

# Getting on with the job

Victorian Budget 17/18



**The Hon Martin Pakula MP**  
Attorney-General

Tuesday, 2 May, 2017

## A safer and fairer legal system for Victoria

The Andrews Labor Government will provide more support to vulnerable Victorians and make the courts safer and more efficient under a major boost to the legal system.

The *Victorian Budget 2017/18* will deliver \$89.2 million to update the ageing IT systems at the Children's and Magistrates' Courts. A new case management system will be developed to ensure better information sharing between the courts and other agencies.

The new system will make court processes faster and help judges to make more informed decisions to keep victims safe, addressing key recommendations from the Royal Commission into Family Violence.

The Supreme Court will also receive a boost of \$10.9 million for advanced new audio and visual technology set to allow witnesses to provide testimony via video link.

A further \$14.5 million will be invested in Victoria's community legal centres to help disadvantaged members of the community access free legal advice and support. The funding also includes ongoing support for Job Watch, which will continue to provide free advice to Victorian workers.

The Budget provides a \$15 million investment in Victoria Legal Aid which will fund additional legal services for children and young people in the justice system.

The Budget will also deliver \$3.4 million to establish a Fast Track Remand Court in the Children's Court to speed up the processing of youths on remand. The fast track court will ensure that young people's cases will be dealt with more quickly, reducing pressure on the system.

\$22 million will provide more mental health support services in the courts, including an additional Mental Health Court Liaison Officer in the Children's Court and an expansion of the Assessment and Referral Court List to provide intensive pre-sentence support and judicial supervision to accused people with a mental illness or cognitive impairment.

Court Services Victoria (CSV) will receive \$12.2 million to upgrade court facilities and boost resources at a number of regional courts to make them safer and more efficient.

CSV will get a further \$3.9 million to develop plans for an expansion of the Bendigo Law Court to meet future demand in the region, and another \$3.7 million to develop plans for a new Werribee Law Court as part of the Wyndham Justice Precinct development.

The Family Drug Treatment Court will also get \$1.4 million to extend a trial operating at the Broadmeadows Children's Court which works with parents whose children are in care due to parental drug or alcohol issues.

### Quotes attributable to the Attorney-General Martin Pakula

*"The Andrews Labor Government is delivering a safer, fairer and more equitable legal system in Victoria."*

*"Court processes will be faster and courts will be brought into the twenty first century with new technology."*

*"We're also funding the essential work of community legal centres so that some of the most disadvantaged people receive the critical services they deserve."*

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