

MEDIA RELEASE



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Victorian Budget fails to deliver for Aboriginal women

Antoinette Braybrook, CEO Djirra today commented that the lack of investment in Djirra was extremely disappointing given the devastating impact that family has on Aboriginal women and children.

“For too long Aboriginal community controlled legal services such as Djirra and the Victorian Aboriginal Legal Service have had to rely on the goodwill of government. Demand for our services has not stopped just because of COVID – there is no pause button for family violence. We know that 1 in 5 of our clients who have opened a new legal matter are experiencing family violence that has been triggered by or made worse by COVID”.

“We have also seen a spike in the numbers of women reaching out for support and safety and we have increased the number of days we offer counselling to meet the growing demand”.

“The number of Aboriginal women held on remand has risen dramatically for the period 2008-2018 (from 13.3 percent to 47.7 percent). We know that 80 percent of Aboriginal women in prison are mothers. We know that between 70–90 percent of those Aboriginal women who are in prison are survivors of sexual assault and family violence and that most of them are in prison for low-level offences”.

“Under investment in Djirra and VALS alongside the increased investment in mainstream providers is not consistent with the Victorian Government’s policy on self-determination or the Closing the Gap Agreement”.

“Djirra will not stop its advocacy to ensuring that Aboriginal women are not consistently overlooked in this way by policy makers in government. This disappointment comes during 16 Days of Activism,” Ms Braybrook said.

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