



Women's BUDGET STATEMENT 2020



ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

This publication was written and launched on the land of the Ngunnawal and Ngambri Peoples of the Canberra Region.

We pay our respect to Elders past and present, and recognise them as the custodians of the land.

The Women's Budget Statement was written with First Nations women. We especially acknowledge their leadership and contributions.

Foreword

Julie Collins MP
Shadow Minister for Women



A phrase that has been repeated again and again by leaders throughout the COVID-19 crisis is that the virus doesn't discriminate.

And whilst it may be true that anyone is at risk of contracting COVID-19, it is increasingly clear that the economic impact of the crisis is not being felt equally in Australia.

A larger proportion of women have lost their jobs and more women are dropping out of the labour force. Across the board we are already seeing worrying evidence of this inequality and sadly the Morrison Government has only made it worse.

The "refresh" of the Women's Economic Security Statement announced in the Budget contains nothing to address significant job losses in industries dominated by females. Nothing new on fixing the gender pay gap or superannuation balances, and no new funding for domestic and family violence service providers.

Women aren't just facing many of the consequences of COVID-19 more harshly, we also know they are doing much more of the dangerous frontline work to combat the pandemic.

COVID-19 should prompt us to consider the opportunities to address inequality going forward. It is disappointing the Morrison Government has produced no plan to fix gender inequality in Australia.

The Government's 2018 Women's Economic Security Statement is still not fully implemented and it promised a focus on workforce participation, earning potential and economic independence.

Since then, all three of these "pillars" have gone backwards or made no progress. In the early months of the pandemic, women were 50 per cent more likely than men to have stopped looking for work. Women also lost hours of work faster than men - hours worked by men fell 7.5 per cent, while hours worked by women fell 11.5 per cent. Women have also borne the brunt of increased caring responsibilities with ABS data showing women are taking on another hour of unpaid care work and another four hours of childcare every day.

The Morrison Government has missed the opportunity to put forward a genuine reform agenda that includes addressing job losses in industries dominated by females, the gender pay gap, Australian women's shrinking superannuation balances, and the discrimination that is fuelling these issues.



Anthony Albanese MP
Leader of the Australian Labor Party

You learn a lot about character during a crisis.

During the coronavirus pandemic, we've seen Australians at their best, looking out for each other.

It's been a time of shared sacrifice, for the greater good – fundamentally, to keep our family, friends and neighbours safe. We've been getting through this together.

But it's been a lot tougher for some than others. And there's no doubt that women have been disproportionately affected by the pandemic and the Morrison Recession.

Since March, 200,000 have lost their jobs and 110,000 women have left the labour force altogether. At the peak of coronavirus restrictions earlier this year, more than 1 million women had no work whatsoever.

That's before you even consider that childcare fees in Australia are some of the highest in the world, and more than 100,000 families across the country are locked out of the system because they just can't afford it.

And on top of that, we know women retire with superannuation balances

which are on average 47 per cent lower than men.

We can do so much better than this. We need to do so much better than this.

We want women to have affordable access to essential health services, no matter what they earn or where they live.

We want to end the scourge of domestic violence against women.

We want to give women equal access to the job market, and dignity in retirement.

We're going to lead the debate on targets for representation for women on boards, in the public service and senior positions. Because women deserve a seat at the table when decisions are being made.

And importantly, if we're elected to lead Australia, we'll reinstate a Women's Budget Statement in Government to stop women from being left behind, like they are under this Government.

Only Labor will make sure no woman is held back, and no woman is left behind. Because it's the right thing to do.



Jim Chalmers MP
Shadow Treasurer

This year's health and economic crisis has had an enormous impact on women. Even before the crisis, women were overrepresented in insecure work, paid and unpaid care work, and faced a gap in pay and retirement incomes. Too many have since lost their job or work hours, been deliberately excluded from vital support or been forced to wind down their retirement savings. These are some of the many reasons why a Women's Budget Statement has never been more important. It's a critical tool to advance equality, improve policy decisions for the entire country, and deliver a strong and fair recovery.



Sharon Claydon MP
Chair of the Status of Women Caucus Committee

Even before COVID-19, gender inequality was proving to be stubbornly persistent. On virtually almost every measure, Australian women come out second-best – on pay rates, on superannuation, on employment opportunities, on housing and on personal safety.

Regretfully, the pandemic has only deepened these pre-existing fault lines.

But COVID-19 has also forced us all to take a fresh look at our priorities and how we can do things better.

We know the things that cause and perpetuate gender inequality in Australia. Now is the time to re-double our efforts to set about changing them.

For the Morrison Government, this must start with equal representation and a commitment to restore gender responsive budgeting. Until the Morrison Government is serious about having women at all tables where decisions are made and is prepared to analyse and publish the impact of the budget on gender equality in Australia, it will continue to make decisions that disadvantage women and girls and entrench inequality even further.

Contents

The Women's Budget Statement	7
The 2020 Budget	8
Economic impacts	10
Women & work	12
Childcare	14
Retirement incomes	16
Aged care	18
Health & mental health	20
Education & training	22
Housing & homelessness	24
Women's safety	26
Access to justice	28
First Nations women	30
Women with disabilities	32
Young women	34
Women from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds and migrant women	36
International development	38
Liberals' record	40
Labor's record	41

The Women's Budget Statement

Budgets matter for women. The choices governments make are not gender neutral, especially at this time. It is important that gender implications be considered as part of the budget as the nation emerges from the COVID-19 crisis to make sure that Australian women do not fall further behind.

Australia was the first country in the world to produce a Women's Budget Statement under the Hawke Government in 1984. The idea was to be transparent about how the decisions made in the Budget impact Australian women. This continued for thirty years until Prime Minister Abbott – the then Minister for Women – scrapped the process in his horror 2014 Budget to try to hide the impact of his cuts on women.

Since then, Labor has continued to produce it every year from Opposition. Labor has also conducted gender impact assessments on Shadow Cabinet submissions and new policy proposals since 2014.

The 2020 Budget

Women are being left out and left behind by the Morrison Government.

THE QUICK FACTS

- The 2020 Budget contains nothing to address significant job losses in industries dominated by women.
- No new funding for frontline domestic and family violence service providers that support women and their children escaping violence.
- Nothing new to address the gender pay gap.
- Nothing on superannuation and women's economic security in retirement.
- Nothing on childcare.
- Nothing on social housing.
- The 2020 Budget doesn't contain a single measure that directly addresses women's long-term and structural economic disadvantage.

“

Women are being left out and left behind by the Morrison Government

NO PLAN FOR WOMEN

Women working on the frontline have carried Australia through COVID-19 and have experienced the brunt of the adverse economic and social implications of the crisis. In response, the Morrison Government has failed to produce a meaningful plan to make sure women don't go backwards as a result of this pandemic.

The Morrison Government is racking up \$1.1 trillion of debt but the Prime Minister's "Women's Economic Statement" contains just \$240 million in spending promises over five years without a plan to improve the participation of women in the workforce. This is just 0.024 per cent of the one trillion dollar debt racked up during the Morrison Recession.



The Morrison Government must do better

It has been acknowledged over 35 times by the Morrison Government that women are being particularly adversely affected by the pandemic, but there is no comprehensive plan in the 2020 Budget to help get women back into the workforce.

There is no plan to lift the permanent rate of JobSeeker from \$40 per day, tackle insecure work, create opportunities for women or to improve access to childcare.

No plan to support women and their children escaping violence. In March, the Prime Minister promised an "initial" \$150 million for domestic and family violence services. Frontline services have been crying out for additional funding but the Morrison Government has failed to deliver.

The Morrison Government must do better.

Economic Impacts

IMPACT ON WOMEN



The Coalition has repeatedly delivered Budgets that didn't contain a single measure to directly address women's long term and structural economic disadvantage.

New research has shown that there are more employment-intensive and gender equitable forms of stimulus than large scale physical infrastructure. For example, a study of seven OECD countries shows that public investment equal to 1 per cent of GDP in labour intensive care industries (such as child care or aged care) generates more total employment than investment in construction. If applied to the Australian market, it is estimated that this employment ratio would be nearly five to one.

A sustainable budget and revenue base is critical to ensuring the Government can invest more in services that Australian women rely on.

THE LIBERALS' RECORD



Since the crisis, the female participation rate has dropped 1.5 per cent. The Parliamentary Budget Office has said that the decline in women's workforce participation experienced during COVID-19 could pose a material risk to the budget over the medium term. This is because strong female participation rates in recent decades have made a significant contribution to economic growth. Under the Morrison Government, this progress is now going backwards.

Despite the disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on Australian women, the Government has failed to produce a plan to make sure women's economic security does not continue to worsen as a result of the pandemic. Instead of a plan, Scott Morrison and Josh Frydenberg are offering up JobKeeper cuts, JobSeeker cuts, superannuation cuts, wage cuts, and more pointing the finger and shifting the blame.

Analysis of the income tax cuts in the Government's 2018 and 2019 budgets show men get a much larger share of the benefit compared to women. The 2018 package saw men get twice the benefit compared to women. This followed men receiving three quarters of the benefits of tax breaks delivered in the 2017 Budget. The Australia Institute has modelled that the stage three tax cuts again favour males, who get more than twice the benefit that women do.

JOBKEEPER

Women make up only 47 per cent of JobKeeper recipients. We know that at least 200,000 Australian women who work in the accommodation, food services, and retail trade sectors alone missed out on the JobKeeper payment due to its exclusion of casual workers. The Morrison Government should follow Labor's call to extend JobKeeper to casual workers. The cuts to JobKeeper mean that twice as many women as men will have their wage subsidy payment halved because of cuts for part-timers.

JOBSEEKER

The JobSeeker coronavirus supplement has also allowed many women in poverty to put fresh food on the table or pay private rent after escaping from domestic and family violence. Even before COVID-19, longer-term recipients of JobSeeker were growing faster among women and older Australians. Between 2013 and 2019, the share of recipients on JobSeeker for one year or more rose from almost 50 per cent to 71 per cent for women and from 51 to 63 per cent for men. The single largest cohort of people now receiving JobSeeker are women over 60. Despite this, the Government has excluded 460,000 women on JobSeeker from wage subsidies in the Budget – simply because they are over 35. This will unfairly hurt women returning to the workforce after caring, and those who have lost their jobs in the recession.

The Budget also locked-in Christmas cuts to JobSeeker that will see it reduce to the old Newstart rate of \$40 a day. The Morrison Government must deliver a permanent increase to the JobSeeker payment.

Women and Work

IMPACT ON WOMEN



Since the Liberal Party took office in 2013, Australia has slipped from 15th place on the Global Gender Gap Index down to 46th place. The gender pay gap in Australia has remained stubborn at 14 per cent and the Government's 2018 and 2020 Women's Economic Security Statements include no measures that address it. New research from the Workplace Gender Equality Agency shows that having more women on boards and in senior leadership positions drives better company performance, greater productivity and greater profitability yet the number of women on boards continues to stagnate.

Protecting women's rights at work is crucial to advancing gender equality. Women are disproportionately represented among low paid workers and are also more likely to be in casual work and insecure jobs.

Not only have women lost significantly more jobs, women have been on the frontline of this pandemic in these predominantly insecure, underpaid and undervalued roles. Women make up 80 per cent of aged and disability care workers, almost 80 per cent of healthcare and social assistance workers, 96 per cent of early educators, 75 per cent of checkout operators, 57 per cent of commercial cleaners and 85 per cent of primary school teachers.

THE LIBERALS' RECORD

*i*

The Government's 2018 Women's Economic Security Statement promised workforce participation, earning potential, and economic independence. On all three of these measures, the Morrison Government has failed with workforce participation going backwards during COVID-19. The Morrison Government "refresh" of the Statement in the 2020 Budget presents no new measures that protects women's rights at work, address the gender pay gap or fix women's economic security in retirement.

ParentsNext

Programs like ParentsNext overwhelmingly affect vulnerable women who face a range of difficult circumstances. The approach the Morrison Government has taken has a tendency to judge and punish vulnerable women, rather than helping them support their family and their reintegration into the workforce. Rather than attacking people struggling to get work, the Government should help women to get decent, secure work. The Morrison Government has recently extended the ParentsNext contract for another three years.

Paid Parental Leave

Over the 2018-19 fiscal year, nearly 180,000 parents received PPL. A family that loses eligibility for PPL and Dad and Partner Pay will be as much as \$15,000 worse off. Labor moved an amendment in the Senate to temporarily amend the PPL work test so that families don't miss out because a parent has lost their job; been stood down; or had their hours reduced. The Government did not support this amendment. The Government has gone some way in responding to this call in the Budget, but some women will still fall through the cracks.

Childcare

IMPACT ON WOMEN



Women still take on a disproportionate share of family and caring responsibilities in Australian households. Australian women do almost twice as much unpaid housework and caring work as men and their careers are disproportionately affected by pregnancy and caring responsibilities. COVID-19 has exacerbated this with ABS data showing women are taking on another hour of unpaid care work and another four hours of childcare every day.

Without access to affordable care, many parents will be forced to give up or turn down work - a sacrifice that is most often taken by women. Study after study has shown that affordable childcare would increase women's workforce participation. In the midst of a recession, the last thing our economy needs is working mothers being unable to take up work because they cannot find childcare.

96 per cent of early educators are women who have been working on the frontline of the COVID-19 crisis. The Morrison Government only provided JobKeeper for two-thirds of early educators, and then ripped JobKeeper from the sector before any other profession.

THE LIBERALS' RECORD

*i*

The 2020 Budget has no plan for childcare. Nothing for families and women who rely on child care.

Families were already being crippled by high childcare fees before the pandemic, with out of pocket costs soaring by 7.2 per cent in one year alone. Now in the middle of a recession, when parents are relying on mortgage and rent moratoriums, as well as JobKeeper and JobSeeker to survive, childcare fees will be out of reach for many.

The Morrison Government has bungled early education and care throughout this pandemic, and it is parents, children, educators and providers who have paid the price every step of the way.

We know that affordable childcare increases workforce participation and in response the Morrison Government has failed to act. It would enable more parents – mostly women – to take up job opportunities or increase their hours to secure their financial situation. This in turn will grow the economy, while supporting children's learning and development.

Retirement income

IMPACT ON WOMEN



There is a large gap between the superannuation savings of Australian men and women. On average, women retire with 47 per cent less superannuation than men. This means that older women – particularly single women – are at a greater risk of experiencing poverty and homelessness in retirement. By the time they are 60, 34 per cent of single women in Australia live in poverty.

Women with lower balances on average will again be heavily impacted by the Morrison Government's troubled early access to superannuation during COVID-19. Despite men accessing superannuation in higher numbers, women have accessed a higher proportion of their balances than men. This will have a negative impact on women's economic security in retirement and is likely to exacerbate the superannuation gap.

Given that a large portion of women do not retire with sufficient superannuation funds, 55 per cent of age pension recipients are women.

THE LIBERALS' RECORD

*i*

The Coalition Government has spent the past seven years attacking retirement incomes. It cut the pension asset test, attempted to scrap the energy supplement, tried to raise the pension age to 70 and left 1.18 million women with no choice but to withdraw \$14.4 billion (as at 4 August) from their superannuation accounts during COVID-19. This means women will be hundreds of thousands of dollars worse off in retirement. Analysis by AMP suggests on average women are accessing 21 per cent of their starting super balances, compared to 17 per cent for men. Of great concern, 14 per cent of women are clearing out their entire super balance, compared to 12 per cent of men. Despite this, the Government failed to model the impact that this policy decision would have on women.

Right now, many women are living their final years in poverty. If the Government doesn't act, another generation of women will face similar prospects.

Aged Care

IMPACT ON WOMEN



The aged care system is dominated by women.

Women in Australia have a longer life expectancy than men and are more likely to need access to aged care services. Consequently, two in three older Australians receiving care and support are women.

With older Australians not wanting to enter residential aged care more older women will make a choice to age in their own homes.

In terms of the aged care workforce more than 85 per cent of those delivering frontline care and support are women.

The leadership, care and support provided by women to vulnerable older Australians has never been more important than in these difficult and challenging times as the COVID-19 pandemic continues to impact across aged care services.

The COVID-19 pandemic has exposed significant issues for the aged care workforce. We know there aren't enough workers and they aren't paid enough. Many casual workers are employed across multiple sites to make up their weekly hours.

THE LIBERALS' RECORD



Older women

Women continue to be impacted by the Morrison Government's failure to address the home care packages waitlist. For the past two years there have consistently been more than 100,000 older Australians waiting for their approved home care package. Around 60,000 of those waiting for care are women.

The home care packages announced by the Morrison Government in this Budget won't come close to meeting demand or addressing the significant concerns of the Aged Care Royal Commission. This meagre amount of packages along with the current waitlist of over 100,000 and the impact of COVID-19 will only see more older women join the Morrison Government's never-ending queue.

THE LIBERALS' RECORD



The \$1.7 billion cuts to the previous aged care budget have impacted older women receiving care across residential facilities. Shockingly this Budget has no significant new funding for residential aged care where so many older Australians have died from COVID-19.

Women in the aged care workforce

The Morrison Government has a dismal record when it comes to supporting workers in aged care, the majority of whom are women.

More than seven years ago the Coalition Government cut the \$1.5 billion workforce supplement to 350,000 aged care workers weeks after forming government. This reduced the opportunity for more than 300,000 female workers to undertake career development opportunities as well as address staff shortages.

Long before the COVID-19 pandemic the Morrison Government knew there were significant staff shortages but did nothing to grow, train or support the workforce.

It has sat on the *A Matter of Care* workforce strategy for the past two years and has not fully implemented any of the 14 measures. There is still no registration scheme for aged care workers.

The Morrison Government has failed to adequately support the aged care workforce during the COVID-19 pandemic.

- It has excluded 125,000 aged care workers from receiving the retention bonus payment.
- Despite the sector facing the highest death toll from the COVID-19 pandemic the Morrison Government failed to prepare the workforce for the impact of this devastating virus. Only one in three aged care workers has done the Morrison Government's personal protection training module.
- Casual workers were left to fend for themselves given they had no access to sick leave.
- It had no idea about the number of staff who were working across multiple sites.

Health & mental health

IMPACT ON WOMEN



Australian women deserve the best possible standard of health care. But they have been let down by the 2020 Budget, and by seven years of the Coalition Government.

While Australian women enjoy longer lives than men, they spend more years with conditions like heart disease – the leading cause of ill-health for Australian women.

Overall life expectancy figures also mask stark disparities for some women. On average, First Nations women live eight years less than other Australian women. And women in disadvantaged areas have twice the rate of potentially avoidable deaths than those in advantaged areas.

Australian women also face unique health challenges. For example, they are more likely to experience physical violence, and much more likely to experience sexual violence – with one in five Australian women suffering sexual violence since the age of 15.

Such challenges have been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic, with some women's health services reporting a 25 per cent surge in demand for mental health services, causing wait times to blow out to three months.

Women are also more exposed to COVID-19 in health care settings because they make up 79 per cent of the health care and social assistance workforces in Australia.

Yet this Budget continues the Government's record of neglecting women's health.

THE LIBERALS' RECORD

*i*

Scott Morrison doesn't understand women's health needs. He told Parliament that the lack of maternity services in regional areas could be addressed with better roads. But Labor knows that Australian women face unique health challenges that deserve urgent attention.

Because women seek health care more often, they are more exposed to record out-of-pocket costs for care under Scott Morrison. Australian women are around 50 per cent more likely than men to delay or avoid GP visits due to cost, with over 350,000 women forced to skip seeing their GP each year. Even more women skip seeing a specialist (375,000 a year) or filling a prescription (612,000). And a staggering 1.2 million Australian women skip dental care each year due to the cost of seeing a dentist.

This Budget also fails to take action on preventive health. One in two Australian women has a chronic condition, and one in four has multiple chronic conditions – a higher rate than men. This includes the two in five Australian women who experience mental ill-health over their lifetime.

Many of these conditions are preventable. But risk factors remain prevalent, with three in five Australian women overweight or obese – a risk factor for many conditions, including cardiovascular disease, high blood pressure, type 2 diabetes, sleep apnoea and osteoarthritis.

These risk factors are driven in part by the 'social determinants of health' – the social, economic and environmental forces that shape women's health. Protecting women's health and preventing disease will be even harder as the recession drags on, emphasising the need for urgent action.

Education & Training

IMPACT ON WOMEN



The Morrison Government's Budget fails to address inequality in the education system. The Government is delivering apprenticeship funding that overwhelmingly benefits men and increases to university fees that are worst for women.

THE LIBERALS' RECORD

*i*

VET & Skills

Australia's training sector has been in crisis under the Government, with steep declines in apprentice and trainee numbers. The trend has continued during the COVID-19 pandemic and has impacted women most. The number of women starting Australian apprenticeships has dropped by 28 per cent, compared to 19 per cent for men.

This Budget bakes in existing inequities in the training system without doing enough to change them. For instance, men are three times as likely to benefit from wage subsidies for existing apprenticeships as women, who only make up a quarter of Australian apprentices.

Measures in this Budget don't do enough to reverse inequality. More work is needed for training in female-dominated industries and to support women in male-dominated trades.

Universities

The Morrison Government's Job Ready Graduates legislation will put women further in debt. Women make up two thirds of students in humanities, social sciences, media and communications, where the Government is jacking up student fees. Thousands will pay more; many students fees will double.

Analysis by the Bankwest Curtin Economics Centre shows overall, young women will be paying an additional \$498 million each year. The changes will increase student contributions for around 170,000 men and 240,000 women. Caring responsibilities already mean women are often slower to repay their Higher Education Loan Program debts – accumulating more interest and ultimately paying more for their degrees. These changes will mean women studying arts degrees could take decades to pay off their American-sized debts.

Housing & homelessness

IMPACT ON WOMEN



Homelessness is fast becoming a women's issue. Unaffordable housing disproportionately impacts women, due to average lower incomes, savings and superannuation amongst women. Women receive 56 per cent of the Commonwealth Rent Assistance paid to individuals and families on very low incomes. The majority of people accessing specialist homelessness services are women. Every day, about 166 Australian women seek shelter through homelessness services and are turned away. That's why we have been calling on the Morrison Government to fund the construction and repair of social housing.

Women and children

Family and domestic violence is the main reason women and children leave their homes. According to the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare in 2018-9, two out of five people accessing specialist homelessness services had experienced family and domestic violence, an overwhelming 90 per cent of these people were women. Women and children cannot stay at home if their home is not safe, domestic and family violence was a national crisis before the pandemic. Lockdowns and self-isolation have only exacerbated it.



Older women are the fastest growing group of homeless Australians

Older women

Older women are the fastest growing group of homeless Australians. A recent report released by Housing for the Aged Action Group and Social Ventures Australia revealed around 400,000 women over the age of 45 are at risk of homelessness in Australia. Older women need better access to safe and affordable housing and COVID-19 has only made that need more urgent.

THE LIBERALS' RECORD

*i*

The 2020 Budget is a testament to the Morrison Government's abject failure on housing affordability and homelessness. Rental stress and homelessness rates are rising while home ownership for young Australians has collapsed. The Budget virtually ignores Australia's housing and homelessness crisis failing to invest a single dollar in the construction and repair of social housing while cutting \$41.3 million from homelessness services from July 2021.

Women and children

In February 2019 the Morrison Government announced a grants program to expand emergency accommodation for women and children experiencing domestic and family violence. The Morrison Government's own guidelines state applicants would start to see "grant activity around July 2020". Instead it has taken the Morrison Government almost 20 months to announce which organisations will receive a grant. The constant delays from this Government are unacceptable.

Older women

The Morrison Government has failed to produce a plan to reduce the rising number of older women experiencing or at risk of experiencing homelessness. The high cost of housing and a severe shortage of social housing only make this problem worse. Labor has called on the Morrison Government to invest in more social housing. Now is the time to help put a roof over the heads of women experiencing or at risk of experiencing homelessness.

Women's safety

IMPACT ON WOMEN



There is nothing new in the 2020 Budget for frontline domestic and family violence service providers.

Violence against women and their children is a national crisis. On average, one woman a week is murdered by her current or former partner. One in three Australian women have experienced physical violence. All women deserve to live free from violence. Until we tackle the scourge of domestic violence, we cannot say Australian women are truly equal.

COVID-19 and Family Violence

Family and domestic violence has only worsened since the pandemic. 1800RESPECT received 1.5 times more calls in 2020 than in 2019. Half of women experiencing abuse told an Australian Institute of Criminology survey that it had become more extreme since COVID-19. Frontline service providers have reported an increase in women experiencing violence for the first time during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Sexual harassment

Almost two in five women have experienced sexual harassment in the workplace in the past five years according to a landmark inquiry conducted by the Australian Human Rights Commission. The report included 55 recommendations which the Government could implement immediately to better protect women in the workplace but the 2020 Budget only contains support for one recommendation.

THE LIBERALS' RECORD

i

Frontline service providers say the Morrison Government simply hasn't given them the resources needed:

- Family violence prevention legal services turned away 30-40 per cent of women seeking help.
- An estimated 150 women are turned away from specialist homelessness services every day.
- Services that help men change their violent behaviour have waiting lists up to six months long.

Funding that has been announced is drip fed out months after it was promised:

- It took the Morrison Government six months to distribute emergency funding.
- Money promised last year for the construction of emergency housing was recently re-announced.

Important projects are running behind or have dropped away:

- A service for courts, police and service providers to share information to stop tragedies has stalled.
- A program to help victims of domestic violence get their fair share of superannuation assets in family law proceedings was supposed to commence this year, but is delayed indefinitely.

Sexual harassment

More than six months has now passed since the Sex Discrimination Commissioner tabled a report with recommendations on how to reduce sexual harassment in the workplace. Despite this, the Government has failed to adequately respond despite multiple high-profile cases of workplace sexual harassment being continually revealed in the media.

Access to justice

IMPACT ON WOMEN



Family violence is a growing area of legal need, particularly for women and their children. Leaving a violent relationship will often give rise to a large number of distinct but related legal issues, including disputes over property, family violence orders, child protection matters, housing and employment issues and welfare-related legal need. Access to a lawyer in the context of family break-up is not only vital to ensure the physical and economic security of those involved, in particular the children, but it can also ensure that small legal issues – an unpaid debt, for example – do not become a much bigger problem.

First Nations women are 32 times more likely to be hospitalised from family violence and 11 times more likely to die of violent assault than other women. Properly funding access to culturally appropriate legal assistance services to First Nations families helps save lives. Domestic violence in Australia is at epidemic levels, and the shopfront services and helplines provided by Family Violence Prevention Legal Services are often the only place domestic violence victims from First Nations communities can seek help discreetly. It is estimated that the national annual cost of violence against First Nations women and children will reach \$2.2 billion by 2021-2022, not including the costs of flow-on impacts on their children.

THE LIBERALS' RECORD



For almost seven years, the Coalition Government has neglected the family law system and frontline legal services.

When it comes to the family law system, judges have not been replaced in a timely manner, funding has not increased in response to increasing demand and review after review – including many dozens of sensible and modest recommendations for reform – have been ignored.

In early 2019, the Australian Law Reform Commission completed its comprehensive, landmark report on the family law system, including 60 recommendations for reform. The Government hasn't yet responded to that report. The Morrison Government also continues to ignore many of the bi-partisan recommendations in the Standing Committee on Social Policy and Legal Affairs' 2017 report on a better family law system to support and protect those affected by violence.

THE LIBERALS' RECORD

i

The Morrison Government does not even follow through on its own announcements. For example, in the 2018 Women's Economic Security Statement, the Morrison Government promised to provide \$3.3 million to improve women's access to superannuation assets at the end of a relationship. That modest and uncontroversial measure still hasn't been implemented.

While the Morrison Government continues to do nothing, Australia's family law system is at breaking point.

Over 30 per cent of litigants in Family Court trials are unrepresented, including those who have experienced family violence. And it can often take as long as 36 months between a court filing and the commencement of a trial in both the Family Court and the Federal Circuit Court of Australia. A lack of legal support combined with lengthy delays can expose women and their children to stress, financial hardship and a significantly higher risk of psychological and physical harm.

It is not just the family law system that has been neglected by the Morrison Government.

In May, the Morrison Government finally announced additional funding for frontline legal services in response to COVID-19. But evidence given to the Senate Select Committee on COVID-19 revealed that the new funding commitment was too little and is being delivered too late. Despite that evidence, the Government did not announce any new funding measures for the legal assistance sector in the 2020-21 Budget.

The thousands of women and their families who rely on these services deserve better from the Morrison Government.

Elder abuse

Labor has always supported the right of older people to live with dignity, free from all forms of abuse.

It has been estimated that as many as 185,000 older people in Australia experience some form of abuse or neglect each year.

Disappointingly, the Morrison Government has failed to address the prevalence of elder abuse. After more than three years the Morrison Government has not fully implemented any of the 14 aged care recommendations included in the Australian Law Reform Commission's elder abuse report.

The mistreatment of older Australians is simply not acceptable and the Morrison Government must do more to combat all forms of elder abuse.

First Nations women

IMPACT ON WOMEN



The worsening health and wellbeing and their social determinants among First Nations women clearly shows that current strategies are failing, and that the directives of First Nations leaders have not been supported in the Government's 2020-21 Budget.

While First Nations people make up 3.3 per cent of the Australian population, they made up 25 per cent of the clients accessing specialist homelessness services in 2016-17. The Australian Institute of Health and Welfare estimates that of the 64,644 First Nations people who sought specialist help for homelessness in 2016-17, 61 per cent were women.

First Nations women comprise 34 per cent of all female prisoners compared to 2 per cent of the overall Australian population. Although the majority of people in prison are male (97 per cent), First Nations women are the most rapidly growing population of prisoners, with rates increasing by 150 per cent since the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody, twice the rate of other females and double the rate of First Nations males from 2000-2016. These women have often experienced poverty, grief and loss, domestic violence, racism and poor mental health.

THE LIBERALS' RECORD

*i*

Australia continually fails to deal with declining outcomes for First Nations women across a range of areas and the 2020-21 Budget is no different, offering very little to First Nations women and their families.

- Since 2013, much of the progress made under Labor has been unwound.
- The shift of the portfolio into the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet has reduced the quality of service provision and policy development.
- The \$500 million Abbott cuts to Indigenous Affairs in the 2014 Budget have never been reversed.
- Further cuts to health and education have had a substantial impact on First Nations people.

The Morrison Government's 2020-21 Budget fails First Nations women. There is:

- No additional education funding for young First Nations women - the *Clontarf Foundation* funding supports the education of young First Nations men only.
- No additional health or legal/justice services for First Nations women.
- No new money for further frontline domestic violence services, including no additional emergency and social housing to meet increased demand due to COVID-19.
- No new money for additional frontline Closing the Gap services to ensure delivery of targets - only an equity injection for new First Nations housing.
- No COVID-19 recovery support for unemployed Indigenous women over 35 years of age to regain employment.

Women with disabilities

IMPACT ON WOMEN



Around 240,000 more Australian women than men are living with some form of disability. We know that women make up more than two thirds of primary carers (approximately 580,000 out of 856,000) in Australia and 55.5 per cent of all carers (1,499,000 out of 2,698,700).

Compared to their peers, women with disability experience significantly higher levels of all forms of violence more intensely and frequently and are subjected to such violence by a greater number of perpetrators. Their experiences of violence last over a longer period of time, and more severe injuries result from the violence. Elderly single women living with disability are more likely to live in poverty.

Women make up 70 per cent of the disability support workforce, and disability service organisations which have higher levels of casual employment and lower levels of permanent employment. These carers have been working on the frontline of the COVID-19 pandemic, providing vital support to some of Australia's most vulnerable people.

THE LIBERALS' RECORD

*i*

The Coalition Government has disregarded the disability sector for seven years.

In the 2019-20 Budget, the Morrison Government cut \$4.6 billion out of the NDIS and only put \$1.5 billion back in 2020-21 – meaning women can't access the support they need under the NDIS.

In 2018, the Morrison Government created a \$35 million a year disability watchdog in that has only issued one infringement to a provider in two years. This means the Morrison Government is failing to protect those women subjected to violence and neglect.

The Morrison Government left people with disability and support workers behind when it waited six weeks into Victoria's second wave to put in place formal governance arrangements – causing anxiety among women with a disability and support workers about COVID-19 preparedness. Workforce supply was strained when the Morrison Government refused to put in place a national retention bonus for disability workers.

Australians with disability are an afterthought to the Morrison Government. Its national COVID emergency response plan did not mention people with disability once.

Young Women

IMPACT ON WOMEN



Young women have disproportionately felt the social and economic pain

Young Australians have disproportionately felt the social and economic pain that COVID-19 restrictions and the recession have brought with young women particularly feeling the burden.

Young women are more likely to work in industries heavily impacted by COVID-19 including accommodation and food services and are also less likely to qualify for JobKeeper due to the Morrison Government excluding casuals with less than 12 months service.

Disproportionate job losses combined with social and educational disruptions have led to significant mental health challenges for young women who are seeking support in larger numbers than their male counterparts.

Young women have been disproportionately forced to make early superannuation withdrawals that could cost them up to \$100,000 in retirement due to lack of government support.

Young women are trying to enter the workforce, the housing market, and commence education and training in the midst of the first recession in 30 years.

Young people deserve support in the labour market but the Morrison Government's track record doesn't instil much confidence they can get the Hiring Credit right – think the failed and exploitative Youth Path Program.

THE LIBERALS' RECORD

*i*

Trying to address the interrelated social, economic and health challenges that young women face with isolated, band-aid solutions will fail. It is critical the Morrison Government takes a holistic, coordinated approach.

The Minister for Youth should be coordinating across government, including with the Minister for Women, on these matters but unfortunately young Australians have been met largely with silence from their Minister during the pandemic.

Young people have had no voice within the Morrison Government, with no national youth strategy for a decade, no Office for Youth, and an absent Youth Minister.

Now more than ever, in the midst of the greatest challenge this generation has ever faced, our young people need a strategy and leadership from the Morrison Government.

That is why the Morrison Government must urgently implement a COVID-19 Youth Recovery Strategy that is co-designed with a diverse range of young people including equal representation for young women.

Women from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds and migrant women

IMPACT ON WOMEN



Almost half of the temporary migrants in Australia are women. During this global pandemic we have seen Australia leave people on temporary visas behind and this Budget provides no extra support to help them. When people on temporary visas are left behind, they get exploited, leading to wage suppression across the economy – and it's even worse for women on temporary visas.

Right now, there are 79.5 million people forcibly displaced around the globe, over half the displaced population are women and children. Displaced women and children are vulnerable at every stage of their journey: during conflict, during flight and in their place of refuge.

THE LIBERALS' RECORD

*i*

Women on temporary visas are being left out and left behind. The Budget contains nothing to address the significant issues temporary migrants face while in Australia.

The Morrison Government has failed to support people on temporary visas during the pandemic. Migrant women and people in Australia on temporary visas experience domestic and family violence at a high rate and can face additional risk because they are often unable to access the services they need.

Risks include the inability to leave a violent relationship due to visa status, having to return to a violent relationship because their only other option is to leave Australia without their children, limited access to domestic violence services, and no access to income or non-emergency medical services.

Women from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds

Multiculturalism is one of Australia's greatest achievements. From 200 countries and 260 languages, Australia's diversity is our strength.

Too many women in our multicultural communities who call Australia home are being let down and left behind by the Morrison Government during this pandemic. The Government has failed to support women on temporary visas – even failing to accurately translate important public health messages. Labor will continue to make the case for a fair deal for multicultural communities, and to make sure the strengths of multicultural women are valued and recognised.

International development

IMPACT ON WOMEN



Gender equality is a key issue for international development policies and programs. Tackling gender discrimination is central to the economic and human development of Australia's partner countries and to supporting women's rights and opportunities.

Women and girls in developing countries face severe challenges including economic disadvantage and gender discrimination. Gender discrimination manifests itself in unequal access by women and girls to education, healthcare and other services, difficulties in securing formal employment, risks of violence and under-representation in Parliaments, governments and other institutions.

COVID-19 has exacerbated the gendered aspects of poverty and disadvantage in the developing world. Women and girls in many developing countries are the hardest hit by the economic, health and social impacts of the pandemic. Research by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation has found that COVID-19's impacts on health systems in developing countries will increase maternal and neonatal mortality rates and reduce access to family planning services. The pandemic will also push more unpaid caring responsibilities onto women and increase the risk that girls in low and middle income countries will not return to schools after they reopen.

THE LIBERALS' RECORD



Since 2013 consecutive Liberal Governments have cut Australia's Official Development Assistance (ODA) by \$11.8 billion. Australian ODA spending is down by more than \$1 billion a year and is at a record low as a share of Gross National Income. These cuts in overseas aid programs have hurt some of the poorest people in the world and have fallen especially harshly on women and children in developing countries.

THE LIBERALS' RECORD

*i*

The Government's own statistics show that Australia's ODA spending on programs which have gender equality as a principal or significant objective has been cut from \$2.19 billion a year when the Liberals came to office to \$1.34 billion in 2018-19.

The aid cuts have been largest in percentage terms for developing countries and regions where women face significant challenges including:

- Afghanistan, where annual funding for Australia's aid programs was cut by 41 per cent over the period from 2014 to 2019
- Bangladesh, where annual funding was cut by 27 per cent from 2014 to 2019
- Sub-Saharan Africa, which has seen a cut of 56 per cent in annual funding
- The Middle East and North Africa, where funding has been cut by 32 per cent.

The Morrison Government has cut Australia's bilateral aid to Pakistan to zero, scrapping this support for important and successful Australian aid programs designed to boost access to school for girls and young women.

The Morrison Government has also failed to meet their own strategic target of ensuring that more than 80 per cent of Australian aid investments address gender issues. Not only has this target not been met every year since 2014-15 but its performance against the benchmark has actually been getting worse each year.

Instead of taking action to turn this deteriorating performance on gender-inclusive aid around, the Morrison Government has now dumped the target.

Liberal's record

Gender equity is not a priority for the Morrison Government. Not long after they were first elected in 2013, Australia slipped from 15th to 44th place in the Global Gender Gap Report under the Coalition's watch, Australia is now at 46th.

In the last seven years, the Coalition Government:

- Appointed Tony Abbott as the Minister for Women and cancelled the annual Women's Budget Statement in his horror 2014 budget.
- Tried five times to slash Paid Parental Leave, calling mothers "rorters", "double dippers" and "fraudsters."
- Tried to cut around \$35 million from Community Legal Centres that provide crucial legal services to people experiencing family violence.
- Have started trying to force through changes to the law that would effectively abolish the Family Court of Australia – leaving women and children in need without a superior court to rule on their cases.
- Cut \$44 million a year to capital funding used to build safe housing options for women and children fleeing family violence.
- Cut health care and university funding disproportionately harming women.
- Supported cuts to penalty rates and argued against minimum wage increases that disproportionately impact women's pay.
- Prevented around 30 public service departments from providing paid family violence leave to their employees and described it as a cost to business that will "make women less attractive to employers."
- Introduced changes to child care subsidies that leave one in four families worse off.
- Told aged care workers, who are 87 per cent women, to "get a better job".
- Took child care workers, who are 96 per cent women, off JobKeeper early.
- Treasurer stated in September 2019 that "the gender pay gap has closed".
- In June, when the Prime Minister was asked about women from the Yass Valley being forced to travel an hour to Canberra or Goulburn to give birth. In response, he said "well, I'm pleased to let the member know that's why we have committed \$150m to upgrade the Barton Highway".
- The Government said during the Matter of Public Importance that "what you hear from the opposition is this long, ongoing, bleak, dreary narrative about entrenched disadvantage. And, you know, it's just so last century"
- The "refresh" of the Women's Economic Security Statement announced in the Budget contains nothing to address significant job losses in industries dominated by females. Nothing new on fixing gender pay gap or superannuation balances and no new funding for domestic and family violence service providers.

Labor's record

Labor has a proud history of advancing women's rights in government and driving reform from Opposition.

In government:

- Labor formed the first National Plan to Reduce Violence Against Women and Their Children (2010-2022).
- Labor established Our Watch, 1800RESPECT and Australia's National Research Organisation for Women's Safety.
- Labor passed the Workplace Gender Equality Act 2012 and established the Workplace Gender Equality Agency.
- Labor formed and funded the six women's alliances that help inform Government policy on issues that directly impact Australian women.
- Labor implemented the first national paid parental leave scheme and introduced Dad and Partner Pay.
- Labor set and achieved targets for gender balance on Australian Government Boards.
- Labor increased resources and promotion for women's sport.

FROM OPPOSITION:

- Labor blocked the Coalition Government's attempts to slash paid parental leave.
- When Labor announced we would axe the tampon tax, Scott Morrison dismissed it as a "cynical exercise". But after six months of pressure, he backpedalled and committed to match Labor's plan.
- Labor pressured the Morrison Government to restore funding for the Keeping Women Safe in Their Homes program.
- Labor led the debate on reforms to prevent alleged perpetrators of domestic violence cross-examining their victims, and eventually the Government adopted our policy.
- Labor forced the Government to commit to funding the ABS Time Use Survey.
- Labor has worked with the Senate cross-bench to make sure radical changes to the Family Court did not pass.



CONTINUE THE CONVERSATION



@AustralianLabor #BudgetAndWomen



/LaborConnect