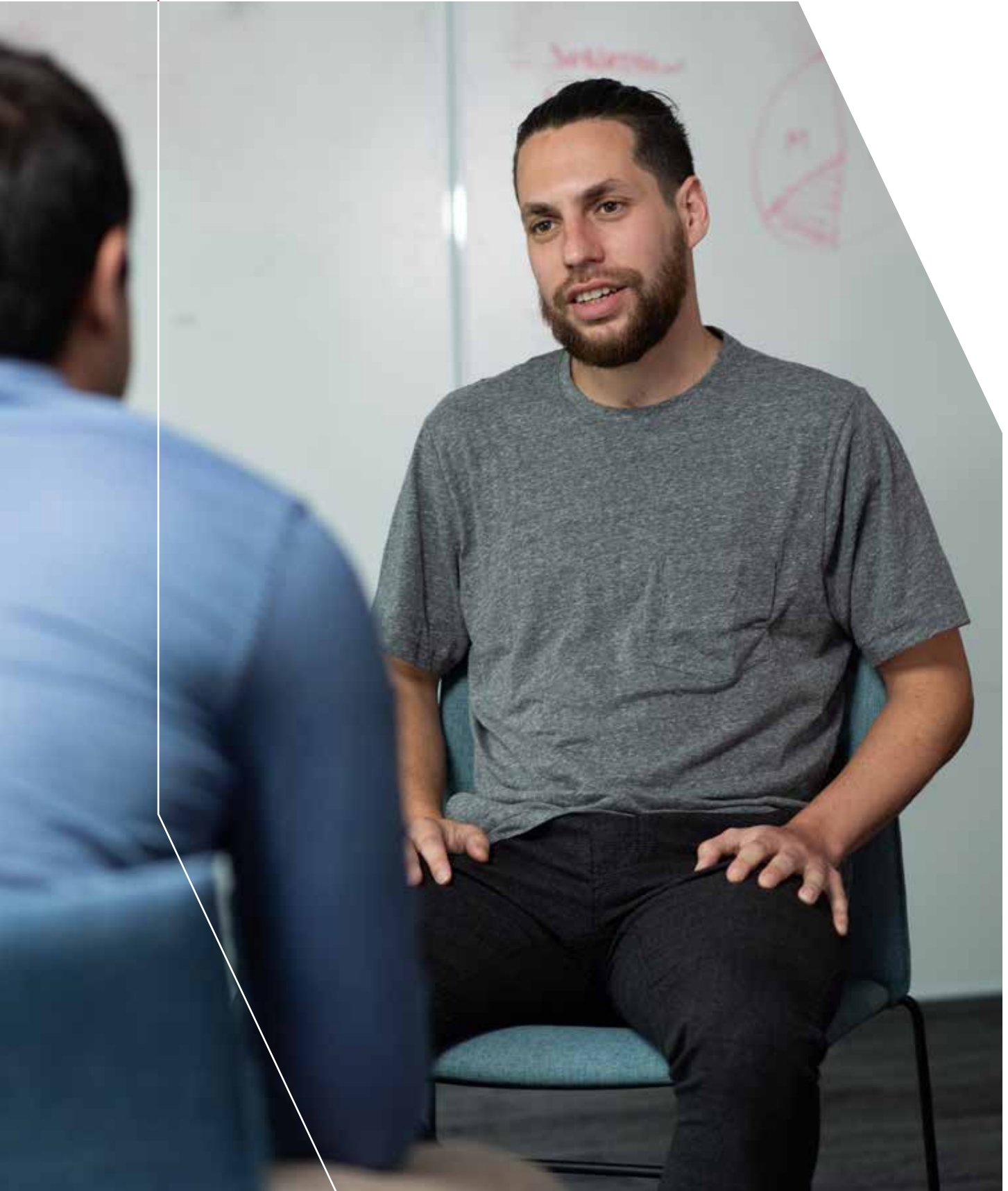
And to oversee our investments across the state, eight interim regional bodies will be established, including for regional Victoria, to provide on-the-ground insight and expertise.

Together, these investments will give regional Victorians a pathway to care in their own community, and close to home.

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This Budget will give regional  
Victorians a pathway to care in their  
own community, and close to home





## A front door and more pathways for care

The Royal Commission told us that Victorians don't know where to go or who to turn to for mental health and wellbeing support.

It's why this Budget delivers \$264 million in community-based care, providing a 'front door' for care, with 20 new local services across Victoria – the first of between 50 to 60 across the state.

These services will ensure Victorians get the care they need much sooner and much closer to their families and communities.

This investment will deliver the six sites already announced, including Benalla, Greater Geelong and the Latrobe Valley, which are due to open in 2022.

These services will help more Victorians get support earlier as well as provide a pathway to acute care.

And, critically, the services will have extended operating hours, so care is available when it's needed.

This Budget is also investing \$954 million to establish 22 reformed area mental health and wellbeing services to replace current services. These services will have more capacity to treat and support Victorians experiencing severe and complex mental health challenges.

A further \$2.3 million will trial two new digital services, enabling rural and regional Victorians to access care from their own homes.

And because it's an issue that touches all of us, \$6 million will go towards initiatives including the creation of dedicated tools and resources specifically designed to support occupational mental health – just one of a raft of reforms to support the wellbeing of workers and workplaces.

## Looking after children and young people

We know that our children and young people can be particularly vulnerable. And that by ensuring they have the support they need early, the better the outcomes.

It's why we're investing \$842 million in mental health and wellbeing support for children and young people, ensuring we're providing support to them, and their families, as early as possible.

This investment will see two separate streams of care created – one devoted to infants and children (ages 0 to 11) and one devoted to young people (ages 12 to 25).

An investment of \$138 million will deliver 13 reformed Infant, Child and Family Mental Health and Wellbeing Services, providing statewide services that are specifically designed around the needs of children and their families.

We're also investing \$266 million to reform and expand 13 Youth Area Mental Health and Wellbeing Services, and to support organisations providing mental health care to young people across Victoria. This will deliver more hours of care for young people, including extended and after-hours support across our regional communities.

A further \$41 million will establish three new multi-disciplinary community-based hubs – one located in regional Victoria – which will take a one-stop approach to children's health, including emotional, developmental and physical health, integrated with a range of other services and paediatricians. These hubs will be based on the existing model at Barwon Health's Child and Family Services Hub, and implement another of the Royal Commission's recommendations.



This Budget invests \$141 million to deliver five new Youth Prevention and Recovery Care (YPARC) units, totalling 50 beds specifically for young people. Delivering sub-acute care, four of these services will be located in regional Victoria, with locations in the Barwon South-West, Gippsland, Grampians and Hume regions. The Loddon Mallee (Bendigo) YPARC unit will also be upgraded.

Our Mobile Targeted Assertive Outreach teams will also be extended to deliver services, providing support to young people in their homes or other settings where they may feel more comfortable.

## Supporting families, carers and communities

If our mental health system is going to work for Victorians with mental illness, it must also work for their families, carers and supporters too.

This Budget provides \$93 million to ensure the voices of families are heard at the heart of our system, while also recognising the additional support they need when caring for a loved one.

This includes delivering family and carer-led centres in eight regions across Victoria to provide personalised help for families and to connect them with the right services.

This work will also include practical help like assisting with short-term respite and enabling family and carer peer support groups – creating connection and community amongst Victorians who are caring for their loved ones.

A further \$17 million will deliver additional help for parents – including new parents – with new support programs, dedicated group-based parenting sessions and expanded perinatal care.

This Budget delivers a further \$116 million to support the mental health and wellbeing of Aboriginal Victorians.

Importantly, this ensures care for Aboriginal people is being led by Aboriginal people, with dedicated funding for Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations.

## Care when it's needed most

If you're in need of serious support, you can't afford to wait. And yet right now, that's the experience of thousands of Victorians – particularly in our regional communities.

It's the reason the Andrews Labor Government is investing \$871 million in bed-based treatment for mental health, including acute care, making sure that Victorians are getting the mental health services they so desperately deserve.

This includes \$11 million to deliver an additional five acute mental health beds at the mental health Acute Inpatient Unit in Warrnambool, improving access to high-quality treatment and care.

This builds on the 179 new mental health beds delivered last Budget, including the 16 at Barwon Health's McKellar Centre.

We're also investing \$17 million to provide people living in rural and regional areas better access to clinical outreach services. This investment will roll out additional services across the state, including nine new sites in Bairnsdale, Hamilton, Horsham, Echuca, Swan Hill, Wangaratta, Bass Coast, Central Gippsland and West Gippsland.

The Andrews Labor Government will also deliver further funding for the successful Hospital Outreach Post-suicidal Engagement (HOPE) program.

This investment will continue support for the successful HOPE program, ensuring the three regional sites funded in last year's Budget can continue caring for their communities.

# EDUCATION

Our schools are the heart and soul of our regional communities.

It's why over the past six years, the Andrews Labor Government has delivered \$21.6 billion to give our kids a quality education, including in regional Victoria.

It's also an investment that has created thousands of new jobs.

This Budget continues this approach – investing \$1.6 billion in new schools, as well as maintenance and upgrades to existing schools across the state.

This investment is expected to support around 3 500 jobs – investing in local kids, and backing local workers.

A further \$716 million is invested in school programs and support for our teaching workforce.

We're also continuing to deliver on our promise, funding three-year-old kinder for every Victorian child.

As we do, we're creating opportunities for thousands and thousands of Victorians, including in regional Victoria.

It means every dollar of investment delivers a double benefit – creating jobs, and caring for Victorians.

## New and upgraded regional schools

The Andrews Labor Government is making sure kids have the classrooms and learning spaces they deserve – wherever they live.

Last Budget, we delivered the biggest single investment in our regional schools, upgrading 44 regional schools and 10 specialist schools as part of a \$385 million Budget boost.

Building on this investment, we are providing a further \$94 million to upgrade 17 schools across regional Victoria – as well as expanding capacity to meet enrolment demand at Drouin, in time for the 2024 school year.

We're also giving local families certainty, planning the upgrade of Verney Road School in Shepparton.

Regional schools will also benefit from investments including:

- » \$188 million to deliver maintenance upgrades at schools across our state
- » \$105 million for relocatable buildings to meet the needs of growing schools and provide additional functional spaces for learning

This Budget also invests \$20 million to support the work of our Tech Schools, including in Ballarat, Bendigo, Geelong and Gippsland.

As part of this investment, funding will expand virtual delivery capabilities as well as pilot a new mobile delivery model for students in remote areas of Gippsland, connecting more secondary students to the skills and jobs of the future.



## Supporting the mental health and wellbeing of our students

As we continue work to ensure more young Victorians are getting the mental health support they need, we know that our schools are integral to our effort – particularly in rural and regional areas.

This Budget invests \$277 million to deliver a comprehensive range of reforms that will put student health, mental health and wellbeing at the centre of our schools.

Our new School Mental Health Fund will allow schools to select and implement mental health and wellbeing support that best meets the needs of their students, while connecting with specialist services where required.

The Fund will be rolled out to all regional and rural government schools first, beginning in Term 3, 2022.

The Mental Health in Primary Schools pilot will also be expanded to include 90 government schools and 10 non-government schools – including in regional Victoria – supporting 100 jobs.

This builds on the investment already made in mental health practitioners in government secondary and specialist secondary school campuses.

And we're continuing to roll out professional learning and coaching for teachers on positive behaviour, to help them identify and effectively support students who might need extra help.

The Doctors in Secondary Schools program will also continue, giving students at participating secondary schools access to primary healthcare through school.

## Ensuring every student can be their best

Every parent wants their child to be happy, healthy and to have every opportunity in life.

That means being able to rely on a great local school and know their children are getting the most out of their education.

Last Budget included a \$1.6 billion investment to transform how we support students with disability and their families, doubling the number of students receiving extra support, including kids with autism, dyslexia or complex behaviours.

With this Budget, the Andrews Labor Government is continuing to reduce barriers for students with disability, including:

- » \$25 million to provide transport assistance for eligible students to attend school
- » \$15 million to improve access to school facilities for students with disability and additional needs, including ramps and handrails, alterations to toilets and showers, and technology for students with vision or hearing impairments
- » \$10 million to make our schools more inclusive, delivering playgrounds, outdoor sensory areas and quiet spaces

A further Budget boost will deliver \$39 million to improve outcomes for Koorie children, including a co-design initiative with community on how we can better support students. Funding will also expand the Koorie Pre-School Assistants program to four new locations, including in regional Victoria.

## The best start in life: three-year-old kinder

We know a great early education is a big part of a great start in life – with benefits that last into the school years and beyond.

In this Budget, we're continuing to deliver on our promise, funding three-year-old kinder for every Victorian child.

The roll-out, which began in regional Victoria, will now reach every community in our state.

As a result, kids will have access to at least five hours a week of a funded kinder program, on offer at around 2 600 long day care and standalone services.

This reform will also save families money, with an average saving of around \$1 150 a year for five hours a week of kinder, and \$3 500 when the roll-out is completed in 2029. Around a quarter of families will be able to access low or no-cost programs at a stand-alone service.

By 2029, the program will be scaled up to deliver the full 15 hours a week to families across Victoria.

With the roll-out requiring more than 6 000 extra teachers and educators, this investment is also creating opportunities for thousands and thousands of Victorians – including in regional Victoria.

## Supporting our teachers

Victoria's regional teachers give our kids their all.

As a Government, we understand how important this work is and the profound difference they can make in the lives of their students.

That's why with this Budget, we're investing \$185 million to support our teaching workforce.

This includes \$148 million to establish the new Victorian Academy of Teaching and Leadership, which will provide support to teachers across the state.

The Victorian Academy of Teaching and Leadership will include seven regional learning centres located in Bairnsdale, Ballarat, Bendigo, Geelong, Mildura, Moe and Shepparton – ensuring rural and regional teachers are able to access professional development opportunities regardless of their location.

Building on the work of the Bastow Institute of Educational Leadership, the Academy will be dedicated to the professional learning and development of our teachers.

The Academy's flagship Teaching Excellence Program will enable teachers to advance their skills by drawing on the latest research.

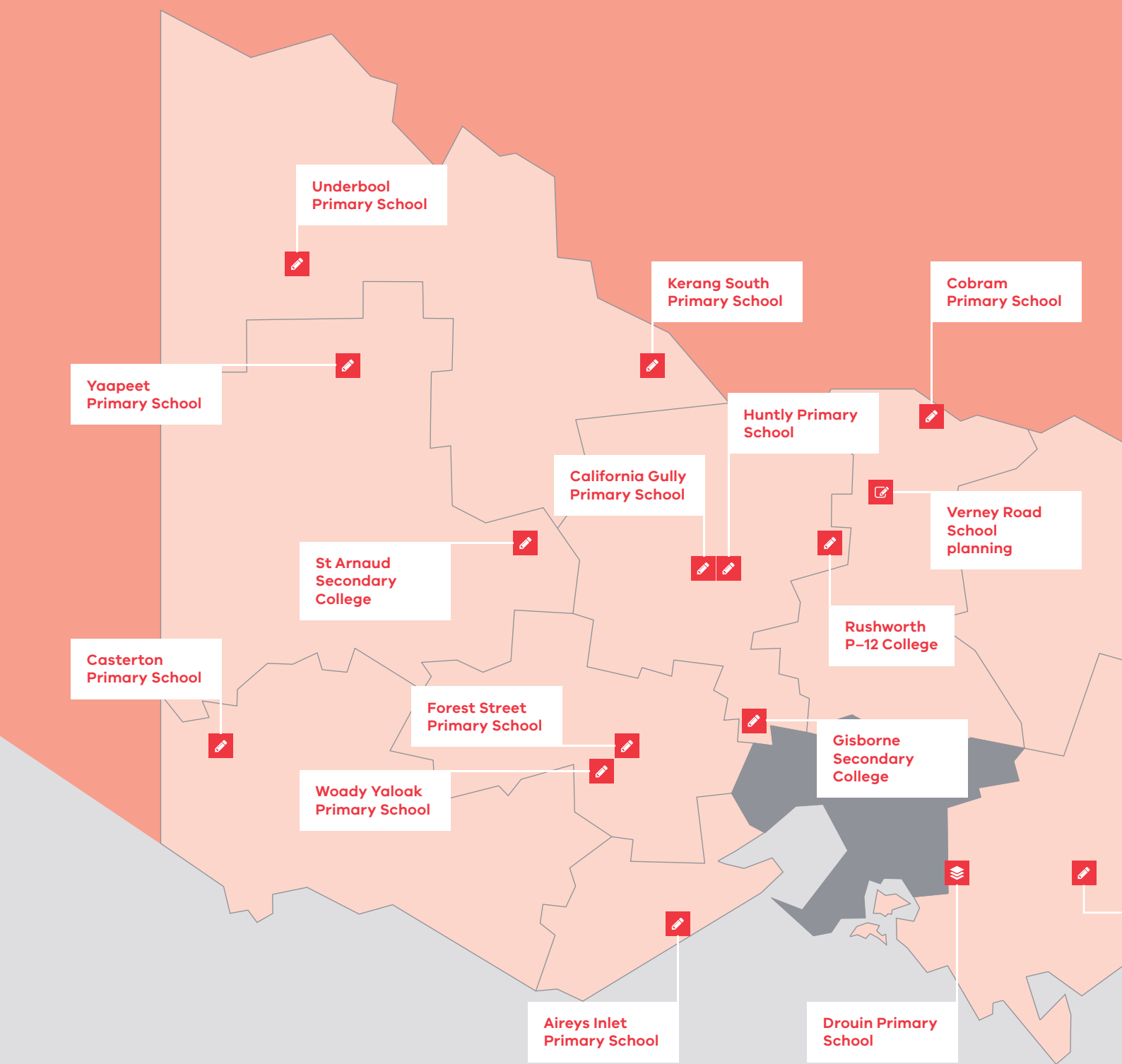
It's an investment in our teachers – and an investment in our kids.

This funding also includes:

- » \$20 million for Turnaround Teams to work intensively with schools in improving student outcomes
- » \$4.8 million to equip an additional 95 teaching students to work in schools in disadvantaged areas and further support school-based mentors



# REGIONAL SCHOOLS





## PLANNING FOR SCHOOLS

- » Verney Road School and specialist provision across the Shepparton region

## SCHOOL UPGRADES

- » Aireys Inlet Primary School
- » California Gully Primary School
- » Casterton Primary School
- » Cobram Primary School
- » Forest Street Primary School
- » Gisborne Secondary College
- » Huntly Primary School
- » Kerang South Primary School
- » Mount Beauty Primary School
- » Orbost Regeneration
- » Rushworth P-12 College
- » Sale College
- » St Arnaud Secondary College
- » Traralgon (Stockdale Road) Primary School
- » Underbool Primary School
- » Woody Yaloak Primary School
- » Yaapeet Primary School

## SCHOOL UPGRADES – GROWTH FOR 2024

- » Drouin Primary School

## LAND ACQUISITION FOR NEW SCHOOLS

- » Mitchell Shire



**Mount Beauty  
Primary School**

**Orbost schools  
regeneration**

**Sale College**



**Stockdale Road  
Primary School  
Traralgon**



Planning for schools



School upgrade



School upgrade (growth for 2024)

# HEALTH

Last year drove home the importance of great local healthcare – and the dedicated people who look after us all.

This Budget invests \$7.1 billion to continue building a health system that will ensure Victorians receive compassionate, world-class healthcare – closer to home.

It also means that as we continue to recover from the pandemic, we're ensuring our health services are equipped to meet the unprecedented levels of demand we're seeing across the country.

Not only will this investment ensure care when it's needed, it is also creating and supporting new jobs.

From our doctors and nurses, to cooks, cleaners, support staff and construction workers – this Budget will give more people in regional Victoria the security of a job.

It's an investment in Victorian workers – and the health and wellbeing of every Victorian.

## Building world-class regional hospitals

Over the past year, our hospitals and local healthcare services have been at the heart of our communities.

This Budget continues to invest in our local hospitals – and the health of our regional communities.

That includes providing the care kids and families can count on, with \$20 million to build a dedicated children's emergency department at the University Hospital Geelong.

A further \$95 million will deliver a new two-level building at Maryborough Hospital. The building will include a day surgery, birthing suites, imaging and pathology services, and urgent care, and will support over 330 jobs at the peak of construction.

Building on \$470 million funded since 2016, this Budget invests an additional \$20 million in the Regional Health Infrastructure Fund. This includes funding to plan for the future redevelopment of the Mildura Base Hospital.

From big projects to small, this landmark Fund is helping our regional health services provide the very best of care to their communities.

We are also investing \$65 million to rebuild the Glenview Community Care aged care facility in Rutherglen, and plan and design for the future redevelopment of the Camperdown and Cohuna public sector aged care facilities.





## Care closer to home

When a loved one gets sick, families deserve peace of mind that the very best care is just around the corner.

That's why we're upgrading the community hospital at Phillip Island and delivering a new one for Torquay, as part of an overall \$556 million investment in 10 community hospitals across our state.

With planning and design work well underway, this investment will kick-start construction – supporting over 1 500 peak construction jobs across Victoria.

Not only will it help get more Victorians into work, it'll ensure these local communities have care they can count on.

This Budget also provides \$759 million to deliver more paramedics, more triage care and support staff for Ambulance Victoria, as well as targeted funding to improve flow of patients in our busy emergency departments.

The investment will also support the opening of new beds in health services across the state, supported by Victoria's hardworking healthcare workforce.

Our support for Ambulance Victoria will also provide new funding for more than 200 paramedics, helping ensure our ambulance services can respond rapidly in emergencies.

It includes an extra \$266 million to support the work of Ambulance Victoria, with additional triage nurses, an expansion to secondary triage services and non-emergency patient transfers.

This funding will also kick-start planning for new ambulance stations at Marong and Armstrong Creek.

It will also fund a \$204 million investment to bolster Ambulance Victoria's resources through programs like Telehealth, and will deliver ongoing operational improvements across the state.

Recognising the need for more alcohol and other drug (AOD) services – particularly in regional Victoria – this Budget will deliver nearly \$38 million to build and open new residential rehabilitation beds, including new services in Corio, Wangaratta and Traralgon, and boost community-based treatment services.

## Supporting more Victorians to start a family

The Andrews Labor Government will help more Victorian families experience the joys of parenthood, helping to cover the costs of in-vitro fertilisation (IVF).

IVF can help people who want to become parents achieve their dreams. But with an initial IVF cycle costing an average of \$5 500, for many it's unaffordable and out of reach.

It's why this Budget delivers \$70 million to establish free and public fertility care services for 4 000 Victorian patients each year when the program is fully operational.

Access to public IVF services will begin in 2022, helping more Victorians become parents, without the high costs.

And because we want this opportunity to extend across our state, this investment will see our public IVF services work with a regional health service.

This investment will also deliver Australia's first public sperm and egg bank, helping even more Victorians start a family of their own.



# JOBS

Over the past six years, we've made jobs our priority.

And in regional Victoria we've seen more than 74 000 jobs created since November 2014 – the fastest growth rate of all the states.

As we continue our rebuild, jobs – good, secure, meaningful jobs – must be at the heart of our recovery.

That includes supporting our skills sector to help more regional Victorians train, retrain and find new opportunities.

Making sure regional voices are heard at the heart of government.

And ensuring our projects and policies create good jobs for the future – and for our future generations.

This focus will underpin our state's economic recovery.

Just as importantly, it'll help more Victorians find employment – and with it, security, stability and certainty.

## Delivering a double benefit

Our Big Build has been delivering the road, rail, schools and hospitals our state needs.

Since 2014, these investments have supported or will continue to support over 177 000 jobs.

Now, as we recover from the pandemic, we're using that same approach: making sure every dollar of investment is delivering a 'double benefit' – making Victoria stronger, and supporting good, stable jobs for Victorians.

Helping look after kids in care. Providing more support to victims of family violence.

Supporting those managing their mental health. Giving more Victorians the security of a home.

Together, the investments made by the Andrews Labor Government in this Budget will support an average of 38 000 jobs every year over the next four years.

With this Budget, we're creating jobs and caring for Victorians.

## Growing regional economies

This Budget continues our commitment to investing in regional communities – and creating regional jobs.

To maximise the impact of our investments in regional communities, \$5 million will continue the Growing Regional Opportunities for Work program and the Regional Community Leadership program.

These programs work with local businesses to create jobs and ensure that strong local leadership skills are fostered and used.

In Portland and the Glenelg Shire, we're also growing local industries and jobs with an investment of \$17 million to deliver:

- » Local freight road upgrades
- » Stage 2 of the Henty Employment Precinct infrastructure upgrades
- » The Portland Diversification Fund, ensuring we keep the local economy strong while also supporting new local jobs

Funding will also establish a Regional and Rural Victoria office in Portland to help get these projects up and running, and ensure direct community engagement.

This Budget also provides \$10 million to create new jobs in the Latrobe Valley, with funding for the Food Manufacturing Precinct on Alexanders Road in Morwell.

This will attract value-adding food businesses to the Valley and create more local jobs.

As part of an investment in the future of the city, the Government also intends to acquire Bendigo GovHub to retain public ownership of this important civic asset.

Regional employers will also benefit from reduced payroll tax rates earlier, with the rate reducing to a quarter of the metropolitan rate from 1 July 2021.

Along with the 50 per cent stamp duty concession for commercial and industrial property in regional Victoria – brought forward as part of our *Jobs Plan* – this will help businesses to invest, relocate and expand in the regions, creating more jobs.





## Supporting our visitor economy

A rebounding visitor economy is critical to our recovery, and to growing regional jobs and supporting regional communities. This Budget includes:

- » \$10 million for distillery door grants to support and enhance Victoria's distilleries, including many located in regional Victoria
- » \$8.9 million for Visitor Economy Partnerships to support local ideas and initiatives to bring more visitors to regional Victoria
- » \$1.7 million for Business Events Victoria to attract more business events to regional Victoria, while supporting local jobs
- » Additional funding to promote everything our regional communities have to offer, attracting more visitors and supporting local jobs

## Investing in our Creative State

Because of our regional communities, Victoria is renowned as the Creative State.

With a \$288 million investment across the state, this Budget continues to invest in the creativity of our regional communities, while also driving the creation of new jobs.

We're providing funding to enhance the visitor experience and keep Geelong Arts Centre's programming active during the final stage of its redevelopment project.

This Budget also provides \$4.5 million for content development and touring programs to highlight the creative talent of regional and outer metropolitan communities and encourage more visitors.

Funding of \$1.3 million will support the creation of the Emporium Creative Hub in Bendigo – providing a new creative space for local artists.

Other investments include:

- » \$11 million for the Music Works program to support musicians, support staff, venues, and allied organisations accelerate the recovery and growth of Victoria's music scene
- » \$790 000 for the Tech Connect program to build technical capacity and capability in Victoria's regional performing arts centres
- » Developing and promoting First Peoples' work through traineeships, mentoring and leadership programs

A dedicated \$121 million will transform the Victorian screen industry by growing jobs, developing homegrown talent, and promoting our people and content to the world.

## Backing regional skills

As we continue to invest in the services our state needs, we are supporting the creation of thousands of new jobs.

And with this Budget we're investing \$384 million in our skills sector to make sure it is Victorians who are first in line.

An investment of \$86 million will establish the new Victorian Skills Authority, bringing together industry, providers and communities to leverage local knowledge.

The Victorian Skills Authority will provide a strengthened local presence across regional Victoria – by connecting industry, education providers and communities to give locals a voice in designing training and ensuring workers have the skills they need.

With a comprehensive training system that prepares students from day one of training through to the first day on the job, this investment will help get thousands more Victorians back to work.

We're investing \$209 million to further support our TAFE and training sector. This investment includes:

- » Up to 12 200 extra subsidised training places in our TAFE and training system to ensure all Victorians can access training
- » Providing 4 800 additional places in digital literacy and employment skills courses to help get more Victorians back into work
- » Increasing the funding provided to TAFEs and other registered training providers to maintain high-quality training across Victoria

We're also delivering \$11 million through the Building Better TAFEs Fund to redevelop GOTAFE's Archer Street Shepparton campus.

This Budget will help support more students in regional Victoria find work, preparing them with the training and skills they need.

## Regional partnerships

No one knows a community better than the people who call it home.

That's why we're continuing to invest in the Regional Partnerships program, which provides a voice for local residents, businesses, community groups and councils at the heart of government.

With an investment of \$5.1 million we'll deliver the programs and projects that matter to these communities, through the Partnerships Development Fund, to boost local job creation and community connection in regional Victoria.

This Budget also delivers on recently identified Regional Partnerships priorities, including:

- » Providing a Jobs and Skills Centre Bus for the Mallee region
- » Improving the health of people in the Loddon Campaspe region through the Healthy Heart of Victoria initiative
- » Funding for Live 4 Life and Be Well in the Ranges to support the mental health and wellbeing of regional Victorians
- » Supporting the diversification of Portland's economy
- » Implementing revitalisation projects in Seymour
- » Supporting businesses in Goulburn to capitalise on procurement opportunities

The Government is also investing \$2 million in the successful Community Leadership program and \$3 million in the Growing Regional Opportunities for Work (GROW) program – helping create jobs for people who experience barriers to employment while investing in local leadership to support recovery.





## Supporting our farmers

Our farming communities are integral to our state's identity and our economy.

It's why this Budget provides \$20 million to deliver on our commitment to position Victoria as a leader in low-emissions agriculture, including accelerating research in emissions reducing technologies. This investment will also co-fund programs to increase drought resilience.

Victoria has built a reputation across the globe for high-quality produce – this Budget backs our standing by investing \$12 million to strengthen agriculture traceability systems.

This includes the establishment of a traceability information hub, the development of new systems to prove the origin and quality of Victorian produce, and campaigns to promote the paddock-to-plate journey of Victoria's produce.

This Budget also invests \$6.4 million for the Victorian Fruit Fly Strategy. Fruit fly poses a significant threat to the horticulture industry, and the new strategy will empower industry and the community to take the lead on control programs.

Recognising the critical importance of water to our farming communities, \$8.4 million will support irrigators and Traditional Owners, including grants for infrastructure projects to enable farms to modernise and optimise water efficiency.

A further \$2.5 million is being provided to support water compliance activities.

Since its establishment in 1986, the Victorian Rural Women's Network has supported women who are finding new and innovative ways to grow and improve their communities. There's \$1.4 million to continue the network's work.

Rural communities will be further supported with a \$5.8 million investment in the Rural Financial Counselling Service, recognising the key role the service has played in assisting farmers to recover from the impacts of drought, bushfires and the pandemic.

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This Budget provides \$20 million to deliver on our commitment to position Victoria as a leader in low-emissions agriculture

## ROAD AND RAIL

Our roads and rail are vital in connecting Victorians to work, to study, to market and most importantly, to each other.

That's particularly true in rural and regional Victoria.

At the same time, and over the past six years, our \$80 billion investment in transport infrastructure has also ensured new opportunities – giving thousands of Victorians the security and stability of a job.

This Budget continues the Andrews Labor Government's commitment to connecting regional communities, at the same as creating new regional jobs.

### New trains supporting local jobs

In good news for commuters and good news for workers, this Budget invests \$986 million to build 25 brand-new, modern X'Trapolis 2.0 trains and supporting infrastructure for our metropolitan network.

Not only will it get Victorians home sooner, it's an investment that will also create hundreds of new local jobs.

These trains will be made in Victoria, with major works completed in Ballarat, and will include a minimum 60 per cent local content requirement.

This will support local manufacturing and supply chains, with the investment expected to support close to 750 jobs.

With this investment, we'll be building trains for Victoria – built by Victorians.

### Public transport Victorians can rely on

Last year we were reminded there's nothing more important than spending time with the people you love.

It's why we're transforming our public transport system – investing in the projects that will get regional Victorians home, sooner.

This Budget continues that transformation, investing to keep our public transport network moving, including:

- » \$613 million to support the reliability of V/Line train services, including maintenance across the regional rail network
- » \$11 million to upgrade and reopen the Lydiard Street level crossing in Ballarat
- » \$3.1 million for operating and maintenance works on regional public transport assets
- » Funding to upgrade the South Dynon train maintenance facility to continue to maintain our regional trains, ensuring a reliable journey for regional passengers









## Upgrading our regional roads

Our road network is vital to connecting regional communities. That's why over the past six years, the Andrews Labor Government has invested in building and improving our regional road network.

This Budget provides a further \$265 million for our roads, including \$44 million to further plan, upgrade and maintain our regional roads.

This includes:

- » Bridge structure renewals and maintenance at crossings along the Murray River
- » An improved intersection at Western Freeway and Learmonth Road in Ballarat
- » Safety upgrades at Black Forest Drive, Woodend
- » Planning for corridor improvements to the Surf Coast Highway, and the Bellarine Link Stage 1 at Geelong
- » Planning of coastal protection works at Bunurong Road, Cape Paterson
- » Improvements to enhance traffic flows at Barwon Heads

We're also investing \$42 million for a safer and more productive road network for freight, upgrading local bridges and improving access for heavy vehicles across our state's road network.

This Budget also invests \$1.4 million to deliver improvements in the way our roads are maintained and managed across 11 small rural shire councils.

The new Road Safety Strategy also invests another \$187 million in our regional road network.

The Andrews Labor Government will tackle the most dangerous behaviours on our roads, including drink-driving, speeding and mobile telephone use, with more safety cameras, additional enforcement and improved technology – all with the goal of reducing the risk of death and serious injuries on our roads.

This Budget also invests \$3.6 million to encourage the transfer of freight from road to rail across Victoria, reducing congestion and improving safety for all road users.

# STRONGER COMMUNITIES

In Victoria, we've shown that if we look out for each other, we can achieve anything.

That's why with this Budget, the Andrews Labor Government is investing in the projects and priorities that further strengthen our regional communities.

The local sports clubs that bind us together.

The emergency services that keep us safe.

The open spaces that matter to local families.

And the investments that will make our state stronger and fairer.

This Budget invests in Victoria's communities – and the people who call them home.

## Investing in what makes our regional communities strong

We know that our investments in sports and recreation help make Victorians healthier, creates jobs – and creates stronger, more connected communities.

This Budget invests \$623 million for community infrastructure that supports the strength of our neighbourhoods and communities.

This includes \$55 million to deliver local sports infrastructure upgrades across our state, including extending the Female Friendly Facilities Fund to deliver community pavilions, changerooms, playing grounds and courts.

Giving all Victorians an opportunity to relax and unwind, funding of \$32 million will also ensure local families and communities can access parks for outdoor recreation.

An additional \$3.6 million will support the continued free public Wi-Fi network services in the Ballarat and Bendigo central business districts.

This Budget also builds on our significant support for recreational boaters – like reinvesting boating fees back into communities – by providing \$6 million over two years to improve boating safety and accessibility at Warrnambool and Lake Bullen Merri.

Funding of \$5.9 million will support new fish hatchery operations in Shepparton to produce up to 1.6 million in additional fish stock every year, supporting recreational fishing and creating local jobs.

Funding of \$5 million will also deliver upgrades at Apollo Bay and Lakes Entrance to improve boating safety.





## Helping our regional communities recover

Our regional communities have faced drought, bushfires and a pandemic.

And they have stood together to rebuild and recover.

Last year, we established Bushfire Recovery Victoria, a permanent and dedicated agency to work directly with bushfire-affected communities.

We also provided \$303 million last year to help impacted Victorians recover.

The Andrews Labor Government will continue our commitment to these communities, with \$104 million in dedicated support.

This includes continued case support, financial counselling, mental health support, legal aid and business support for local residents.

Funding will also go towards restoring waterways, rebuilding visitor facilities in local parks, and looking after local wildlife.

## More support to keep children and families safe

The Andrews Labor Government wants to make sure every child grows up happy, healthy and supported.

This Budget continues our investment across Victoria to support vulnerable children and families, delivering \$1.2 billion in support.

This includes \$1 billion to expand the child protection workforce, increase out-of-home care placements and provide a range of other supports to improve outcomes for vulnerable Victorian families, making sure more children are getting the support they need, while also supporting 246 new child protection practitioners statewide.

As part of this investment, a new trial – Frontline Victoria – will also create a new fast-tracked path for degree-qualified career changers to move into a role within the child and families services system – strengthening the workforce and strengthening support for our kids.

A further \$354 million will support our continuing work to keep women and children safe.

This includes:

- » \$97 million to support statewide enhanced family violence information sharing and risk assessment
- » \$78 million to expand the network of specialist family violence courts, including locations in Geelong and the Latrobe Valley
- » \$49 million to support victim survivors in emergency accommodation, statewide 24/7 crisis services and other supports to victim survivors of family violence and sexual assault
- » \$9 million for an Aboriginal family violence refuge in Horsham to provide accessible and culturally appropriate support services for survivors of family violence

An additional \$34 million will ensure our most vulnerable kids can access early childhood education and care. This funding will expand early intervention, and trial new and intensive support for children and their families.

This Budget also delivers \$7 million to strengthen youth participation and connection through projects including the Latrobe Youth Space, Aboriginal youth mentoring programs and the Regional Presence Project in Ballarat, Morwell, Swan Hill and Warrnambool.

Together, these investments are creating new jobs, and caring for Victorians.



## Protecting our environment

People living in our regional communities understand better than anyone the need to preserve our environment – safeguarding it for future generations and protecting regional livelihoods.

This Budget continues our investment in environment protection, ensuring we pass on a healthy environment to our children and grandchildren – and a healthy economy with job opportunities for regional Victorians.

We're investing \$250 million in protecting and preserving our environment, including funding for our volunteers and local community organisations.

This includes grants to help protect threatened species, improve local habitats and strengthen our biodiversity. Landcare, the Port Phillip Bay Fund and other local organisations will share in this funding, supporting the work of their volunteers.

Funding will also deliver initiatives to protect Victorian wildlife, through community-driven action, pest and weed management and ongoing support for Trust for Nature.

The health of Victoria's regional waterways and wetlands will also be improved with funding for river rehabilitation and protection works, targeted at sites that are important for tourism and recreation.

And our \$12 million investment in tackling roadside weeds and pests will stop the spread of invasive weeds along rural roadsides, which benefits our rural and regional communities, by preventing the spread of fire and helping to safeguard the livelihoods of our farmers.

With these investments we're protecting our environment – and the future of our state.

## Modernising our local fire and emergency services

The Andrews Labor Government is continuing to back our police and emergency services workers with the support they need – so they can support their communities.

That includes \$272 million to upgrade the vital communication technologies our emergency services need to keep Victorians safe in an emergency, including funding for Forest Fire Management Victoria and the Country Fire Authority (CFA) to upgrade their radios.

A further \$28 million will support facility upgrades for our emergency service organisations. This includes replacement CFA stations at Serpentine, Metcalfe and Irymple. Funding will also provide a new Port Fairy Victorian State Emergency Service (SES) facility, as well as redevelop Life Saving Victoria's Wonthaggi clubhouse and Point Lonsdale beach base.

Funding of \$384 million will continue the Reducing Bushfire Risk program and Safer Together strategy, reducing the impact of bushfires on Victorian communities, the economy and the environment.

This Budget also backs our men and women in blue, with funding of \$29 million to replace the Benalla Police Station with a new state-of-the-art facility, helping to keep this local community safe.





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**Victorian Budget 2021/22**

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