

Inquiry into homelessness in Victoria

Summary of recommendations

The final report of the *Inquiry into homelessness in Victoria* contains 51 recommendations for the Victorian Government which aim to improve housing outcomes for Victorians.

This brief summary highlights the recommendations most relevant to the child and family services sector and the infants, children, young people and families we support.¹ While most of the recommendations aim to improve the ability of individuals and families to access housing, the following recommendations directly relate to children, young people and their families.

- **Recommendation 8 - Prioritise outreach for the purpose of early intervention** (p. 129)

That the Victorian Government implement measures to prioritise outreach to other institutions outside the homelessness sector for the purposes of early intervention, including by:

 - o Engaging with bodies and institutions that are the first to know when individuals are at risk of homelessness to assist them to identify and respond to risk factors for homelessness, including through education and training.
 - o Supporting homelessness services to build strong relationships and referral pathways with institutions that are the first to know when individuals are at risk of homelessness.
- **Recommendation 9 - Ongoing funding for the family violence Flexible Support Packages program** (p. 133)
 - o Funding needs to be made available on an ongoing basis to ensure that persons experiencing family violence can have the help they need to avoid homelessness.
- **Recommendation 11 - Ongoing funding for the Private Rental Assistance Program** (p. 139)
 - o Ensure ongoing funding for the Private Rental Assistance Program in recognition of its key role in preventing entry into homelessness and that the funding grows to meet demand.
- **Recommendation 12 - Increased accessibility for young people** (p. 139)
 - o Consider the barriers faced by young people, persons experiencing family violence and other groups in relation to difficulties entering or remaining in the private rental market in continued development of the Private Rental Assistance Program, with a view to making the service more accessible for these cohorts.

- **Recommendation 16 - Additional funding for early intervention services for young people experiencing family conflict** (p. 150)
 - Investigate and provide additional funding for homelessness early intervention services for young people that seek to address family conflict issues.
- **Recommendation 17 - Supporting young people at risk of homelessness** (p. 156)
 - Conduct an assessment of suitability for additional Education First Youth Foyer sites in metropolitan and regional areas, with a view to providing funding for additional facilities.
- **Recommendation 18 - Provide innovative accommodation for young people** (p. 158)
 - Provide additional funding to organisations that provide innovative accommodation for young people at their family home, such as Kids Under Cover.
- **Recommendation 19 - Expanding projects and models that target homelessness** (p. 166)
 - Provide funding and support for the expansion of initiatives linked to the Community of Schools and Services model, with a minimum expansion to seven pilot sites that will include four metropolitan sites and three regional sites.
- **Recommendation 20 - Support training and employment opportunities for young people** (p. 172)
 - Commit funding for programs, such as HoMie, that assist young people who are at risk of, or experiencing, homelessness to receive job readiness training and connect them with employment opportunities.
- **Recommendation 21 - Expand Social Enterprise opportunities** (p. 174)
 - Include more social enterprises that work with people who are at risk of, or experiencing, homelessness in their social procurement policy. Such social enterprises should include a work readiness component in their employment programs.
- **Recommendation 24 - Improve discharge planning and practices** (p. 184)
 - Pursue a 'no exits into homelessness' policy to improve discharge practices at mental health, hospital, rehabilitation, aged care and other institutional settings.
- **Recommendation 34 - A right to housing** (p. 200)
 - Include the right to housing in the Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 (Vic).

- **Recommendation 35 - Improve access to Specialist Accommodation Facilities** (p. 216)
 - o Improve access to specialist family violence crisis accommodation facilities, including by:
 - a) conducting demand modelling for family violence crisis accommodation across the state in order to ascertain need.
 - b) providing additional funding for accommodation facilities, including for core and cluster models of accommodation.
 - c) ensuring regional areas have access to family violence crisis accommodation to allow persons experiencing violence to remain in or close to their communities.

- **Recommendation 47 - Advocate to the Commonwealth Government to increase Jobseeker Payment** (p. 302)
 - o Advocate to the Commonwealth Government to permanently increase the rate of JobSeeker payments.
 - o Further advocate for reconsideration of the indexation of this payment to CPI and to also urgently consider the many barriers to income support accessibility.

Read more about the recommendations in the Final Report:

<https://www.parliament.vic.gov.au/lsc-lc/article/4662>

ⁱ Legislative Council Legal and Social Issues Committee 2021, *Inquiry into homelessness in Victoria: final report*, Parliament of Victoria, Melbourne.

Content in this summary is largely included verbatim from the report. Some recommendations are only partially included or have been summarised. Please refer to the report for full details.