



Mana-na woorn-tyeen maar-takoort Every Aboriginal Person Has A Home

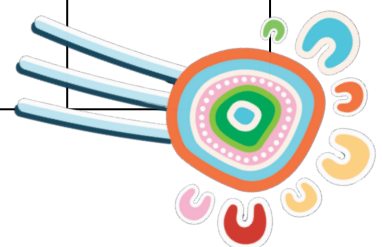
AHHF

2024-25 Victorian State Budget Submission

The Aboriginal Housing and Homelessness Forum (AHHF) comprises of 38 Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations (ACCOs), Traditional Owner groups, and Aboriginal Trusts who are delivering housing and homelessness services in Victoria. To advance objective four: development of an Aboriginal Homelessness Service System from [Mana-na woorn-tyeen maar-takoort: the Victorian Aboriginal Housing and Homelessness Framework](#) and the implementation of the [Blueprint for an Aboriginal-specific homelessness system in Victoria](#), the AHHF members have identified the below budget priorities.

These budget priorities must be read in the context of the AHHF's call for **10% of all homelessness funding to be provided to ACCOs** to support Aboriginal Victorians experiencing, or at risk of experiencing homelessness. Currently, only 3% of homelessness funding goes to ACCOs. The figure of 10% is reflective of the fact that Aboriginal people in Victoria represent over 10% of all people experiencing homelessness, despite only representing 1% of the overall Victorian population. It should also be noted that the **following priorities are in addition to the funding already allocated to ACCOs under the existing funding arrangements.**

	Priorities		Costing
Budget Priority 1	Aboriginal Entry Points	Enhanced support for Pilot Entry Point In the 2022-23 State Budget, funding was provided to deliver two Aboriginal-specific homelessness entry points. The entry points will be based out of Ngwala Willumbong Aboriginal Corporation and Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-operative and are due to be operational from January 2024. KPMG were commissioned by the Aboriginal Housing and Homelessness Forum (AHHF) to provide costing for the two pilot entry points, which came to \$13.6 million over an 18-month period. However, the 2022-23 State Budget provided only \$7.6 million of funding over the first 18 months. Preliminary demand analysis and detailed mapping of the service system and corresponding housing and support resources, demonstrates a need for the pilot entry points to be funded consistent with the KPMG costings. This will ensure that the entry points are able to meet the short- and medium-term housing needs of service users and can deliver Aboriginal-specific multidisciplinary support to every service user that requires it.	\$6 million (\$24 million over four years)



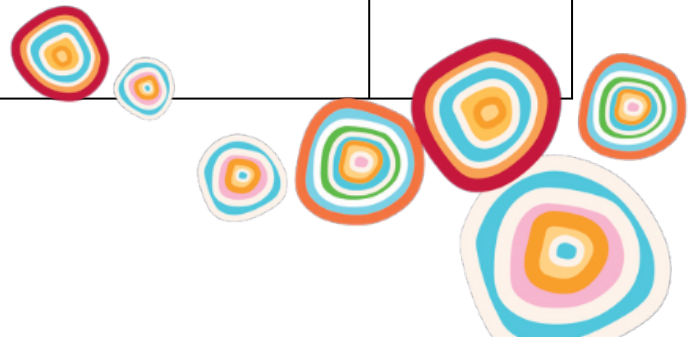


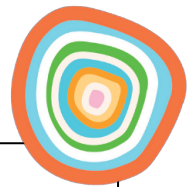
Budget Priority 1	Aboriginal Entry Points	<p>Expansion of Aboriginal Entry Points</p> <p>The enhanced, culturally safe and responsive service model co-designed as part of the pilot entry points, should be expanded into a further two priority regions. With the service models based upon early intervention and prevention of Aboriginal Victorians becoming entrenched in the homelessness system, the two additional Aboriginal entry points are a necessary and critical part of service system reform.</p> <p>Design and implementation would be informed by the interim findings of the evaluation of the pilot entry points and should be funded consistent with the KPMG costings commissioned by the AHHF.</p>	<p>\$13.6 million</p> <p>(\$54.4 million over four years)</p>
		<p>Housing Options Program</p> <p>Housing Options Programs work to promote accessible pathways to short-term accommodation including hotels, motels, and caravan parks, as well as rooming houses where appropriate. This is done by engaging proactively with accommodation providers. Importantly to the Aboriginal Homelessness system the Housing Options program can work towards addressing racial discrimination and barriers experienced by the Aboriginal Community Controlled sector in accessing housing.</p> <p>The Housing Options program benefits the overall homelessness system by maximising the limited short-term accommodation options that are available within the homelessness system.</p>	<p>\$200,000</p> <p>(\$800,000 over four years)</p>
Budget Priority 2	Stewardship of the Aboriginal Homelessness System	<p>The Blueprint calls for a devolved model of stewardship of the Aboriginal Homelessness System in which government and the Aboriginal community work together to manage and develop the system over time. The model supports a place-based approach to funding, management and monitoring of the system through localised forums to ensure that the system is informed by local voices and guided by the needs and aspirations of the community. This stewardship model guarantees that the Aboriginal homelessness system is controlled and underpinned by the principles of self-determination.</p> <p>In 2022, the AHHF endorsed Aboriginal Housing Victoria as the lead agency, responsible for oversight, implementation, and development of the model for stewardship of the Aboriginal Homelessness System. The lead agency function is only funded until June 30, 2024. To support the ongoing development of the Aboriginal homelessness system it is important that the lead agency functions are refunded.</p>	<p>\$500,000</p> <p>(\$2 million over four years)</p>





<p>Budget Priority 3</p>	<p>Housing First for Aboriginal Victorians</p>	<p>Housing First is recognised internationally as the most effective intervention for people with histories of chronic homelessness and associated support needs. From Homelessness to a Home (H2H) has been a highly successful Housing First Intervention with 85% of participants retaining their housing after three years.</p> <p>Approximately 1600 Aboriginal Victorians experience rough sleeping every year and would be within the cohort for whom Housing First interventions would be most successful. Given the success of H2H, funding and delivery of an Aboriginal Housing First intervention, could all but end rough sleeping amongst Aboriginal Victorians.</p>	<p>\$12 million (\$48 million over four years)</p>
<p>Budget Priority 4</p>	<p>Pathways out of homelessness: Supporting Aboriginal Victorians to exit the homelessness system.</p>	<p>Housing alone cannot resolve homelessness. To end homelessness, support is required to secure, establish, and sustain tenancies.</p> <p>Investment in support must be reflective of the needs in the community, and targeted towards key cohorts including young people, elders, families, people leaving custody and care, people with a disability and people experiencing, and using family violence.</p> <p>Support packages must be flexible enough to scale up and down depending on the specific needs of the service user and their pathway out of homelessness.</p>	<p>\$3 million (\$12 million over four years)</p>
<p>Budget Priority 5</p>	<p>Early intervention and prevention: Ensuring Aboriginal people do not enter the homelessness system.</p>	<p>Since 2018 there has been a 37% increase in the number of Aboriginal Victorians seeking support from the homelessness service system. In the same period, homelessness for non-Aboriginal Victorians has remained stable.</p> <p>Significant investment is needed into early intervention and preventative responses with the aim to first stabilise and then decrease the volume of Aboriginal Victorians entering the homelessness service system.</p> <p>Programs such as Aboriginal Private Rental Access Program (APRAP) and Aboriginal Tenancies at Risk (ATAR), are currently providing effective interventions. Given that we know these programs work, they need to be scaled up and expanded across the state.</p>	<p>Early Intervention: \$8.8 million (\$35.2 million over four years) Prevention: \$3.7 million (\$14.8 million).</p>






<p>Budget Priority 5 (Continue)</p>	<p>Early intervention and prevention: Ensuring Aboriginal people do not enter the homelessness system.</p>	<p>Preventative interventions should be targeted towards pathways into homelessness including young people leaving care, people fleeing family violence, people leaving custody and people being discharged from hospital. Engaging people in these high-risk settings for homelessness will mean Aboriginal Victorians can avoid coming into contact with the homelessness system in the first place.</p> <p>The Aboriginal community-controlled sector is the best source of knowledge and expertise in relation to their respective communities. Therefore, design of service interventions must be informed by local demand analysis and local voices.</p>	<p>Early Intervention: \$8.8 million</p> <p>(\$35.2 million over four years)</p> <p>Prevention: \$3.7 million</p> <p>(\$14.8 million).</p>
<p>Budget Priority 6</p>	<p>Short-term and transitional accommodation options.</p>	<p>There is critical shortage of short-term and transitional accommodation options, particular in regional and rural Victoria.</p> <p>ACCOs are struggling to meet the accommodation needs of their communities, which is contributing to the continued high rates of rough sleeping found within Aboriginal communities. We know that the longer that people are homeless the more entrenched they become and the harder it is to end their homelessness. Increasing the range of short-term and transitional accommodation options for Aboriginal Victorians will result in more effective pathways out of homelessness.</p> <p>What is needed is investment in a strategy to drastically increase the short-term accommodation options available to Aboriginal people experiencing homelessness, particularly in regional and rural Victoria. The strategy must enable the immediate acquisition of short-term and transitional accommodation that driven by local demand and information. The strategy must also be responsive to the needs of specific cohorts including young people, people experiencing family violence and people living with a disability.</p> <p>Options include:</p> <p>1. Increase in HEF allocation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • During the COVID lockdowns of 2020-22, Victoria was able to effectively end street homelessness through considerable increased HEF spending. We propose a similar response for Aboriginal Victorians. HEF allocations for ACCOs should be doubled to enable them to utilise the existing hotel, motel and caravan park accommodation options in their regions. 	<p>\$12 million</p> <p>(\$48 million over four years)</p> <p>\$9.2million (\$36.8 million over four years)</p>





Budget Priority 6 (Continued)	Short-term and transitional accommodation options.	2. Repurposing of unused buildings. <ul style="list-style-type: none">Repurposing unused buildings to be utilised as crisis or shelter accommodation, including hotels, motels or caravan parks. An example of such an approach is the City of Melbourne's Make a Room project. 3. Spot-purchase program. <ul style="list-style-type: none">Spot-purchase properties to be utilised as short-term or transitional accommodation.	\$9 million (\$36 million, over four years) \$10 million (\$40 million over four years)
Budget Priority 7	Supportive Housing Program	<p>Amongst the population of Aboriginal Victorians experiencing homelessness there will be some for whom independent living will not be possible. This includes those with a disability, complex and varied support needs and elders.</p> <p>Investment is needed to enable the Aboriginal community-controlled sector to develop, design and implement dedicated supportive housing arrangements for these cohorts.</p>	Capital funding: \$23.6 million (\$94.4 million over 4 years) Operational funding: \$3 million (\$12 million over four years)
Budget Priority 8	Aboriginal-specific Youth Foyer	<p>An Aboriginal-specific youth foyer in two locations based on demand and capacity. Service model for foyer to be guided by expertise of ACCOs currently delivering housing and homelessness support to young people.</p> 	Design: \$600,000 for design Capital funding: \$20 million. Operational funding: \$2 million (\$8 million over four years)
Budget Priority 4	Reinvestment and launch of Aboriginal Hostels	Redesigning and recommissioning of Aboriginal hostels. Partnering with Aboriginal organisations to ensure that the model is culturally safe and supportive for Aboriginal Victorians.	\$600,000 for design

