

Department of Families, Fairness and Housing strategic plan 2025–2029

To receive this document in another format, email Strategic Planning [strategy@dffh.vic.gov.au](mailto:strategy@dffh.vic.gov.au)

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# Secretary’s message

Our department is proud to mark another year of delivering services to Victorians.

We know that many people in our community are doing it tough. Now, more than ever, people experiencing vulnerability, discrimination and disadvantage need our support.

This support includes:

* caring for children and families in need
* providing housing and homelessness services
* responding to family violence and sexual assault.

We do this work across our portfolios:

* Ageing
* Carers and Volunteers
* Children
* Disability
* Equality
* Housing and Building
* Prevention of Family Violence
* Veterans
* Women and
* Youth.

Our *2025–2029 strategic plan* (the plan) sets out how we will continue to provide these vital services for Victorians.

It guides us as we further our vision of safe and supported children and families, in stable homes and strong communities.

To achieve the vision, we are working towards the following objectives:

* Aboriginal voice, knowledge and cultural leadership drive Aboriginal policy, legislation and system reform.
* Children, young people and families are safe, strong and supported.
* Victorian communities are safe, fair, inclusive and resilient.
* All Victorians have stable, affordable and appropriate housing.
* Our social services system is integrated, effective, person-centred and sustainable.

To strengthen these systems, we will continue to deepen our partnerships with communities, with services and across government.

We will work together to deliver integrated, sustainable and responsive evidence-led support that meets the challenges we face.

The plan also furthers our work to transfer control and decision-making power to First Peoples. As part of this, we remain steadfastly committed to the truth-telling process and the work of the Yoorrook Justice Commission. We will equip our staff to listen and act. We will hold ourselves accountable to the Commission’s work.

In addition, we recognise that our policies and programs must reflect the diversity of our communities. We must deliver fair and responsive outcomes and remove barriers. This means considering the ways that intersecting factors such as gender, culture, age, disability, sexuality and socioeconomic background shape people’s experiences.

Our workforce is central to achieving this vision. Our people include many staff in frontline and regional roles who provide the backbone of our services.

We want our workforce to thrive in safe, inclusive and supportive workplaces where diverse experiences are valued.

It is my privilege to lead this department as we work to promote fairness, build resilience and shape a future where every Victorian can thrive.

**Peta McCammon  
Secretary  
Department of Families, Fairness and Housing**

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# Acknowledgement of First Peoples

We acknowledge the Traditional Owners and Custodians of the lands and waters on which we live, work and play.

We acknowledge all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples across the state.

We pay respect to and recognise the contributions of their Elders past and present, and other First Peoples, who have fought tirelessly for the rights of their communities.

The sovereignty of First Peoples has never been ceded. Their strength and resilience as the world’s oldest living culture is enduring.

# Commitment to self-determination

Our department is committed to achieving First Peoples self-determination because we know it works, it’s what community wants, and it is a human right. We endeavour to enable self-determination consistent with the Victorian Aboriginal Affairs Framework and welcome accountability against our progression. We deliver our commitments through our contributions to Closing the Gap, Truth and Treaty and leading First Peoples strategies established across our portfolios to achieve real and tangible First Peoples outcomes.

The right for First Peoples to freely determine their political status, and to pursue social, cultural and economic development based on their values and ways of life, is enshrined in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. Self-determination exists because First Peoples have lost those rights, and to achieve meaningful and lasting change we must listen to First Peoples across the state when they tell us what they need for themselves, their families and their communities to thrive. We acknowledge the strong and ongoing advocacy of First Peoples and the significant impact this has on our work, acknowledging that best outcomes for First peoples are achieved when informed by their knowledge and expertise.

We endeavour to embed cultural safety and self-determination principles in all we do, consistent with the Victorian Government’s Victorian Aboriginal Affairs Framework. This provides an architecture for government departments to report annually on progress towards transforming government systems and structures to enable self-determination.

We will hold ourselves accountable to First Peoples’ decisions on matters that affect their lives and communities. This includes through Victoria’s commitment to the National Agreement on Closing the Gap. We acknowledge that Victoria’s Treaty process will have wide-ranging impacts for our work with First Peoples. Treaty will provide a framework for transferring decision-making power and resources to Traditional Owners. It will recognise the sovereignty of the First Peoples who have been practising their own law, lore and cultural authority since before the State of Victoria was formed. We commit to working proactively to support the aspirations of the First Peoples’ Assembly of Victoria.

In this document, the term ‘Aboriginal’ is used to refer to both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

# About this plan

The strategic plan outlines our objectives and priority initiatives for 2025 to 2029. It fulfils the medium-term planning requirements for the Department of Treasury and Finance’s *Resource management framework 2025.*

The plan is updated on an annual basis to reflect the department’s current priorities. It informs our investments, measurement, reporting and other activities.

For our staff, the strategic plan sets out our roles and functions as a department. It includes the priority initiatives we will deliver over the next 4 years.

The plan guides our divisions, portfolios and areas in their work. It also sets out our approach to partnership and collaboration with our stakeholders. This includes our actions to strengthen the community and social services sector. These actions help our partner organisations do their important work.

For the Victorian community, the plan reaffirms our commitment to a vision of safe and supported children and families, in stable homes and strong communities.

It acknowledges the opportunities and challenges we will respond to over the coming years to achieve this vision.

# Statement of direction

## Vision

Safe and supported children and families, in stable homes and strong communities.

## How we will achieve it

Standing up for inclusion and equality, preventing harm and discrimination, and delivering social and housing support to Victorians who need it.

## Objectives

* Aboriginal voice, knowledge and cultural leadership drive Aboriginal policy, legislation and system reform.
* Children, young people and families are safe, strong and supported.
* Victorian communities are safe, fair, inclusive and resilient.
* All Victorians have stable, affordable and appropriate housing.
* Our social services system is integrated, effective, person-centred and sustainable.

## Guiding principles

Cultural safety, client voice and agency, an intersectional lens, lived and living experience and evidence led.

## Enablers

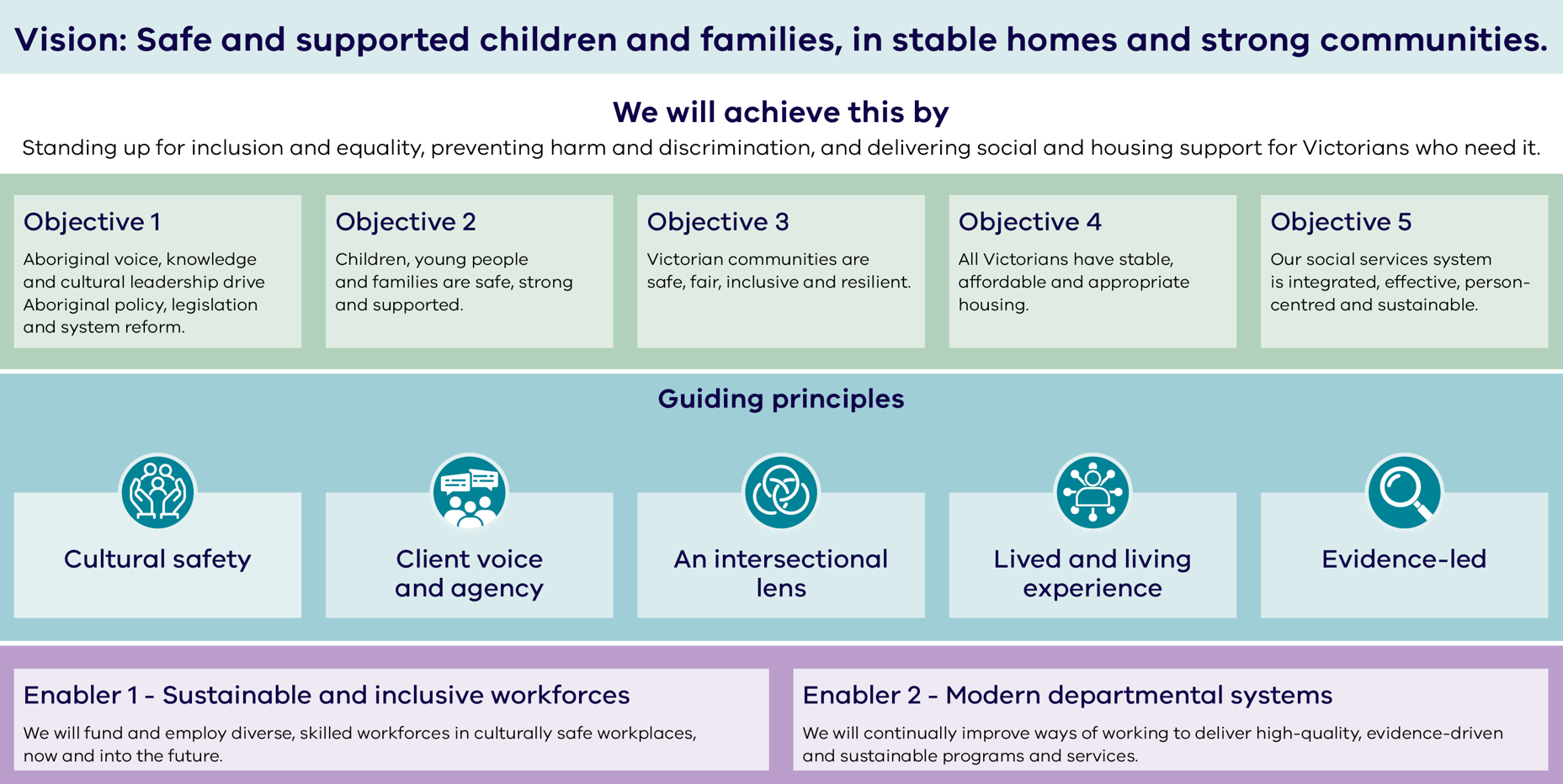
### Sustainable and inclusive workforces

We will fund and employ diverse, skilled workforces in culturally ​safe workplaces, now and into the future.

### Modern departmental systems

We will continually improve ways of working to deliver high-quality, evidence-driven and sustainable programs and services.

Figure 1: DFFH statement of direction



# Our department

The department’s vision is safe and supported children and families, in stable homes and strong communities.

We aim to achieve this by:

* standing up for inclusion, human rights and equity
* preventing harm and discrimination
* delivering social and affordable housing and support to Victorians who need it.

We have a broad remit that spans:

* prevention and response
* policy leadership and program and service delivery
* statewide and place-based initiatives.

Our department’s complexity is a strength that allows us to meet the diverse needs of Victorians across the state.

We support ministers across 10 portfolios:

* Children (delivered in partnership with the Department of Health and the Department of Education)
* Disability
* Ageing (delivered in partnership with the Department of Health)
* Carers and Volunteers
* Equality
* Housing and Building (delivered in partnership with Department of Transport and Planning)
* Prevention of Family Violence
* Veterans
* Women
* Youth.

We are leaders in promoting an equitable society that champions inclusion, removes barriers to participation and fosters equal opportunity for all.

We prioritise intersectional approaches to eliminating inequity by:

* celebrating diversity in Victorian communities
* advocating for better access to services and programs and protections against discrimination.

We work hard to prevent violence, vilification and harm and protect people from disadvantage.

We are building new housing because everyone should have a home that keeps them safe.

We also invest in early intervention and prevention to respond to challenges before they become crises.

We work closely with communities to foster connection and resilience.

We deliver vital support to people at critical points in their lives.

We ensure children and families are cared for.

We provide accommodation for Victorians who need it. We do this as a landlord and owner of social, affordable and specialist disability accommodation. We also fund and provide:

* child protection and family services
* safe and affordable housing and homelessness support
* disability services and support
* family violence and sexual assault services and programs.

We support communities during and after major emergencies. And we provide grants and concessions for Victorians when they need it most.

We fund and partner with the community sector to ensure high standards of care, safeguard the rights of clients and ensure that supports are easy to access and navigate.

We share our responsibility to serve Victorians with other departments.

We recognise the intersections between social and housing services and the justice, health, education and other systems.

To promote integrated, responsive and accessible government services and programs, we seek to continually improve our coordination, information sharing and advocacy with our stakeholders.

In every part of our work, we are guided by these principles:

* cultural safety
* client voice and agency
* an intersectional lens
* lived and living experience
* evidence led.

## Our divisions

### Aboriginal Self-Determination and Outcomes

The Aboriginal Self-Determination and Outcomes (ASDO) division is a critical pillar of the department. It has leadership, oversight and coordination functions relating to self-determination, Truth, Treaty and Closing the Gap.

ASDO prioritises First Peoples’ expertise, knowledge and experience. The division works in accordance with policy and legislative settings. These include the Victorian Aboriginal Affairs Framework, the National Closing the Gap Agreement, and the *Treaty Negotiation Framework*.

The division drives Aboriginal self-determination by ensuring First Peoples’ voice, ways of knowing, being and doing are embedded into the department’s decision-making processes.

### Children and Families

The Children and Families division supports the Children portfolio with policy and strategic advice, program design and management, and reform delivery. This also includes funding:

* statutory child protection services
* family support and parenting services
* care services
* specialist support services, including for young people leaving care
* initiatives supporting Aboriginal children and families.

The division ensures the safety and wellbeing of children and young people at risk of harm, abuse and neglect. It seeks to improve outcomes for all Victorians, particularly families and children experiencing disadvantage and vulnerability.

### Community Operations and Practice Leadership

The Community Operations and Practice Leadership division delivers vital child protection and public housing services directly to the Victorian community. The division operates in 4 geographical divisions across 17 areas. It stewards the broader government-funded community services sector by managing contracts and operational policy and funding frameworks.

The division responds to current and emerging place-based, population and community-wellbeing issues in:

* child and family services
* family violence and sexual assault services
* housing and homelessness
* disability
* emergency management
* community settings.

The division also responds to local and statewide emergencies and critical incidents.

### Corporate and Delivery Services

The Corporate and Delivery Services division is an enabling division that supports the department to serve Victorians. It delivers centralised:

* finance and human resources services
* health, safety and wellbeing services
* management of industrial relations and legal services
* feedback, freedom of information, integrity, risk and audit functions
* ministerial, cabinet and parliamentary services
* information technology services
* procurement, contracting and business service functions.

This division houses the Child Protection Litigation Office, which represents the Secretary in child protection applications. It provides legal advice and support for the most complex and sensitive child protection matters. This includes matters where the protection of a child is directly relevant to a Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal matter, the Federal Circuit Court and Family Court, and in criminal and intervention order proceedings.

### Disability, Fairness and Emergency Management

The Disability, Fairness and Emergency Management division supports Victorians by standing up for inclusion, human rights, equity and preventing harm, vilification and discrimination. The division does this through developing, reforming and implementing inclusive policies, programs and services. These improve social, economic and wellbeing outcomes, and they drive improved community safety, connectedness and wellbeing.

This includes:

* providing specialist disability homes, with more choice and control for people with a disability
* embedding lived experience in policies and processes
* partnering with the community sector
* fostering self-advocacy and creating opportunities for people to have a say on initiatives that affect them.

The division focuses on people with disability, complex needs, seniors, carers, volunteers, veterans, youth, women and LGBTIQA+ Victorians, and people and communities experiencing vulnerability.

Together with internal and external partners, it supports all Victorians – including those most at risk – before, during and after major emergencies.

To deliver this work, the division takes a nuanced and intersectional approach. Its initiatives consider the multiple, compounding forms of disadvantage that people experience.

The division leads work in:

* Community Inclusion, Veterans and Youth
* Disability Homes Victoria
* Disability Reform and Complex Needs
* Emergency Management
* Equality, Seniors, Women and Equity Strategy.

### Family Safety Victoria

Family Safety Victoria (FSV) has primary responsibility for the Prevention of Family Violence portfolio.

FSV leads policy, programs and initiatives to create a future where:

* all Victorians are safe, thriving and live free from violence
* children grow up in environments built on gender equality and respectful relationships
* families promote health, development and wellbeing.

The division is responsible for strategic policy, statewide reforms and system stewardship for family and sexual violence prevention and response.

This includes:

* primary prevention initiatives to change systems, structures, attitudes and behaviours that lead to violence
* improving outcomes for family violence and sexual assault victim survivors. This ensures victim survivors – including children and young people – get the help they need, when they need it
* keeping people who use family violence visible, accountable and motivated to change their behaviour
* undertaking whole-of-government family and sexual violence reform and measuring its impact
* building a more connected, inclusive and responsive family violence and sexual assault system across the state
* partnering with First Peoples to support a self-determined approach to preventing and responding to family and sexual violence
* ensuring the family violence and sexual assault system is inclusive, culturally safe and underpinned by the lived experience of victim survivors, including children and young people.

### Homes Victoria

Homes Victoria is responsible for the Housing and Building portfolio. It works towards making sure all Victorians have access to safe, stable and affordable housing.

Homes Victoria leads social housing policy, and delivery of social housing and homelessness programs.

Homes Victoria operates across government on a wide range of related social issues. It works closely with renters, industry, the not-for-profit sector, local government and local communities. It aims to maximise the social and economic benefits of investing in social and affordable housing.

Homes Victoria’s key responsibilities are to:

* steward, partner and fund the social housing and homelessness systems
* manage and maintain the government’s social housing assets, which provide homes for more than 116,000 Victorians
* renew and expand those assets by making sure the Victorian Government’s capital programs are delivered on budget and on time.

Homes Victoria is a public statutory authority established as a body corporate under the *Housing Act 1983*.It is treated as a public non-financial corporation. Homes Victoria’s Chief Executive Officer and staff report to the Secretary of the department.

### System Reform, Workforce and Engagement

The System Reform, Workforce and Engagement division drives whole-of-system reform across the department’s areas of portfolio responsibility. It delivers strategic, regulatory and workforce development initiatives.

The division works closely with operational areas, other departments, and sector and industry partners. The division leads budget strategy, strategic planning and corporate reporting across the department. It also oversees the Public Accounts and Estimates Committee process, and provides internal and external communications, community engagement and digital and media services.

System Reform, Workforce and Engagement’s key responsibilities are:

* community sector workforce development
* strategic and regulatory reform
* performance, evidence and analytics
* evaluation
* public engagement.

## Our people

Our vision for the state relies on the skills, expertise, responsiveness and capability of our people.

We aim to have skilled workforces wherever we are most needed. We want to lead the way in attraction, retention and wellbeing.

We foster safer, fairer and more inclusive workplaces. This ensures our people are engaged, high-performing and feel valued during all stages of their careers at the department.

We also ensure our people reflect the diverse communities we serve.

We are guided by the:

* *Aboriginal workforce strategy 2021–2026*
* *Aboriginal cultural safety framework*
* *Diversity and inclusion framework 2022–2027*
* *Gender equality action plan 2022–2025*
* Disability action plans.

We value the diversity of thought and lived experience expertise people bring to the workplace. This includes people’s different:

* ages
* caring responsibilities
* cultural and linguistic backgrounds
* disabilities
* race or ethnicity
* gender and gender identity
* religion and faith
* sexual orientation
* sex characteristics
* socioeconomic background.

Our people’s rich and varied perspectives help us support individuals, children and families, and communities.

## Our stakeholders

We work closely with many stakeholders to achieve our vision. This includes:

* funded service and program providers and community organisations
* Aboriginal organisations, Traditional Owners and other Aboriginal leaders, and Aboriginal staff
* local, state and Commonwealth government agencies
* peak bodies and advocates in the housing, social services, disability and community sectors
* people with lived and living experience, including service users
* LGBTIQA+ community-led organisations
* advisory groups that we support and facilitate.

We support the following portfolio entities:

* Respect Victoria (family violence prevention agency)
* Queen Victoria Women’s Centre Trust
* Shrine of Remembrance Trustees
* Victorian Veterans Council.

We work with and support our statutory entities:

* Social Services Regulator
* Commission for Children and Young People
* Victorian Disability Worker Commission, and Disability Worker Registration Board
* Disability Services Commissioner.

We also work closely with the:

* Commissioner for Gender Equality in the Public Sector
* Commissioner for LGBTIQA+ Communities
* Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission.

## Where we operate

The department delivers and funds social and housing services across Victoria.

We have more than 35 offices in 4 operational divisions spanning the state – North, South, East and West.

The department’s [office locations webpage](mailto:https://www.dffh.vic.gov.au/dffh-office-locations)[[1]](#footnote-1) provides more information about our offices and how to contact us.

# Our current environment

Over the next 4 years, we will focus on the following new and emerging challenges  
 and opportunities.

## Aboriginal self-determination

Our Aboriginal Self-Determination and Outcomes division aims to elevate First Peoples’ leadership. The division also seeks to ensure cultural safety is embedded in our workplaces, policies, programs, projects and services.

It leads the department’s efforts to embed Aboriginal voice and ways of knowing, being and doing in our policies and programs.

This work will be shaped by the outcomes of the Yoorrook Justice Commission – Victoria’s formal truth-telling inquiry and the first of its kind in Australia.

As we progress along the self-determination continuum we will undertake bold reforms of self-determination.

Our goal is to transform the system rather than undertaking piecemeal change to existing programs, projects and services.

## Planning for and responding to growing demand

We will continue to drive system innovation and improvement across the state, as well as utilising place-based approaches tailored to local challenges. We will also continue to work to meet increased demand for homes and support. This includes maintaining service continuity in sectors undergoing significant reform.

We will:

* listen to evolving community expectations and needs
* plan and work with communities and the funded sector to focus supports where they are most needed
* innovate with local communities, using evidence-led approaches.

In our role as steward of Victoria’s housing and social services systems, we will continue to work to meet increased demand for homes and support. This includes maintaining service continuity in sectors undergoing significant reform.

## Supporting the workforce

We need a strong housing, child protection and community sector workforce. This will ensure that Victorians can get the support they need, in the right way, at the right time and in the right place.

This means working to:

* attract, train, retain and equip the workforces that deliver vital inclusive and accessible programs and services
* create inclusive organisational cultures that make us an employer of choice
* strategically plan for our future workforces
* support our funded agencies to do the same.

We cannot meet future demand for government supports without staff who can deliver outcomes for Victorians across the state.

## Building stronger partnerships and networks for the communities we serve

Our department plays a unique and vital role in the lives of many individuals, families and communities, often during times of crisis or disadvantage.

We will foster strong families, neighbourhoods and support networks that prevent harm before it occurs.

We will strive to help Victorians when and where they need us most.

To achieve this, we need to:

* coordinate more effectively both within and outside our department
* develop new partnerships and models for collaboration with our communities
* ensure our technologies and processes stay efficient and fit for purpose.

# How we will achieve our objectives

## Objective 1: Aboriginal voice, knowledge and cultural leadership drive Aboriginal policy, legislation and system reform

Self-determination enables the wellbeing of Aboriginal Victorians. We will actively address systems and structures that inhibit self-determination with the partnership and leadership of the Victorian Aboriginal community.

### Objective 1 objective indicators

To succeed, we will:

* increase the transfer of decision-making power and resources to Aboriginal organisations
* increase the use of Aboriginal knowledge and evidence in policy, program and service planning, design, delivery and evaluation, under Aboriginal leadership
* increase investment in the Aboriginal workforce to support the Aboriginal community-controlled organisations to excel in practice, partnership and service delivery
* increase the cultural competence of the non-Aboriginal workforce across all service functions to embed practices and processes that respect Aboriginal ways of working, knowledge and evidence
* improve flexible funding practices to empower Aboriginal organisations to meet the diverse needs of the community
* increase the protection and promotion of Aboriginal knowledge and Aboriginal intellectual property.

### Objective 1 initiatives

To meet this objective, we will:

* support the development of policies and legislative amendments
* undertake capacity- and capability-building activities and change management processes
* improve reporting, monitoring and evaluation of Aboriginal self-determination and Closing the Gap actions
* partner with Aboriginal governance representatives to strengthen the department’s data sovereignty practices
* lead and oversee the department’s response to recommendations made by the Yoorrook Justice Commission, and all necessary work to support the Treaty process
* work closely with the Department of Premier and Cabinet to ensure all Treaty-related work aligns with whole-of-Victorian-Government best practice guidance.
* work on reforms in partnership with Aboriginal communities, organisations and sector partners
* strengthen Aboriginal governance, including regional governance mechanisms
* reform funding models to better support Aboriginal organisations
* elevate Aboriginal self-determination in housing and homelessness, family and sexual violence and other service systems. This includes implementing the Dhelk Dja 3-year action plan 2023–2025, and developing the next 3-year action plan (2026–28) from late 2025
* empower Aboriginal decision-making to reduce the over-representation of Aboriginal children in care services. This includes:
  + engaging with Aboriginal stakeholders to design and deliver an Aboriginal-led child and family services system
  + continuing to implement *Wungurilwil Gapgapduir* and its nation-leading initiatives, through a refreshed 2024-2028 Action Plan
  + including ongoing funding for care and case management of Aboriginal children in care by Aboriginal community-controlled organisations
  + implementing and embedding Aboriginal self-determination in the framework for children and family services, including binding principles for decision makers, through the Statement of Recognition Act 2023
  + continuing and expanding the care and case management of Aboriginal children in care by Aboriginal community-controlled organisations
* implement the Dhelk Dja action plan commitments to:
  + strengthen family violence prevention and Aboriginal frontline family violence services
  + support strong Aboriginal governance and leadership
  + improve access to data to support local decision-making.

## Objective 2: Children, young people and families are safe, strong and supported

This objective aims to ensure that Victorian families, carers and individuals have respectful relationships and are safe from harm, fear and neglect in their homes. This includes addressing the compounding effects of abuse and violence; improving support and recovery for victim survivors and engaging with perpetrators of violence to help them to change their behaviour and ensuring the wellbeing of children and young people in care.

### Objective 2 objective indicators

To succeed, we will:

* reduce abuse and neglect of children and young people
* increase safe, respectful family relationships
* improve development and wellbeing for children and young people
* increase the stability of care services placements
* increase connections to culture, family and kinship systems for Aboriginal families including for Aboriginal children in care
* reduce over-representation of Aboriginal children and young people in care services
* reduce the incidence and impact of family violence, including over-represented cohorts of women and children
* increase safety for victim survivors of family violence.

### Objective 2 initiatives

To meet this objective, we will:

* deliver and implement the third Rolling Action Plan under *Ending Family Violence: Victoria’s 10-year plan for change*
* build support for the next stage of primary prevention of family and gendered violence in Victoria, including by supporting Respect Victoria on implementation of the Ballarat Saturation model and developing clear roles and responsibilities across the prevention sector
* advance statewide family violence risk assessment and information sharing by revising the Multi-Agency Risk Assessment and Management (MARAM) framework and Family Violence Information Sharing Scheme (FVISS) guidelines to ensure they continue to reflect evidence-based best practice and progress statewide implementation
* develop a family violence crisis and emergency accommodation strategy with the specialist family violence sector
* implement the Sexually Abusive Behaviour Treatment Service (SABTS). This initiative supports children and young people (under the age of 18 years) displaying or using harmful sexual behaviour
* strengthen safety and support for children and young people experiencing family violence through direct practice and risk assessment, supported by the Child and Young Person’s MARAM practice guidance and tools
* understand and demonstrate the impact of our work to prevent and respond to family violence by strengthening implementation of the Family Violence Outcomes Framework
* continue to modernise the Family Services platform to provide a more sustainable, evidence-based and targeted system of support across Connecting, Strengthening and Restoring Families
* implement a Safe Spaces program for LGBTIQA+ young people in Western Victoria to provide social connection and mental health and wellbeing supports in Ballarat and Geelong.
* improve supports for children and young people by continuing to enhance the delivery of therapeutic supports in all residential care homes and modernising home based care including the introduction of additional therapeutic foster care placements and enhanced supports for carers.
* Improve and enhance supports for service users by delivering tailored supports to young people transitioning from care services, including through Better Futures and Home Stretch and Housing First.
* implement Victorian Redress for Historical Institutional Abuse to provide redress and formal acknowledgment of harm caused and lifelong impacts of abuse in institutional care in Victoria
* improve our use of data insights through the Menu of Evidence. This provides searchable and independent information on evidence-based practice for children, young people, families and carers
* improve our use of insights from people with lived and living experience including from the Minister for Children’s Youth Advisory Group (MYAG).

## Objective 3: Victorian communities are safe, fair, inclusive and resilient

This objective aims to ensure Victorians are socially connected to their community in a way that enhances their safety and wellbeing. Strong communities are critical in fostering social inclusion and participation and ensuring that Victorians from intersectional communities can safely identify with their culture, express their identity and build support networks with people they trust.

### Objective 3 objective indicators

To succeed, we will:

* increase economic inclusion and participation
* increase community participation, inclusion and connectedness
* decrease experiences of discrimination
* increase safety where people live, work, learn and play
* increase wellbeing for Aboriginal Victorians, including safety to connect with and express culture
* increase capacity for senior Victorians to age well
* improve supports for people with complex needs
* increase community resilience
* improve social recovery following emergencies
* reduce sexual violence.

### Objective 3 initiatives

To meet this objective, we will:

* strengthen intergovernmental advocacy to influence the national policy agenda on disability inclusion, gender equality, LGBTIQA+ inclusion, veterans affairs, aged care, family violence and equitable access to social services and programs
* coordinate and deliver actions under key strategies and plans including:
  + *Our promise, your future: youth strategy 2022–*27
  + *Pride in our future: LGBTIQA+ strategy 2022–32*
  + *Inclusive Victoria: state disability plan 2022–26*
  + *Ageing well action plan 2022–26*
  + *Our equal state: Victoria’s gender equality strategy and action plan 2023–27*
  + refreshed *Victorian carer strategy* (due for release in 2025)
* lead and support legislative reforms to protect the rights of people with disability, LGBTIQA+ people, older adults and other people with complex needs
* deliver programs to boost youth participation and equip government stakeholders to engage more effectively with young people and the youth sector
* deliver supports for Victorian LGBTIQA+ groups and organisations to empower their communities through all life stages, including events celebrating LGBTIQA+ identities, culture and history, and funding critical services delivered by and for LGBTIQA+ communities
* deliver upgrades to scout halls, facilities for ex-service organisations and other community infrastructure
* deliver cost-of-living relief through:
  + expanding partnerships with the food security sector and boosting food relief services
  + expanding the Good Money Program to increase access to no-interest loans
  + improving access to the Victorian Carer Card
  + reducing the eligibility age for the Seniors Card for First Nations people
  + the nation-first Veterans Card
  + free pads and tampons in vending machines in public sites
  + the Energy Bill Relief Fund
* deliver mentoring, employment and education, alcohol and other drugs outreach, housing support, diversion and family therapy programs for young Victorians at risk of disengagement, homelessness or contact with the justice system
* implement a Pride in Ageing program to address the needs of ageing LGBTIQA+ Victorians and better support their connections to communities
* implement programs that support and connect LGBTIQA+ communities through delivery of the annual Pride Event and Festival Fund (PEFF) and the Victoria’s Pride annual celebrations and regional activation program.
* implement the Rainbow Tick Accreditation program to improve inclusive community and mental health services for LGBTIQA+ Victorians including a dedicated self determination stream for Aboriginal Community Controlled organisations and services.
* improve and expand supports for service users by:
  + delivering specialist forensic disability support and treatment, including safe, community-based housing for people with cognitive disability who are leaving the justice system or at risk of reoffending
  + supporting coordination and assertive outreach for people with complex needs experiencing significant service gaps who are at risk of harm to themselves or others
  + considering responses to the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) Review and the Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability.

## Objective 4: All Victorians have stable, affordable and appropriate housing

This objective aims to ensure Victorians have safe homes that provide emotional and physical sanctuary. Victorians have security of tenure in housing that is appropriate to their needs, including that it is accessible, high quality, affordable and tailored to them. This outcome includes supports to address and reduce housing insecurity and homelessness, to enable suitable housing for all.

### Objective 4 objective indicators

To succeed, we will:

* increase the supply and availability of quality housing within people’s means
* improve the quality, environmental sustainability, appropriateness and accessibility of social housing
* increase housing stability for people experiencing or at risk of rough sleeping, homelessness, and other insecure housing arrangements
* increase financial ability to access and maintain housing and utility services
* increase Aboriginal residents’ connection to community, culture and place
* increase the proportion of Aboriginal people living in appropriately sized (not overcrowded) housing
* improve transitions to independent living arrangements.

### Objective 4 initiatives

To meet this objective, we will:

* continue to increase the supply and quality of housing options for Victorians. This includes progressing the $6.3 billion Big Housing Build and Regional Housing Fund and other large capital programs
* improve the public housing system to ensure quality service and deliver better and more comfortable homes
* continue to progress Australia's biggest ever urban renewal project – the High-Rise Redevelopment Project
* improve tailored housing support for people and families at risk of homelessness, including by:
  + continuing to roll out proven services to address homelessness, with a focus on housing first
  + strengthening support and short-term accommodation that enables victim survivors of family violence to stay at home safely or find suitable housing
  + continuing to work with the sector and people with lived and living experience to better structure and deliver homelessness services to meet the needs of people seeking homelessness, assistance and reforming the homelessness response to ensure homelessness is rare, brief and that supports are flexible, tailored and culturally safe.
* evolve our housing management and resident tools
* provide high-quality, safe and secure specialist disability accommodation that enables choice and control for residents.

## Objective 5: Our social services system is integrated, effective, person-centred and sustainable

The social services system is joined up and provides safe, effective and appropriate services that respond to the needs, preferences and circumstances of Victorians. Our corporate functions and IT systems facilitate efficient service delivery, administration and oversight, and our workforce is sustainable and highly skilled. We nurture strong partnerships with funded agencies, and we deploy data and evidence to continuously improve.

### Objective 5 objective indicators

To succeed, we will:

* improve the quality, safety and effectiveness of service delivery
* increase responsiveness of services to diversity and intersectionality
* improve access to services
* increase the voice of clients, people with lived experience and diverse communities in the design, delivery and evaluation of policies and services
* increase effective organisational oversight and financial management
* increase system agility, responsiveness and resilience
* increase effectiveness, appropriateness and integration of technology, IT systems and information management
* improve workforce health, safety, wellbeing, capability and diversity
* increase use of evidence, analytics, evaluation, outcome measurement and data to inform planning, investment, practice and policy design.

### Objective 5 initiatives

To meet this objective, we will:

* improve regulatory oversight by:
  + bringing Victoria’s child safety regulators together within the Social Services Regulator, to respond to the recommendations of the Rapid Child Safety Review
  + consolidating Victoria’s disability oversight entities into the Social Services Regulator
  + aligning the worker regulation schemes
  + establishing a dedicated complaints function for social services
* design a modern, integrated client and case management system for community and family services
* continue to explore options for a modern, integrated client and case management system for community and family services
* elevate lived and living experience expertise and client voice in the design of programs and services, and through advisory committees and engagement with commissioners
* improve our use of data insights by strengthening data collection, analysis and reporting through the MARAM and Family Violence Information Sharing schemes. This will inform our family and sexual violence responses
* scale and apply linked data insights for decision-making across the Victorian Government through the Victorian Social Investment Model (VicSIM).

# Our enablers

## Enabler 1: Sustainable and inclusive workforces

We will fund and employ diverse, skilled workforces in culturally safe workplaces, now and into the future.

We must strengthen the capability of our workforces to do our best work. We must remove barriers to attracting a diverse workforce.

As an employer, this means:

* empowering our staff by widening and deepening their expertise and skills
* supporting them to move between roles and sectors when organisational and community needs evolve
* enabling them to maintain their health and wellbeing on the job.

In addition, to support the funded-agency workforces, we will work with the sector to enable fulfilling and sustained careers in the community services.

To succeed we will:

* support our funded-agency workforces by:
  + continuing to develop and grow the Community and Social Services Graduate Program as an attractive, structured and supported early career program for social services workforces
  + promoting community services careers through communications and engagement, including targeted campaigns for key subsectors such as child protection
  + develop and implement the whole-of-department *Aboriginal workforce strategy* in 2025, overseen by the Aboriginal Strategic Governance Forum (ASGF), and
  + continue to design and pilot other programs or policies that address workforce challenges, such as scholarship programs, more accessible pathways to qualifications and inter-agency collaboration to address workforce shortages
* work with the Aboriginal Sector Workforce Strategy Working Group to support Aboriginal organisations
* support the department’s workforce by:
  + developing strategies to support and retain the department’s frontline workforces through professional development, wellbeing services and leadership development
  + increasing cultural safety and awareness for departmental staff. This includes implementing the Aboriginal Cultural Safety Framework and its measurement and assessment tool
  + promoting diversity, inclusion and belonging in our workforces through the *public sector veteran employment strateg*y and through the *Aboriginal workforce strategy 2021–26*.

## Enabler 2: Modern departmental systems

We will continually improve ways of working to deliver high-quality, evidence-based and sustainable programs and services.

We must have the right processes, systems and cultures in place to achieve the best possible outcomes.

To meet the new risks and opportunities ahead, we will continue to improve how we:

* collaborate with partners
* share knowledge
* deliver programs and services
* demonstrate accountability to stakeholders
* engage communities
* evaluate and review our progress.

As the stewards of a broader social and housing services system, we must also support our funded agencies to consider their own practices and ways of working.

Our staff and the community services sector cannot meet evolving community needs without:

* robust governance and integrity functions
* effective data management and information sharing within the department and across government and the sector
* research and evaluation support
* sustainable, effective service delivery models
* developing clear strategy for the future.

To succeed we will:

* strengthen accountability and integrity functions, including by reviewing our complaints and feedback processes to ensure they are fit for purpose, client-focused, contemporary, efficient and effective
* improve our use of digital technologies by designing a modern, integrated client and case management system for community and family services
* improve our use of digital technologies by enhancing the corporate systems that underpin all our people, process and financial management
* strengthen the cybersecurity capabilities and posture of both the department and our service delivery partners.

# Performance and financial reporting

The Victorian State Budget contains detailed information on the department’s objectives, outputs and performance against key performance indicators. This is an important accountability tool for the funding we receive to deliver services and operations.

The department’s performance and workforce profile is reported in our [annual report](https://www.dffh.vic.gov.au/publications/annual-report)[[2]](#footnote-2) and [Department Performance Statement](https://www.dtf.vic.gov.au/2025-26-department-performance-statement)[[3]](#footnote-3) as part of each State budget.

The *2025–26 Victorian State Budget Paper* 3 (BP 3) sets out the department’s output groups and their budgeted costs. Tables 1 to 4 outline the department’s total output, and new output and asset initiatives.

Table 1: Department output funding 2025–26 ($ million)

| Output | 2025–26 |
| --- | --- |
| Child Protection and Family Services | $2,193.4 |
| Family Violence Service Delivery | $786.9 |
| Primary Prevention of Family Violence | $25.3 |
| Community Participation | $69.7 |
| Disability Programs and Services | $372.4 |
| Seniors Programs and Participation | $63.1 |
| Support to Veterans in Victoria | $20.2 |
| LGBTIQA+ equality policy and programs | $10.5 |
| Women’s policy | $15.9 |
| Youth | $30.9 |
| Concessions to Pensioners and Beneficiaries | $1,162.9 |
| Housing Assistance | $653.4 |
| Total | $5,404.6 |

Note: Table may not add due to rounding.

Data source: 2025–26 BP 3, p. 124.

Table 2: Department total output initiatives, 2024–25 to 2028–29 ($ million)

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Output initiative | 2024–25 | 2025–26 | 2026–27 | 2027–28 | 2028–29 |
| Total output initiatives | 65.8 | 510.9 | 211.1 | 37.3 | 14.8 |

Data source: 2025–26 BP 3, p. 38.

Table 2.1: Department output initiatives – Child Protection and Family Services,   
2024–25 to 2028–29 ($ million)

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Output initiative | 2024–25 | 2025–26 | 2026–27 | 2027–28 | 2028–29 |
| Civil claims costs for historical child abuse | 65.8 | 198.4 | - | - | - |
| Improving outcomes for children and young people in care | - | 77.3 | 12.1 | 0.4 | 0.4 |
| Justice system costs associated with court programs | - | 0.7 | 0.7 | 0.7 | 0.7 |
| Strong Families, Safe Children: connecting, strengthening and restoring families | - | 86.0 | 81.5 | - | - |
| Supporting a safe and effective Youth Justice system | - | 0.3 | 1.9 | 1.5 | - |
| Supporting the child protection workforce | - | 7.1 | 7.1 | - | - |

Table 2.2: Department’s output initiatives – Community Participation, 2024–25 to 2028–29 ($ million)

| Output initiative | 2024–25 | 2025–26 | 2026–27 | 2027–28 | 2028–29 |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Providing more no-interest loans to vulnerable Victorians | - | 1.3 | 1.3 | 1.3 | 1.3 |
| Strengthening food security across Victoria | - | 12.7 | 4.2 | 1.0 | - |

Table 2.3: Department’s output initiatives – Disability Programs and Services, 2024–25 to 2028–29 ($ million)

| Output initiative | 2024–25 | 2025–26 | 2026–27 | 2027–28 | 2028–29 |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Continuing support for Victorians with disability | - | 24.1 | - | - | - |
| Maintaining regulation of disability and social services | - | 13.6 | 13.9 | - | - |

Table 2.4: Department’s output initiatives – Family Violence Service Delivery, 2024–25 to 2028–29 ($ million)

| Output initiative | 2024–25 | 2025–26 | 2026–27 | 2027–28 | 2028–29 |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Family violence risk assessment and information sharing schemes | - | 8.5 | 8.4 | - | - |
| Supporting Victoria’s response to family violence | - | 27.3 | 28.0 | 12.1 | 12.4 |
| Supporting Victoria’s response to sexual violence | - | 13.1 | 13.4 | - | - |

Table 2.5: Department’s output initiatives – Housing Assistance, 2024–25 to 2028–29 ($ million)

| Output initiative | 2024–25 | 2025–26 | 2026–27 | 2027–28 | 2028–29 |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Continuing critical services to address homelessness and community needs | - | 20.4 | 20.4 | 20.4 | - |
| Victorian Social Investment Model (VicSIM): enabling effective social policy and early intervention | - | 2.7 | 2.7 | - | - |

Table 2.6: Department’s output initiatives – LGBTIQA+ Equality Policy and Programs,   
2024–25 to 2028–29 ($ million)

| Output initiative | 2024–25 | 2025–26 | 2026–27 | 2027–28 | 2028–29 |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Supporting Victoria’s LGBTIQA+ communities | - | 1.5 | - | - | - |

Table 2.7: Department’s output initiatives – Support to Veterans in Victoria, 2024–25 to   
2028–29 ($–million)

| Output initiative | 2024–25 | 2025–26 | 2026–27 | 2027–28 | 2028–29 |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Employing veterans to benefit Victoria | - | 0.4 | 0.4 | - | - |
| Keeping the Eternal Flame burning – Victoria’s Shrine of Remembrance | - | 1.2 | 1.2 | - | - |

Table 2.8: Department’s output initiatives – Women’s Policy, 2024–25 to 2028–29   
($ million)

| Output initiative | 2024–25 | 2025–26 | 2026–27 | 2027–28 | 2028–29 |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| The Victorian Honour Roll of Women | - | 0.5 | 0.5 | - | - |

Table 2.9: Department’s output initiatives – Youth, 2024–25 to 2028–29 ($ million)

| Output initiative | 2024–25 | 2025–26 | 2026–27 | 2027–28 | 2028–29 |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Investing early in young Victorians | - | 10.3 | 9.7 | - | - |
| Living Learning: innovative support to re-engage young people | - | 3.7 | 3.8 | - | - |

Data sources: 2025–26 BP 3, p. 38.

Table 3: Department total asset initiatives – 2024–25 to 2028–29 ($ million)

| Asset initiative | 2024–25 | 2025–26 | 2026–27 | 2027–28 | 2028–29 | TEI |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Total Asset Initiatives | 15.5 | 40.3 | 54.9 | 4.8 | 4.8 | 120.3 |

Table 3.1: Department asset initiatives – Disability Programs and Services, 2024–25 to   
2028–29 ($ million)

| Asset initiative | 2024–25 | 2025–26 | 2026–27 | 2027–28 | 2028–29 | TEI |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Specialist Disability Accommodation (SDA) safety: fire panel replacements | - | 4.8 | 4.8 | 4.8 | 4.8 | 19.2 |

Table 3.2: Department asset initiatives – Housing Assistance, 2024–25 to 2028–29   
($ million)

| Asset initiative | 2024–25 | 2025–26 | 2026–27 | 2027–28 | 2028–29 | TEI |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Housing Support Program – priority works(a) | 15.5 | 35.5 | 50.1 | - | - | 101.1 |

Note: This initiative is fully funded by the Commonwealth Government.

Data source: 2025–26 BP 3, p. 46.

Table 4: Whole of government – First Peoples, 2024–25 to 2028–29   
($ million)

| Output initiative | 2024–25 | 2025–26 | 2026–27 | 2027–28 | 2028–29 |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Advancing self-determination for Aboriginal children and families(a) | - | 5.6 | 7.3 | 5.8 | 6.1 |

Note: This initiative contributes to the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing’s Child Protection and Family Services output.

Data source: 2025–26 BP 3, p. 3.

## Approved use of accumulated State Administration Unit

The Resource Management Framework sets out the order of funding for approved asset investments. The department follows this order and if required, funds will be drawn down from accumulated depreciation state administration unit funding, after seeking approval from the Treasurer as required under s. 33 of the *Financial Management Act 1994*. Any funds accessed from accumulated depreciation funding will be reported in the annual financial report.

1. https://www.dffh.vic.gov.au/dffh-office-locations [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. https://www.dffh.vic.gov.au/publications/annual-report [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. https://www.dtf.vic.gov.au/2025-26-department-performance-statement [↑](#footnote-ref-3)