



South Australia's

Women's Equality Blueprint

2023-26



Government
of South Australia

Acknowledgement of Country

The Government of South Australia acknowledges and respects Aboriginal people as the state's first people and recognises their traditional relationship with Country.

We acknowledge that the spiritual, social, cultural and economic practices of Aboriginal people come from their traditional lands and waters, and that their cultural and heritage beliefs, languages and laws are still of importance today.

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Minister's message



Katrine Hildyard MP

Minister for Women and the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence

I am very proud to be South Australia's first Minister for Women and the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence and to help to drive change that empowers girls and women to equally and actively participate in our economy and in every aspect of community life.

I want our state to be an exemplar of gender equality, a place in which your gender has no bearing on your ability to pursue any path, because an equal future is the right thing for girls and women and an equal future benefits everyone.

Our state has an impressive record of advancing gender equality with South Australia being the first place in the world where women successfully fought for the right to vote and stand for parliament.

South Australia has produced many outstanding women leaders. In the political sphere, the first woman Prime Minister in Australia, the first woman to enter local government in Australia, the first woman Governor in Australia and the first woman to lead an Australian political party were all South Australian. The first woman Supreme Court judge was also South Australian, as was the first First Nations woman to be appointed a Companion of the Order of Australia.

While we have made significant strides toward achieving gender equality, there is more to advance.

Women continue to have lower levels of workforce participation compared to men and are also underrepresented in leadership roles and certain industries. Women are at greater risk of experiencing sexual harassment and domestic and family violence. The 2021-22 Personal Safety Survey estimated that 39 per cent of South Australian women have experienced physical and/or sexual violence since the age of 15, and 202,200 women have experienced violence, emotional abuse or economic abuse by a cohabiting partner in the same age bracket. First Nations women can experience particular disadvantage,



including racism, higher rates of violence and poorer health outcomes compared to non-Indigenous women.

These terrible statistics demand urgent and ongoing action to address the drivers of gender inequality.

I am pleased to release South Australia's *Women's Equality Blueprint* for 2023-2026 which summarises current and future policies and practices that will guide us toward advancing gender equality. We want to create opportunities for every South Australian to thrive.

Achieving gender equality requires collective effort; it is crucial to work alongside the private and non-government sectors and different levels of government to identify gaps and design innovative and evidence-based approaches to advance change. It also requires the empowerment and harnessing of community effort to challenge gender stereotypes and foster equal and respectful relationships between men and women. Together, we have the best chance of achieving equality with and for South Australian women and girls.

This *Women's Equality Blueprint* outlines key actions and initiatives the Government is committed to implement to advance gender equality across four priority areas: safety and security, leadership and participation, economic wellbeing and health.

We will take action to help prevent violence against women and support and empower women experiencing violence.

We will increase women's participation and representation in leadership, so that women's voices are heard in and influence all aspects of public life.

We will promote women's economic wellbeing to increase women's economic security across the lifespan.

We will increase support for women's health issues to enhance wellbeing and quality of life.

The safety of women and children, and their right to live free from violence, is a cross-government priority informed by South Australia's commitments under the *National Plan to End Violence against Women and Children 2022-2032* (National Plan). Released in October 2022, the National Plan commits all states and territories to 10 years of sustained action and partnership across sectors and levels of government to end violence against women and children in one generation.

The actions in the *Women's Equality Blueprint* are an expansion of the South Australian Government's focus on helping to create a fair and inclusive state in which women and girls are empowered and equal. I very much look forward to working with you to progress them.



Vision

South Australia is a fair and inclusive state, in which women and girls can equally and actively participate in the economy and all aspects of community life.

Principles

Equality is a human right.

Achieving equality for women and girls is a collective effort which requires action from the government, private sector, non-government organisations and communities.

Achieving equality for women and girls requires addressing potential intersectional disadvantage and discrimination.

Gender equality benefits everyone.

Recognising and celebrating the achievements and contributions of women and girls in all their diversity helps inspire future generations.

Diversity in leadership and in the workforce is beneficial for South Australia's economic growth and productivity.



Introduction

The South Australian Government is strongly committed to making South Australia a fair and inclusive state, in which everyone can equally and actively participate in the economy and all aspects of community life.

The South Australian Government is committed to advancing gender equality for all people. The *Women's Equality Blueprint* is focused on the South Australian Government's actions to achieve equality for women and girls. This is because evidence shows that women and gender diverse people disproportionately experience discrimination and disadvantage based on their gender identity.

The *Women's Equality Blueprint* expands on the Women's Statement (2023-24 State Budget) by highlighting the key initiatives and activity the South Australian Government is leading under four priority areas which are fundamental to women's equality:

- 1 Safety and security**
- 2 Leadership and participation**
- 3 Economic wellbeing**
- 4 Health**

The actions in the *Women's Equality Blueprint* include legislation, funding and programs.



Women in South Australia

SAFETY AND SECURITY

279,300

women over the age of 15 have experienced physical or/and sexual violence, representing **39%** of the total female population in the state¹.

40%

of homicides are family and domestic violence related².

LEADERSHIP AND PARTICIPATION



On average, women spend **2.3 hours more** than men undertaking unpaid work, such as housework and caring for children and other family members every day³.

1 1/2

Men are **1.5 times more** likely to hold managerial positions than women⁵.

35.5%

of elected candidates in local government are women⁴.

HEALTH



Women are at a greater risk than men of developing mental illness⁸.

942

women were diagnosed with cervical cancer in 2022⁹.

ECONOMIC WELLBEING



\$381,700



\$435,900

In Australia, women continue to retire with less superannuation than men⁶.



For every dollar a man makes, a woman earns only **93 cents**.

60.4%

The female labour force participation rate is **60.4%**, which is the second lowest nationally⁷.

¹ Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), 2021-22 Personal Safety Survey.

² Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), Recorded Crime – Victims, 2021.

³ OECD, Time Spent in Paid and Unpaid Work by Sex, Australia, 2021.

⁴ Electoral Commission SA, Local Government Election Report 2018.

⁵ WGEA, Gender Equality Scorecard, 2022.

⁶ Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), Household Income and Wealth, Aug 2022.

⁷ Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), Labour Force Participation Rate, Apr 2023.

⁸ Australian Government Department of Health, National Women's Health Strategy 2020-2030.

⁹ Cancer Australia, Cervical Cancer in Australia Statistics, 2022.



Framework

Vision

South Australia is a fair and inclusive state, in which women and girls can equally and actively participate in the economy and all aspects of community life.

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Diversity in leadership and in the workforce is beneficial for South Australia's economic growth and productivity.

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Priority areas

SAFETY AND SECURITY

LEADERSHIP AND PARTICIPATION

ECONOMIC WELLBEING

HEALTH



Outcomes

Violence against women reduced

Women experiencing family and domestic violence can access support services

Women experiencing family and domestic violence can access safe and secure housing

Women experiencing family and domestic violence supported in the workplace

Community awareness and action on family and domestic violence

Housing security for older women improved

Representation of women in leadership roles increased

Representation of women on boards and committees increased

Women equally participate in all aspects of community life

South Australian gender pay gap reduced

Number of women who establish and run successful businesses increased

Women's workforce participation increased

Workforce gender segregation reduced

Women's lifelong economic security improved

Women's access to healthcare improved

Women's education on cervical cancer screening process increased

Women can access termination of pregnancy procedures without fear of criminal consequences

Legend

Priority area actions

Type of action Symbol

Legislation



Funding



Program



Training



Review



Taskforce



Target



Priority area:

Safety and security

Women's safety is essential to achieving gender equality. As well as being a cause and consequence of gender inequality, experiences of violence, harassment and discrimination can have a significant detrimental impact on women's wellbeing. It can also lead to financial and housing insecurity, as family and domestic violence is the leading driver of homelessness for women.

As women experience family and domestic violence and sexual violence at higher rates than men, initiatives are needed to prevent violence against women, protect victim-survivors' safety and ensure they have timely access to support services.



The domino effect of violence, directly and indirectly, affects so many people in South Australia. We cannot have a flourishing, gender equal society if women are unsafe and fearful.

- *Deborah Nikou*
Haven Community Partner,
Goolwa Haven (Safety Hub)



Actions



Criminalise coercive control

The SA Government will introduce legislation criminalising coercive control to address this pattern of family and domestic violence. The legislation will be introduced following targeted consultation with specific groups, as well as engagement with the wider community.



Make electronic monitoring a condition of bail for people charged with certain family and domestic violence offences

The SA Government will introduce legislation to make electronic monitoring a condition of bail for people charged with certain serious family and domestic violence offences.



Work towards consistency in the state system for family and domestic violence leave

The SA Government has introduced amendments to the *Fair Work Act 1994* (SA) to improve access to paid family and domestic violence leave for public sector and local government employees.



Prohibit discrimination against people who are or have experienced domestic violence

The SA Government has introduced a bill to amend the *Equal Opportunity Act 1984* (SA) to include the experience of family and domestic violence as a ground of discrimination. This will make it illegal to discriminate against someone on the basis that they are being, or have been, subjected to family and domestic violence.



Actions



Include Mental Health First Aid training and an understanding of family and domestic violence in work health and safety education

The SA Government will develop resources to provide guidance for businesses about their duties under work health and safety laws, and how to manage the risks of domestic violence in the workplace.



Review legislation around consent to sexual activity

The SA Government will review legislation on consent to sexual activity to ensure it protects victims of unwanted sexual activity and reflects community expectations.



Restore funding to the Women's Domestic Violence Court Assistance Service

The SA Government has restored funding to the Women's Domestic Violence Court Assistance Service. This service provides free legal assistance for women experiencing family and domestic violence, including assistance with Intervention Order applications, variations or revocations, and supporting women to report breaches of intervention orders to police.



Establish the southern and northern family and domestic violence prevention and recovery hubs

The SA Government has committed \$1 million to establish hubs which will support and empower women experiencing family and domestic violence, as well as help to increase community awareness.



Actions



Continue to embed regional safety hubs within local communities

The SA Government will continue to deliver the regional safety hub program with ten hubs located across nine regions. The safety hubs provide a safe space for women to access information and assistance in their local community. Trained volunteers and staff provide an early intervention service for women experiencing family, domestic and sexual violence and raise awareness in the broader community.



Extend the Crisis Accommodation Program and Perpetrator Response Program

The SA Government will invest \$7.4 million over four years to extend the Crisis Accommodation Program (CAP) and Perpetrator Response Program. The CAP provides women and children escaping family and domestic violence up to four weeks accommodation and case management support to secure safe and stable housing, including, where possible, returning to their homes safely.



Provide additional funding for homelessness support services

The SA Government has committed \$6 million over four years to homelessness services which provide accommodation and other support services to people experiencing homelessness. This includes funding for Catherine House, which provides accommodation and support services for women experiencing homelessness.



Continue the Safe and Secure Housing Program

The SA Government will continue to deliver the Safe and Secure Housing Program to support victims of family and domestic violence to transition to the private rental market and/or into community housing, to increase stability and security for women and their children.



Actions



Ring-fence a proportion of public housing for women escaping domestic violence

The SA Government will explore the most effective way of using a proportion of public housing to provide accommodation for women escaping domestic violence, as domestic and family violence is a key driver of homelessness among women.



Introduce a new South Australian strategy to respond to family, domestic and sexual violence

The SA Government will launch a new statewide strategy that includes actions from a range of agencies to respond to family, domestic and sexual violence. This strategy will align with and support the delivery of actions under the National Plan and the *National Partnership on Family, Domestic and Sexual Violence Responses 2021-2023*.



Ensure women do not bear the brunt of financial instability as a result of experiencing family and domestic violence

The SA Government will work with the finance and real estate industries to ensure women who have experienced domestic and family violence do not bear the brunt of unpaid mortgages, loans and rent and can benefit from financial and housing security.



Educate the community about coercive control, available supports and legislative changes

The SA Government will raise community awareness about coercive control and the supports available to victim-survivors, the proposed legislative change and justice responses.



Actions



Continue delivery of Respectful Relationships education

The SA Government will continue partnering with Power Community Limited (Port Adelaide Football Club) for the delivery of primary prevention community programs to year-10 students. Programs such as 'Empowered' and 'Respectful Relationships' aim to use the power of sport and its influence on young people to promote respectful relationships and explore the attitudes and behaviours that contribute to domestic violence.



Educate the community about preventing violence against women and children

The SA Government will roll out a public awareness campaign targeting the prevention of violence against women and children during the FIFA Women's World Cup, including delivering an education program across clubs within South Australia.



Expand the Women's Safety Contact Program

The SA Government has expanded the Women's Safety Contact Program to include a culturally safe and responsive element for First Nations women and children impacted by family and domestic violence, in partnership with KWY Aboriginal Corporation and Women's Safety Services SA.



Continue the Safe and Well Kids Program

The SA Government will continue to deliver the Safe and Well Kids Program which is delivered through a partnership model to support children and young people experiencing domestic and family violence with case management, therapeutic support and legal assistance.



Continue the KIND Perpetrator Program

The SA Government will continue to deliver the KIND Perpetrator Program, an early intervention program aimed at working with perpetrators of adolescent family violence and adolescent dating violence.



Actions



Enable earlier access to support for women experiencing domestic violence

The SA Government will establish a new trauma-informed early intervention model for victim-survivors and people at risk of family and domestic violence through integrated, community-based, case management responses.



Establish new recovery supports for victim-survivors of family, domestic and sexual violence

The SA Government will establish a new recovery service model to build victim-survivors' resilience, wellbeing, and access to mainstream services and support networks.



Establish a holistic model to support First Nations families experiencing family, domestic and sexual violence

The SA Government will establish a new culturally safe service for First Nations families which focuses on long-term healing and recovery. This will be led by Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations which will support families through a trauma informed model that prioritises safety, culture, and underlying causes of harmful behaviour. The service will connect clients to ongoing support, including disability supports where necessary.



Expand services to address perpetrator behaviours

The SA Government will establish a new initiative that works with male perpetrators of violence or males at risk of perpetrating violence to reduce violence and create safer communities. This includes programs that work with young First Nations men to cultivate positive social and emotional skills and programs for men who are currently remanded in custody.



Actions



Strengthening supports for specific groups of victim-survivors

The SA Government will deliver a range of programs which support victim-survivors, or people at risk of family, domestic and sexual violence. This includes initiatives which provide specialised support for First Nations women, migrant and refugee women, and young women.



Strengthen the Family Safety Framework, including the Family Safety Portal

The SA Government will continue to strengthen multi-agency collaboration through the Family Safety Portal to facilitate the most effective response to women and families at high-risk of domestic and family violence.



Improve data sharing mechanisms to help prevent family and domestic violence

The SA Government will continue to improve mechanisms to share data collected by government and community organisations to help prevent family and domestic violence.



Allocate additional frontline and community workers

Through the extension to the *National Partnership on Family, Sexual and Domestic Violence Responses*, the SA Government will grow the family, domestic and sexual violence sector by funding additional workers.



Address perpetrator behaviours

Through the extension to the *National Partnership on Family, Sexual and Domestic Violence Responses*, the SA Government will invest in innovative approaches to addressing family and domestic violence perpetrator behaviour.



Priority area:

Leadership and participation

In a gender equal society, women and men have the same opportunities to obtain leadership roles and to participate in all aspects of the economy, public and community life. However, women currently remain significantly underrepresented in leadership and management roles in many workplaces and industries.

Increasing women's representation in leadership requires that businesses and organisations improve the diversity of their decision-making bodies and remove the barriers within their own systems that prevent women from participating.



Women leaders serve as an inspiration for future generations, breaking down gender stereotypes and empowering girls to pursue their ambitions. We need South Australian women in leadership roles if we are to create a fair and just society where all individuals have equal opportunities.

- *Zainab Kazemi*
Winner of the 2023
Emerging Leader Award



Actions



Introduce a Bill to establish a Voice to Parliament for First Nations People

The SA Government has passed a bill to legislate for a Voice to Parliament for First Nations People following state-wide engagement. The Voice to Parliament will enable First Nations women to have greater say on Parliament's decision-making to influence better outcomes for First Nations women by providing advice on the laws and policies which affect their lives and advancing the hopes and aspirations of their families and communities.



Introduce an Equality Bill

The SA Government will introduce an Equality Bill to require organisations to take positive actions across a range of areas to advance gender equality.



Ensure all State Government boards comprise at least 50% women

The SA Government has re-established the Premier's Women's Directory as a resource for South Australian women who seek appointment to State Government boards and committees, to achieve the 50% target.



Reinstate the Multicultural Women's Leadership course

The SA Government will reinstate the Multicultural Women's Leadership course to enable culturally and linguistically diverse women with leadership aspirations to further their skills.



Actions



Link funding for sports organisations to improving the diversity of decision-making bodies

To help ensure that decision-making bodies reflect the diversity of the community, the SA Government now requires state sporting organisations, clubs, leagues and associations to improve the diversity of their decision-making bodies to be eligible for future funding programs.



Establish a Women in Sport Taskforce

The SA Government has established a Women in Sport Taskforce to raise the profile and participation levels of girls and women in sport and address the inequality that limits girls' and women's participation.



Support the relocation of the Women's Shed in Playford

In recognition of the important role community sheds play in reducing loneliness and improving mental health, the SA Government has provided funding to enable the Women's Shed in Playford to relocate.



Hold a Women's Leadership Symposium

The SA Government will provide funding for a symposium which will be held in conjunction with the FIFA Women's World Cup. The Power of Her will bring together global leaders, changemakers, women's equity experts, women and male allies of all backgrounds to discuss leadership, collaboration and opportunities to advance gender equality for women and girls.



Actions



Build inclusive and respectful workplaces in the public sector

The SA Government is launching new actions in 2023 to ensure all employees are valued and respected. These will be detailed in the new inclusion strategy, anti-racism strategy, integrity framework, and bullying and harassment guidance.



Launch the Women in the Department for Infrastructure and Transport (DIT) initiative

The SA Government will launch the Women in DIT initiative to further gender equity, promote diversity and inclusion, strengthen organisational capability, and position DIT as an employer of choice.



Improve access to pre-school

The SA Government will make 15 hours of pre-school available for every three-year-old in South Australia, providing better outcomes for children while helping more parents return to work.



Encourage women's participation in sport

The SA Government has worked with local governments to bring female and unisex changerooms to 21 parks and clubs to help ensure sport is safe and accessible for everyone.



Priority area:

Economic wellbeing

Another key feature of a gender equal society is that women and men have equal opportunities for workforce participation and economic security. However, women continue to experience lower levels of economic security over their life course compared to men due to a range of factors including the gender pay gap, time out of the workforce to undertake caring responsibilities, and occupational segregation.

Initiatives aimed at supporting women to gain additional skills, as well as understanding and addressing the causes of the gender pay gap and encouraging businesses and organisations to adopt policies aimed at increasing gender equality, have the potential to increase women's workforce participation and improve their lifelong economic wellbeing.



Economic security is the cornerstone of gender equality. Gender equality is a values proposition, and we won't achieve gender equality in South Australia until we equally value women's work in public and private domains.

- *Abbey Kendall*
Director and Principal
Solicitor, Working
Women's Centre



Actions



Establish a Women in Business Program

The SA Government has established a targeted program tailored to the specific challenges women face when starting, operating and growing businesses. Upon launching, the program has two initial components:

1. The Women in Business Foundations Program, which will deliver capability and skills development programs for women in the early stages of their business journey.
2. The Women in Business Advisory Board Program, which will focus on increasing participation rates and the business skills of South Australian female business owners with established businesses and growth ambitions.



Establish the Multicultural Women's Micro Business Fund pilot program

The SA Government will establish the Multicultural Women's Micro Business Fund pilot program to assist women to establish their own enterprises.



Improve access to training for jobs in the care sector

The SA Government offers subsidised TAFE training courses in aged care, disability care and early childhood education and care which support women to access skills development in high demand areas and will help build a more sustainable care workforce.



Grants to encourage women into trades

The SA Government has invested in grants for skill shortage solutions in priority areas including defence, commercial cookery, brick and block, concreting and saw technology, including specific grants to get more women into trades.



Actions



Investigate extending portable long service leave

The SA Government will explore the possibility of extending the portable long service scheme to the arts and creative sectors to enable them to qualify for long service leave based on their service to an industry rather than an employer.



Introduce wage theft legislation

To protect the rights of women who are overrepresented in vulnerable employment, the SA Government will introduce wage theft legislation which creates criminal penalties for persistent and deliberate underpayment of workers, including wages and superannuation. There will be a coordinated approach across government regulators and agencies to ensure that workplace laws are understood, followed, and enforced.



Strengthen labour hire licensing

The SA Government will strengthen labour hire licensing to ensure that all labour hire firms and workers are covered by the same laws and regulations.



Establish the Housing Security for Older Women Taskforce

The SA Government has established a Taskforce to work towards housing security for older South Australian women, to curb the trend of older women being the fastest growing cohort experiencing homelessness in Australia. The Taskforce includes a diverse range of government and non-government representatives, as well as lived experience advocates who have experienced housing insecurity.



Actions



Establish a Gender Pay Gap Taskforce

The SA Government has established a Gender Pay Gap Taskforce to identify the drivers of the gender pay gap in South Australia and make recommendations about how these could be addressed by the SA Government. The Taskforce will undertake research on key South Australian industries and consult with subject matter experts to ensure diverse views are represented.



Measure the gender pay gap in the public sector

The SA Government will work with the federal Workplace Gender Equality Agency to better understand and report the gender pay gap within the SA public sector.



Priority area:

Health

Population's health is influenced by a range of social determinants such as where a person is born, live, work and their access to services.

Achieving gender equality involves providing men and women with universal access to health services and the necessary supports to maintain a healthy life. For women, this includes being able to access support for health issues they may encounter over their lifetime including reproductive health, menopause and menstruation.



South Australian women need and deserve a holistic health care response; this should recognise all elements of their health from the impacts of interpersonal violence to reproductive well-being. Our health care must also respond to the needs of all South Australian women no matter their age, post-code, background or sexuality.

- *Katrina Dee*

Director - Youth and Women's Safety and Wellbeing Division, Women's and Children's Health Network



Actions



Build the new Women's and Children's Hospital

A new hospital will be built in Adelaide which will be 25 per cent larger than the current Women's and Children's Hospital to provide critical care services including birthing, theatres, a 23-hour ward, Paediatric Intensive Care Unit and Neonatal Intensive Care Unit.



Fund a campaign to increase awareness about cervical cancer screening self-testing

The SA Government provided \$198,000 to fund a campaign encouraging women aged 25-74 to consider self-collection for their five yearly cervical cancer screening. The campaign was informed by consultation with the Australian Medical Association and the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners.



Finalise the regulations to decriminalise termination of pregnancy

The SA Government drafted the Termination of Pregnancy Regulations 2022 in consultation with the Statewide Termination of Pregnancy Committee. These regulations were required for the *Termination of Pregnancy Act 2021 (SA)*, which removes the termination of pregnancy procedure from the criminal legal system, to come into effect.



Extend support for free sanitary products in public schools

The SA Government is providing an additional \$60,000 funding over three years period (2022-2024) for four non-government providers to distribute free sanitary products across all SA public schools.



Next steps

The South Australian Government will implement the actions outlined in the *Women's Equality Blueprint* by 2026 after undertaking ongoing consultation and collaboration with other governments, private sector, non-government organisations and the community as a whole.

Office for Women's [website](#) will periodically host updated information on the progress of the 57 actions listed under the Blueprint's priority areas.

The South Australian Government will also publish timely updates on initiatives aimed to improve gender equality in the state as part of the Women's Statements included annually in the SA State Budget.





Government
of South Australia