

Federal Budget 2022-2023

What's needed for Women's Safety.

Tuesday, 29 March 2022

Full Stop Australia is calling on the Federal Government to take decisive action and invest \$1 billion in women's safety.

We are calling for \$1 billion to be invested in whole of government responses to tackle sexual, domestic and family violence through the four pillars of primary prevention, early intervention, response and recovery which are the foundation of the government's National Plan to Reduce Violence Against Women and their Children

Full Stop Australia encourages the Federal Government to exercise leadership and take strong, decisive action in this year's federal budget to invest in women's safety and economic empowerment. If the Government can invest \$16 billion in tax cuts to assist the nation's highest earners, then \$1 billion should be available to address women's safety – which is everyone's business.

Primary Prevention

Full Stop Australia warmly welcomes the recent announcement of \$189 million over five-years to strengthen primary prevention and an additional \$104 million for e-safety measures including electronically tracking perpetrators.

However, whilst these measures are welcomed, tackling gender inequality is also critical to preventing gender-based violence. Full Stop Australia strongly recommends the government take real, concrete measures to secure gender equality and lift women's economic security and participation including:

- Closing the gender pay gap.
- Increasing workplace flexibility for people with caring responsibilities.
- Improving workplace protections for employees impacted by sexual, domestic and family violence (such as universal domestic violence leave and proactive protection from sexual violence in the workplace).

www.fullstop.org.au

P 02 8585 0333 F 02 9555 5911
PO Box 555 Drummoyne NSW
2047

ABN 58 023 656 939

We acknowledge the traditional owners of country throughout Australia, and their continuing connection to land, sea and community. We pay our respects to them and their cultures, and to elders both past and present.

- Universal access to affordable childcare.
- Ensuring equitable access to parental leave.
- Increasing women’s leadership in all settings including business, government, sport, media, the arts and in community.
- Increasing equity in superannuation, family law, taxation and social service systems.

Early Intervention and Response

Full Stop Australia needs to see a commitment from the Federal Government to continue funding the National Partnership Agreement on Family, Domestic and Sexual Violence (NPA) to support frontline services (including services that support people impacted by sexual harassment) but also to **increase that funding beyond the current \$130 million per annum.**

In addition, it must be specified in the NPA that sexual violence services get an appropriate proportion of that amount. Unfortunately, many state and territory based sexual assault services missed out on desperately needed funding under the initial COVID Response Fund and the first tranche of the NPA funds.

We strongly recommend that local, on-the-ground, specialist services should be prioritised under the NPA, including Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations and organisations which specialise in servicing all priority populations including culturally and linguistically diverse people, LGBTIQ+ people, people with a disability and people in regional, rural and remote areas.

Local, specialist services need to be adequately funded not only to provide crisis responses, but also to be spearheading early intervention initiatives across all community and institutional settings.

It is vitally important that contracts funded under the NPA are at least 3 years in duration. This is not only to ensure that services can plan for the future and retain staff, but also to secure women’s economic participation. In NSW for example, Equity Economics found that 4 out of 5 workers in the NSW Social Sector are women. In addition, it is vital that service contracts under the NPA include funding for data collection, monitoring and evaluation so that we can monitor our progress.

If the Federal Government is truly committed to securing the economic empowerment of women who are fleeing sexual violence, it is crucial that the Government specifically invests in the capacity of the sexual violence sector. The Federal Government **must provide an additional investment in workforce development for the sexual violence sector** (building on the DV Alert Program), to expand it beyond domestic and family violence to include sexual violence.

Finally, the Federal Government needs to invest in **reforming the family law system as a priority in addressing women and children’s safety.** Full Stop Australia is calling on the government to expand the Lighthouse Pilot and Evatt List in the Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia nationally, and this needs to be accompanied by an increase in funding for specialist sexual, domestic and family violence services, women’s legal services and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women’s and family violence prevention legal services.

Recovery

People impacted by sexual violence need specialist support to manage and recover from the impacts of the trauma they have experienced. This can range from a crisis response to trauma specialist counselling, care navigation and warm referrals, and ad-hoc de-briefing.

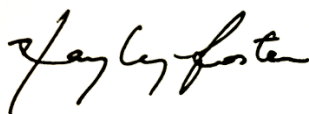
Full Stop Australia calls on the Federal Government **to commit to a trauma recovery model of care so that all survivors are supported to recover from the trauma they have experienced.** This needs to include an investment in the Primary Health Networks to provide key referral pathways for people impacted by sexual, domestic and family violence (as an alternative pathway to the criminal justice system).

Trauma recovery services for people impacted by complex trauma must be universally available across Australia through the primary health system. In addition, a national resource hub needs to be funded to support local health networks.

In addition to the \$1 billion investment in Women's Safety, Full Stop Australia also supports the 'Unhoused' campaign which calls for a **\$7.6 billion investment to provide 16,810 new permanent homes for women.** Insecure housing and risks of potential homelessness are a significant factor impacting a women's decision in leaving an abusive relationship, with the choice often being to remain in an unsafe living environment, or risk homelessness.

Finally, Full Stop Australia is also calling for:

- More funding for the Australian Human Rights Commission and the Workplace Gender Equality Agency so that their roles can be expanded, and they can take a more active role in promoting and responding to gender inequity and gender-based violence.
- Longer-term, secure funding for ANROWS so we can continue to build and strengthen our evidence base and translate evidence to action.
- Increased funding for the Australian Bureau of Statistics, Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, Australian Institute of Criminology and the Australian Institute of Family studies to improve data collection on sexual, domestic and family violence.



Hayley Foster
Chief Executive Officer
Full Stop Australia