

## EQUALITY FOR WOMEN

Despite decades of progress towards equality, many women still experience sexism and discrimination at work, home and in the community. The Greens want all women to be safe, valued and treated as equals in private and public life, regardless of their background, ethnicity, religion, disability, gender identity or sexuality. Women have the right to be free from violence and harassment and should have the freedom to choose what to do with their bodies. The Greens are committed to achieving equality for all women, including through housing, financial, and workplace security. We will put in place legal, workplace and economic reforms that directly address the key causes of inequality for women in Australia and globally. We acknowledge that transgender women and gender diverse people often experience compounded sexism and discrimination, which The Greens will address in our comprehensive LGBTIQ+ policies.



### THE GREENS WILL:

- Stop the epidemic of family and domestic violence against women
- Make abortion safe, accessible, legal and free
- Address the housing and homelessness crisis for older women
- Keep women safe from harassment and discrimination at work, online and on the street
- Fix the gender pay gap and improve economic security for women
- Improve global equality for women through our development program

## STOP THE EPIDEMIC OF FAMILY AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

We are experiencing a true national security crisis - one in three women experiences family and domestic violence (FDV) in their lifetime and, on average, one woman every week is killed by her partner or former partner.<sup>1</sup> Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women are 32 times more likely to be hospitalised from domestic violence.

The rate of domestic violence has not reduced despite public attention, but the need for crisis response services has increased as more women feel emboldened to seek help. Government investment in essential family and domestic violence frontline services is grossly inadequate,<sup>2</sup> and many legal services, shelters and support services report that they simply do not have the resources to help everyone who needs it.



## FULL FUNDING FOR FRONTLINE CRISIS RESPONSE SERVICES AND PRIMARY PREVENTION

We must make sure that no survivor is turned away when they need help. The Greens will create a new ten-year, \$5.3 billion National Partnership Agreement on Domestic Violence and Violence Against Women between state and federal governments. The Greens' plan would provide 10-year funding certainty for frontline response services and radically boost their funding by investing \$2.2 billion over four years as part of the 10 year commitment.

This agreement would provide dedicated, secure, long-term funding for specialist family and domestic violence services across the country to deliver outreach, crisis response, crisis accommodation, legal support, advocacy and post-crisis support to women who need it. It would include funding for crisis and temporary housing services, and would also be responsive to the particular needs of LGBTIQ+ people, migrants and people with disability.

As part of that 10 year funding commitment, the Greens will increase and provide long-term secure funding support for Our Watch and ANROWS (Australia's National Research Organisation for Women's Safety), the national primary prevention and cultural change experts.

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<sup>1</sup> Our Watch, Facts and Figures, 2018, [www.ourwatch.org.au/Understanding-Violence/Facts-and-figures](http://www.ourwatch.org.au/Understanding-Violence/Facts-and-figures)

<sup>2</sup> National Foundation for Australian Women, Gender Lens on the Budget 2018-19, 2018

## DIRECT FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR FDV SURVIVORS

The Greens would commit an additional \$200 million over four years to a Survivor Grant fund, which would give up to 50,000 FDV survivors grants of up to \$4000, helping approximately 1,000 survivors each month.

### **The Survivor Grant would be able to be used on the following expenses:**

- Basic household staples: food, clothing, care packs and utility costs;
- Safety support technology: for home and personal security;
- Medical, health and wellbeing needs: costs not covered by Medicare or Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme, and counselling or specialist services;
- Rent and housing costs;
- Community, social and economic participation: schooling, educational costs, workforce readiness (eg adult education, TAFE courses); and
- Independence: clothing, care for pets, outings, wellbeing courses.

### **The Survivor Grants would be accessed through existing family violence services, and be targeted to survivors of family violence who:**

- Are escaping family violence;
- Have recently experienced family violence; or
- Are planning to leave an abusive situation.

### **Priority would be given to:**

- Survivors at highest risk from family violence;
- Survivors experiencing financial hardship; and
- Survivors whose safety needs and independent living goals can reasonably be met through a flexible support package.



## MAKING FDV LEAVE 10 DAYS AND PAID

The Greens will also legislate to ensure all workers are entitled to 10 days paid family and domestic violence leave, so that no woman has to choose between getting paid and being safe. Five days of unpaid leave is wholly inadequate given the financial burden on women when leaving violent relationships.



## MAKE ABORTION SAFE, ACCESSIBLE, LEGAL AND FREE

Access to affordable sexual and reproductive healthcare, including abortion and contraception, is part of every woman's right to control her own body.

The Greens will continue to work at federal and state levels to ensure abortion is safe, free and legal in all Australian states.

The Greens want all women to have improved access to reproductive health and abortion services, including access to abortions in public hospitals within a reasonable distance of their homes. To achieve this we will provide \$15 million to fund the additional cost to public hospitals, as well as to cut out-of-pocket costs, and invest in improved data collection on termination rates. This data is especially important to ensure women in rural and regional locations have equitable access to the health services they need. This investment adds to the Greens long-standing commitment to index diagnostic imaging rebates on the MBS, which would reduce the cost of scans which are an additional financial burden faced by women seeking an abortion.

We will advocate for the introduction of safe-zones, so that women who have an abortion are not subjected to harassment for undergoing medical procedures.

In some Australian states women are forced to undergo counselling before they can terminate a pregnancy. While the Greens support informed consent for all medical procedures, each woman is the best, most knowledgeable expert about her own life -- including the decision on whether she needs additional counselling. Counselling should be made available to all who request it, but should not be mandatory. Moreover, counselling must be unbiased and transparent. The Greens will introduce legislation into parliament to mandate transparency in advertising for counselling services, and ensure that federal funding is strictly spent on unbiased counselling.

## ADDRESS THE CRISIS IN HOUSING AND HOMELESSNESS FOR WOMEN

The largest growing cohort of homeless people is older women, with huge increases in the number of women seeking housing and homelessness support services.

The Greens have a plan for policy reform to make private housing more affordable and to make public housing available to all who need it. We will reform unfair tax breaks, strengthen renters' rights, and invest in social housing to build 500,000 new public and community homes.

We will also increase funding for crisis and temporary housing services as part of our \$5.3 billion National Partnership Agreement on Domestic Violence and Violence Against Women. Dedicated resources to build transitional housing and crisis services for women is a key part of this plan.





## KEEP WOMEN SAFE FROM HARASSMENT & DISCRIMINATION AT WORK, ONLINE, ON THE STREET

Women have the right to be free of sexual harassment and discrimination everywhere, whether at work, online, at places of study, or on the street - no matter the time of day or what they are wearing.

The best way to stop harassment, discrimination and violence is before it occurs. Primary prevention involves challenging the deeply ingrained attitudes, social norms and gender inequalities that give rise to discrimination and ultimately violence against women. Creating a culture where women are safe is a task for us all, and starts with education and behavioural change by men. The Greens support primary prevention programs and men's behaviour change programs, like the Change the Story framework for primary prevention developed by Our Watch.

But change must start earlier, in our schools, where Respectful Relationships programs are already embedded in the National Curriculum but are often under-resourced or delivered infrequently. The federal government must work with States and Territories within the education system to support its rollout.

The Greens will also work federally with State and Territory governments for a nationally consistent sexual education curriculum, which closes significant gaps in the education of young people in issues such as consent, respect and safe sex. Importantly, sex education must keep up with the modern world and must include online safety and online consent. Sex education must also incorporate principles of diversity, including consideration of LGBTIQ+ relationships, culturally and linguistically diverse people, people living with disabilities and First Nations Peoples.

The Australian Human Rights Commission is currently undertaking the fourth National Inquiry into Sexual Harassment in Australian Workplaces. The Greens are committed to scrutinising its recommendations and pushing for any recommended legal changes to keep women safe from harassment and discrimination in the workplace. We would also task the Sex Discrimination Commissioner with providing advice on:

- Giving access to the Anti-Discrimination Tribunal for state-based employees; and
- The success of France's cat-calling laws which ban street harassment, and whether a national approach could be taken in Australia.

The Greens will also continue our work to stop the sexist, violence-inciting slogans against women and girls on Wicked Campers, and would task state and national governments through COAG with achieving a national ban on such slogans.

## FIX THE GENDER PAY GAP AND WOMEN'S ECONOMIC SECURITY

Our separate five point plan on ending the gender wage gap would:

1. Boost women's financial security through equal pay for equal work;
2. Legislate to protect the right to request family friendly, flexible workplaces;
3. Value the work of carers through extended paid parental leave, with superannuation;
4. Provide more affordable and accessible early childhood education to more children; and
5. Reform superannuation for fairer retirement.

The Greens will also work to re-introduce a Women's Budget Impact Statement which used to accompany the Federal Government's annual Budget, but was axed by Prime Minister Tony Abbott in 2014.



## TOWARDS GLOBAL EQUALITY

The Greens will reverse the trend of slashing aid budgets under successive Coalition and Labor Governments.

In terms of gender equality, the Greens are committed to ensuring that our aid program is specifically designed to raise the status of women globally. We support a suite of measures aimed at achieving global gender equality, including setting funding and performance targets for gender equality investments in our aid program, setting stand-alone funding targets for women's rights organisations, increasing Australia's funding for sexual and reproductive health rights, developing an adolescent girls action plan and requiring the Minister for Foreign Affairs to present an annual gender equality report to Parliament.