The Hon Ben Carroll MP

Minister for Crime Prevention   
Minister for Corrections  
Minister for Youth Justice   
Minister for Victim Support

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A STRONGER PRISON SYSTEM TO KEEP PEOPLE SAFE

Victoria’s prisons will be expanded and made stronger, with boosted offending behaviour programs, as the Andrews Labor Government takes action to break the cycle of reoffending, continue keeping the community safe, and creating jobs in the process.

To make sure our prisons remain strong and secure, the *Victorian Budget 2019/20* includes more than $1.8 billion to meet growing demand, including 1,600 new beds and new prison infrastructure across the state. This includes expanding the new Chisholm Road prison by 548 beds, making it the largest maximum-security prison in the state.

The women’s prison system will also undergo significant redevelopment, with $237 million for more than 100 new beds and upgraded infrastructure to keep staff and the community safe.

These projects will create thousands of local jobs during construction, with apprentices, trainees and engineering cadets comprising 10 per cent of all new workers on the Chisholm Road prison build.

While we build the prisons that a growing Victoria needs, we also know that we must keep investing to break the cycle of reoffending and keep people out of prison in the first place.

That’s why the Budget provides a total of $93.2 million for programs and services focused on keeping high risk people out of the justice system, including young people.

This investment includes $20 million to reduce the incarceration of women, including for programs targeted at women in prison with a mental illness, intellectual disability or cognitive impairment. It will also go towards reducing incarceration rates of Aboriginal women.

To reduce the number of Victorians moving into, out of, and then back into the prison system, $22.7 million will be invested in diversion, rehabilitation and reintegration programs.

All too often, a life spent moving through the justice system starts at a young age, setting kids up for a life of crime. That’s why the Budget also includes $45.5 million to reduce youth offending, which will include early intervention and diversion programs targeting young people.

Crime prevention initiatives will also be boosted with $5 million to better address the causes of crime, as well as identifying new pathways to work and training, and initiatives focused on safe homes and communities.

Reforming victim support will be a top priority for the Labor Government, with $3.2 million to begin implementing the Victorian Law Reform Commission’s recommendations on financial assistance for victims of crime.

The reforms will ensure victims receive the support they need, and make it easier, faster and less traumatic for them to access financial assistance.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Crime Prevention, Corrections, Youth Justice and Victim Support Ben Carroll

*“As Victoria grows and our 3,135 new police officers hit the beat, we’re investing in the infrastructure our corrections system needs to keep the community safe.”*

*“We know that community safety is more than just building more prison beds – that's why we’re boosting prison programs and investing in education and skill development.”*

*“For younger Victorians, we will boost early intervention and diversion programs so that a bad choice doesn’t turn into a life of crime.”*