

# A FAIR SHARE FOR ALL QUEENSLANDERS

## Queensland Election Platform 2024

Queensland's economy is the strongest in the nation. As outlined in the 2024-25 Queensland Budget Overview, "Queensland continues to lead the nation when it comes to economic growth and strong labour market conditions..."<sup>1</sup> Queensland's economic growth is also forecast to strengthen to three per cent in the 2023-24 and 2024-25 financial years.<sup>2</sup> The 2022-23 Report on State Finances found that Queensland benefited from a record operating surplus of \$13.93 billion for the 2022-23 financial year.<sup>3</sup>

While many Queenslanders are struggling with the cost of living, the state's economy has been touted as the strongest in the nation. While Queensland's budget position is strong, the pressure on household budgets is crippling.

This election is the time for both major parties to commit to giving Queenslanders a fair share of the state's prosperity.

Financial pressure on low-income households can be alleviated by reducing cost of living pressure, ending Queensland's housing crisis, supporting families with children and investing in sustainable frontline services.

Children who come into contact with the youth justice system have often experienced poverty and are usually victim-survivors of domestic and family violence. Domestic and family violence is continuing to increase in Queensland.

A fair distribution of the state's resources should include investing in domestic and family violence services and early intervention and diversion programs for young people and their families who are coming in contact with the police and youth justice system.

<sup>1</sup> State of Queensland. (2024). *Doing what matters for Queensland, Queensland Budget 2024-25, Budget Overview*, p 5. [https://budget.qld.gov.au/files/Budget\\_2024-25\\_Budget\\_Overview.pdf](https://budget.qld.gov.au/files/Budget_2024-25_Budget_Overview.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> Ibid, p 69.

<sup>3</sup> Queensland Treasury. (2023, June 30<sup>th</sup>). *Report on State Finances*. Queensland Government. [Report on State Finances - Queensland Treasury](#)

The QCOSS Queensland Budget Analysis 2024-25 recognises the Queensland Government's historic investments made to support Queenslanders.<sup>4</sup> The Opposition has also agreed to honour budget commitments from the 2024-25 State Budget if they are fully funded and underway,<sup>5</sup> with some exceptions.<sup>6</sup> This means there is bipartisan support for a number of important commitments, such as an uplift in funding for specialist homelessness services, as well as the commitment to build 53,500 new social housing dwellings by 2046. This has been enthusiastically welcomed by the community services sector.<sup>7,8</sup>

In the lead up to the Queensland State Election on 26 October, QCOSS is seeking commitments from both the Queensland Government and the State Opposition against our election priorities:

1. Improve sustainability of the community services sector: Assure the financial sustainability of Queensland's community services through fair procurement and contracting practices.
2. End Queensland's housing crisis: Bolster commitments contained in the Homes for Queenslanders Plan to ensure every Queenslander has a roof over their head by 2032 by investing in permanent supportive housing and making renting fair.
3. Reduce the cost of living: Improve access to financial counselling services across Queensland, as well as programs that reduce digital disadvantage. Ensure low-income households are enabled to participate in Queensland's energy transition.
4. Give all children a good start: Support the growth of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-controlled kindergartens across Queensland, and extend Free Kindy to three year olds. To support ongoing educational needs of all young people, implement key asks from the [A Right to Learn](#) campaign.
5. Invest in Queensland's youth services: Fund services that respond to the root causes of problematic behaviour in children, establish a comprehensive service system response for children under the age of 14 who are in contact with the youth justice system and ensure children leaving detention are appropriately supported.
6. Advance women's equality: Increase funding for domestic, family and sexual violence services, as well as funding for women's health services. Continue and expand gender responsive budgeting and gender responsive procurement across the Queensland Government.
7. Continue the development of a human rights respecting culture in Queensland: Ensure recent and ongoing reviews like the Human Rights Act review are appropriately responded to, continue with important reforms associated with Queensland's equality laws, support the Path to Treaty, including the Truth-telling and Healing Inquiry and appoint an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children's Commissioner.

The 2024 Queensland election provides the opportunity for both major parties to commit to policies, partnerships, and processes that empower the community services sector and support low-income households to make Queensland fair.

<sup>4</sup> QCOSS. (2024). Queensland Budget Analysis 2024-25. (2024). [https://www.qcooss.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2024/06/QCOSS-Budget-Analysis-2024-25\\_web.pdf](https://www.qcooss.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2024/06/QCOSS-Budget-Analysis-2024-25_web.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> Brewster, A. David Crisafulli says LNP will honour Labor's budget commitments if it wins government in Queensland. Australian Broadcasting Corporation. June 5, 2024.

<sup>6</sup> Queensland. *Parliamentary Debates, Legislative Assembly*. June 13, 2024. Mr David Crisafulli MP, p 2180. [https://documents.parliament.qld.gov.au/events/han/2024/2024\\_06\\_13\\_WEEKLY.pdf](https://documents.parliament.qld.gov.au/events/han/2024/2024_06_13_WEEKLY.pdf)

<sup>7</sup> State of Queensland. (2024). *Boost our social housing Big Build*. <https://www.housing.qld.gov.au/homesforqueenslanders/initiatives/social-homes>

<sup>8</sup> LNP – Liberal National Party of Queensland. (2024, June 13). *Homes with Purpose*. <https://online.lnp.org.au/dave-crissafulli/news/testing>

# IMPROVE SUSTAINABILITY OF THE COMMUNITY SERVICES SECTOR

On 13 June the Queensland Government announced that it would implement [\*Best Practice Industry Conditions for Social Service Procurement\*](#).

This commitment includes the following important elements:

1. Default five-year initial terms
2. Six months' notice where contracts will not be renewed and provision for 'wind-down periods'
3. Transparent indexation of contracts
4. Funding for training and supervision
5. Supporting services to develop and implement local approaches
6. Streamlining arrangements for community service organisations that have multiple and significant contracts with the Queensland Government, including working towards appointment of a lead agency to manage the relationship with these organisations on behalf of the Queensland Government.

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QCOSS and the community services sector is seeking a commitment from the Queensland Government and the State Opposition to:

- Continue the implementation of the principles included in the [\*Best Practice Industry Conditions for Social Service Procurement\*](#).
- No cuts to community service funding agreements where contractual requirements are being met.

# END QUEENSLAND'S HOUSING CRISIS

Independent research commissioned by QCOSS with our Town of Nowhere campaign partners has found that the Queensland Government's social housing commitments included in the *Homes for Queenslanders Plan* is nation leading.<sup>9</sup> However, Queensland remains the epicentre of the housing crisis. More than 45,400 people are waiting for an average of 28 months on the social housing register.<sup>10</sup> It is estimated that 300,000 Queenslanders, a population twice the size of Cairns, have unmet housing need.<sup>11</sup> The cost of renting is continuing to increase in an unprecedented way and working families are struggling to keep a roof over their heads.

The Opposition Leader provided bipartisan support for the ambitious social housing target of 53,500 homes by 2046 and for the 20 per cent uplift of funding for Specialist Homelessness Services. It is understood that both the Queensland Government and the State Opposition have committed to the 20 per cent uplift across the budget forward estimates to 2027-28.<sup>12</sup>

Queensland leads the country in its bipartisan and ambitious response to the housing crisis. Long-term commitments from both major parties are critical to ensure a comprehensive strategy can be implemented to deliver a reliable pathway for all Queenslanders to put a roof over their head. QCOSS looks forward to seeing the LNP's Housing Plan, which has been announced but not released.

However, there is more the Queensland Government and State Opposition must do to end the housing crisis.

<sup>9</sup> Pawson H, Clarke A, van den Nouwelant R, Petersen, H, Moore J, and Sigler, T. (2024). *Breaking Ground Report: Progress update and assessment of Queensland's Housing Crisis*. Queensland Council of Social Service. <https://townofnowhere.com/report-breaking-ground-housing-crisis-update/>

<sup>10</sup> Queensland Government Open Data Portal, (Updated 24 July 2024), *Social Housing Register as at 31 March 2024*. <https://www.data.qld.gov.au/dataset/social-housing-register/resource/9189ab1f-6ea5-4026-8c8c-31bde740c8e6>

<sup>11</sup> Pawson H, Clarke A, van den Nouwelant R, Petersen, H, Moore J, and Sigler, T. (2024). *Breaking Ground Report: Progress update and assessment of Queensland's Housing Crisis*. Queensland Council of Social Service. <https://townofnowhere.com/report-breaking-ground-housing-crisis-update/>

<sup>12</sup> Queensland. Parliament Estimates Housing, Big Build and Manufacturing Committee - State Development and Infrastructure; Industrial Relations; Racing. 24 July 2024. <https://documents.parliament.qld.gov.au/com/HBPMC-C4A9/C20242025-6D4D/Proof%20-%20Estimates%20Hearing%20-%20held%20on%2024%20July%202024%20.pdf>

QCOSS and the community services sector is seeking a commitment from the Queensland Government and the State Opposition to:

- Give Specialist Homelessness Services funding certainty by confirming the 20 per cent funding uplift will be permanent.
- Make Renting Fair by committing to:
  - Limits to rent increases by an amount calculated in reference to the Consumer Price Index and include mechanisms to effectively limit frequency of increases. We draw particular attention to the approach adopted in the Australian Capital Territory in relation to rent increases.<sup>13</sup>
  - An end to 'without grounds' evictions, including no grounds evictions at the end of a fixed term agreement.
  - Implementation of energy efficiency standards for rental properties.<sup>14</sup>
- Implementation of a Supportive Housing Framework, including ensuring 10 per cent of all new social housing is permanent supportive housing.
- QCOSS asks the State Opposition to release their Securing our Housing Foundations Plan as soon as possible so Queenslanders have an opportunity to better understand how an LNP would address the housing crisis.

<sup>13</sup> *Residential Tenancies Act 1997* (ACT) ss 64A – 70; *Residential Tenancies Regulation 1998* (ACT) s 5A.

<sup>14</sup> Queensland Council of Social service. (2024). *Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024*.

# REDUCE THE COST OF LIVING

QCOSS and the community services sector have welcomed the significant cost of living relief that has been provided by the Queensland Government in 2024. For a defined period, Queenslanders will have energy bill relief, cheaper public transport, assistance to pay for sporting activities for children and discounts on government fees and charges. Importantly, food relief services have been provided with further resources. The State Opposition has confirmed this relief would be continued under an LNP Government as per the 2024-25 Queensland State Budget.

Queenslanders on low incomes are particularly vulnerable in a cost-of-living crisis. More should be done to provide targeted support to those who need it the most.

Funding is sorely needed for Financial Counsellors. Queensland has the lowest per capita funding for financial counselling, despite the crucial role financial counsellors play in assisting individuals with debt management, consumer rights, and navigating financial crises such as mortgage stress.

Measures are also required to bring the cost of energy down in the long term. The *Community Sector Blueprint: A National Framework for Minimum Energy Efficiency Rental Requirements*<sup>15</sup> outlines characteristics that should be present in the forthcoming National Framework for Minimum Energy Efficiency Rental Requirements. Energy efficiency measures will assist tenants in managing their energy bills, and will help to make homes safer and healthier to live in. Energy efficiency incentives along with regulatory requirements will help to ensure that the transition to a cleaner energy future is a just transition, which does not leave anyone behind.

QCOSS and the community services sector is seeking a commitment from the Queensland Government and the State Opposition to:

- Provide funding to increase the number of Financial Counsellors, ensuring service gaps in regional areas of Queensland are addressed and develop a Financial Inclusion Action Plan or similar initiative to address current cost-of-living concerns for low-income households and enable systemic financial inclusion.
- Address the digital divide by:
  - Developing a 10-year Digital Inclusion Roadmap in consultation with industry, social service providers and the community.
  - Increasing funding for digital literacy programs to evolve and scale existing successful programs and develop new programs targeting other digitally excluded groups.
  - Auditing infrastructure, digital equipment and resourcing needs of public libraries, Indigenous Knowledge Centres and community and neighbourhood centres to fully enable them to act as digital access and support hubs.
  - Ensuring all low income, vulnerable and remote students can access suitable connectivity and devices at school and at home.

<sup>15</sup> Healthy Homes for Renters. (2022). *Community Sector Blueprint: a National Framework for Minimum Energy Efficiency Rental Requirements*.

- Implement the following Power Together Alliance asks:
  - commit to continuing the electricity bills rebate and target these towards vulnerable Queensland households while electricity costs remain high
  - assist the most vulnerable social housing tenants slash their power bills by rolling out a Virtual Power Plant (VPP) on an initial 10,000 dwellings
  - help improve the energy literacy and engagement of Queenslanders in the electricity system by supporting community power hubs
  - provide more targeted financial support for renters and vulnerable households in the rollout of household clean technology, such as small-scale solar and storage, energy efficiency upgrades and electric appliances to replace gas
  - work with the Federal Government and other Australian states and territories to deliver an ambitious National Framework for Minimum Energy Efficiency Rental Requirements, and ensure mandatory minimum energy efficiency rental standards are implemented as soon as possible in Queensland. Mandatory disclosure of rental energy efficiency ratings should also be implemented to ensure compliance
  - bring online more publicly owned renewable energy projects sooner so that the Sunshine State has at least 10 GW of large-scale renewable energy by the end of 2025
  - provide direct sustainable funding into community-based organisations across Queensland with an initial allocation of \$10 million to enhance climate resilience
  - expand the Resilient Home Grants Criteria to at a minimum enable apartment buildings to access the funding
  - provide accessible insurance options for individuals with lower incomes by providing insurance microfinance trials combined with a community led education campaign. This will support the most vulnerable in society having a safety net and mitigate disaster-induced poverty cycles, enhancing resilience
  - update the Queensland Building and Construction Commission Act 1991 to implement strict location restrictions for housing development in high climate impact risk areas. The code should also integrate mandatory minimum resilience standards into the building code, ensuring developers adhere to essential criteria for enhancing property resilience
  - QCOSS welcomes the LNP's commitment to a solar for renters scheme. We await the details of this from the LNP, as well as a solar for renters commitment from the Queensland Government.



# GIVE ALL CHILDREN A GOOD START

During the first five years of a child's life their brain development creates the foundations for learning and development later in life. Exposure to adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) cause chronic stress during childhood. Typically, the more adversity a child experiences, the higher their risk of long-term physical, mental and social consequences into adulthood.

Children experiencing poverty have an increased risk of long-term impacts after exposure to ACEs, this can include a higher rate of poor developmental outcomes in later childhood,<sup>16</sup> poorer cognitive and social outcomes, and lower levels of general health.<sup>17</sup> Homelessness makes children four times more likely to have a developmental delay.<sup>18</sup>

While improvements in child development since 2009 have been significant, over one in four of all children, and 42.5 per cent of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, are currently assessed as vulnerable in one or more of the five domains on the Australian Early Development Census (2018). Nationally, one in five children are developmentally vulnerable, in Queensland it is one in four.<sup>19</sup>

Children of families experiencing disadvantage are less likely to attend early learning services and maternal and child health services. This means that barriers to achievement start before children have even begun school (Early Years Catalyst, 2022). This is reinforced by the 2023 NAPLAN results, which indicate that one in three Australian students are not on track with their learning. Most of the children performing below expectations are from disadvantaged backgrounds.<sup>20</sup> As well as this, children in remote areas, and those with parents who did not finish high school or were unemployed were also considered to be at risk and largely scored as below proficient.<sup>21</sup>

While significant investment connected to the Queensland Government's *Putting Queensland Kids First Plan* was included in the 2024-25 Queensland State Budget, more is required to ensure the most disadvantaged children in Queensland have the support they need.

<sup>16</sup> Badland, H., Chong, S., Kvalsvig, A., Goldfeld, S., Gray, S., Mensah, F., O'Connor, E., O'Connor, M., Redmond, G., Williams, K., & Woolfenden, S. (2018). *The impact of multidimensional disadvantage over childhood on developmental outcomes in Australia*. International Journal of Epidemiology 1485-1496.

<sup>17</sup> Warren, D. (2017). *Low Income and Poverty Dynamics: Implications for Child Outcomes*. Australian Institute of Family Studies. Social Policy Research Paper No 47

<sup>18</sup> HCH Clinicians Network. (2009). *Mitigating Homeless Children's Risk for Developmental Delay*. Healing Hands publication. <https://nhchc.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/Apr09HealingHands.pdf>

<sup>19</sup> Australian Institute of Health and Welfare. (2023). Early childhood and transition to school. Accessed 1 November 2023. Early childhood and transition to school - Australian Institute of Health and Welfare ([aihw.gov.au](http://aihw.gov.au))

<sup>20</sup> Grattan Institute. (2023). *The new NAPLAN results are a wake-up call*. The new NAPLAN results are a wake-up call - Grattan Institute

<sup>21</sup> Grattan Institute. (2023). *The new NAPLAN results are a wake-up call*. The new NAPLAN results are a wake-up call - Grattan Institute



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QCOSS and the community services sector is seeking a commitment from the Queensland Government and the State Opposition to:

- Increase investment in free kindergarten to all three-year olds, bringing Queensland in line with best practice in Australia and overseas. Further support is also required to grow community-controlled early childhood services.
- Support development and growth of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander early childhood services in consultation with community-controlled organisations and peak bodies.
- Build on the outcomes being achieved by the Family Wellbeing Services and ensure demand for these services can be met by doubling investment over the next five years. This would increase funding from \$54 million in 2023-2024 to a total of \$108 million by 2027-2028.
- Implement the [A Right to Learn](#) campaign asks:
  - Amending the *Education (General Provisions) Act 2006* (Qld) to require that school disciplinary absences are only used as a last resort measure.
  - Introducing Multi-Tiered Systems of Support to improve academic, social-emotional and behavioural outcomes for all students.
- Ensure Ministerial Charter letters stipulate all Ministers have responsibilities for child development and wellbeing relevant to their portfolios.

# INVEST IN QUEENSLAND'S YOUTH SERVICES

QCOSS members are concerned with both major parties' rhetoric in relation to youth justice.

Youth justice policies aiming to keep communities safe and support the wellbeing of children and young people should be evidence-based. The younger children are when they have contact with the justice system, the more likely they are to go on to re-offend.<sup>22</sup> To keep our communities safe, the Queensland Government should invest in an alternative to the justice system for children under the age of 14.

The United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child has recommended that all State parties (including Australia) raise the minimum age of criminal responsibility (MACR) to at least 14 years of age. In Queensland, the MACR is 10 years of age.

The Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability (Disability Royal Commission) recommended raising the age of criminal responsibility to 14.<sup>23</sup> A draft report from Council of Attorneys-General also includes a recommendation to raise the age of criminal responsibility to 14 without exception.<sup>24</sup>

Recent recommendations have also highlighted a need to provide better support for young people transitioning out of detention. In their draft interim report, the Youth Justice Reform Select Committee recommended "that the Queensland Government fund a minimum 12-month transition plan for every child and young person transitioning back into the community after detention which is skills, education and health focused, including residential accommodation options...", ('Recommendation 36'). The Queensland Family and Child Commission recently made a similar recommendation in their report, *Exiting youth detention, preventing crime by improving post-release support*, and explained this must be "...part of a broader approach by the Queensland Government to target investment in a developmental approach to crime prevention."<sup>25</sup> The need for better support for young people transitioning out of detention also aligns with findings from the *Youth Justice: Evidence Review* developed by the Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Protection Peak in April 2022.

The Queensland Government accepted Recommendation 36 in-principle.<sup>26</sup> The Youth Justice Strategy, *A Safer Queensland* also commits to "...support better transitional planning for young people exiting detention..."<sup>27</sup> QCOSS also notes the State Opposition has announced intentions to fund 12-month post release support from a community service for young people leaving detention.<sup>28</sup>

<sup>22</sup> Sentencing Advisory Council. (2016). *Reoffending by children and young people in Victoria* (p. xiii). [https://www.sentencingcouncil.vic.gov.au/sites/default/files/2019-08/Reoffending\\_by\\_Children\\_and\\_Young\\_People\\_in\\_Victoria.pdf](https://www.sentencingcouncil.vic.gov.au/sites/default/files/2019-08/Reoffending_by_Children_and_Young_People_in_Victoria.pdf)

<sup>23</sup> Commonwealth of Australia. (2023). *Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of people with a disability. Final Report – Volume 8, Criminal justice and people with disability* (p. 28). <https://disability.royalcommission.gov.au/system/files/2023-09/Final%20Report%20-%20Volume%208%2C%20Criminal%20justice%20and%20people%20with%20disability.pdf>

<sup>24</sup> Council of Attorneys-General Age of Criminal Responsibility Working Group. (2020). *Draft Final Report 2020: Council of Attorneys-General Age of Criminal Responsibility Working Group* (p. 80). <https://www.croakey.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/age-of-criminal-responsibility-working-group-draft-report-20201.pdf>

<sup>25</sup> The Queensland Family and Child Commission. (2024). *Exiting youth detention, preventing crime by improving post-release support*. <https://www.qfcc.qld.gov.au/sector/monitoring-and-reviewing-systems/young-people-in-youth-justice/exiting-youth-detention>

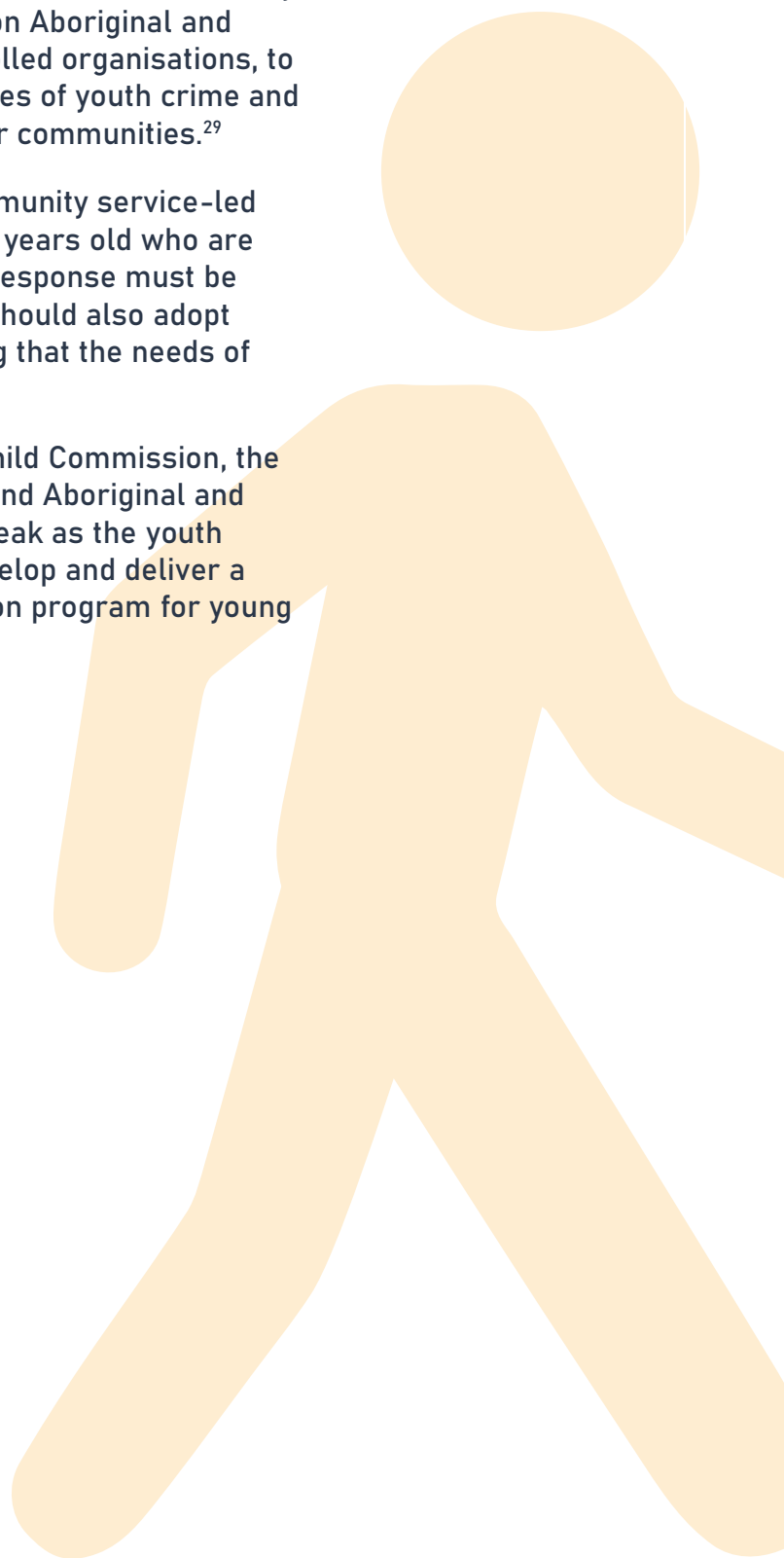
<sup>26</sup> State of Queensland. (2024). *Queensland Government Response to the Interim Report: Inquiry into ongoing reform to the youth justice system and support for victims of crime, Report No. 1, 57<sup>th</sup> Parliament Youth Justice Reform Select Committee*. <https://documents.parliament.qld.gov.au/tp/2024/5724T725-B9B9.pdf>

<sup>27</sup> State of Queensland. (2024). *A safer Queensland, Queensland youth Justice Strategy 2024-2028*. Department of Youth Justice. <https://desbt.qld.gov.au/youth-justice/strategies-reform/strategy>

<sup>28</sup> LNP – Liberal National Party of Queensland. *LNP announces \$175 million Staying on Track program*. <https://online.lnp.org.au/dave-crissafulli/news/lnp-announces-staying-on-track-program>

QCROSS and the community services sector is seeking a commitment from the Queensland Government and the State Opposition to:

- Prioritise investments and policies that enable the community services sector, with a particular focus on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-controlled organisations, to lead the way in addressing the root causes of youth crime and make all Queenslanders feel safe in their communities.<sup>29</sup>
- Fund and implement an alternative, community service-led response to children under the age of 14 years old who are interacting with the justice system. The response must be supportive and therapeutic in nature. It should also adopt principles of restorative justice, ensuring that the needs of victims continue to be met.<sup>30</sup>
- Work with the Queensland Family and Child Commission, the community service sector, and Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Protection Peak as the youth justice peak body for Queensland, to develop and deliver a holistic 12-month post detention transition program for young people leaving youth detention.



<sup>29</sup> Queensland Council of Social Service. (2023). *Queensland Budget 2024-2025 – Invest in Queensland's youth services*. <https://www.qcross.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2023/11/5.-Invest-in-youth-services-V2.pdf>

<sup>30</sup> Ibid.

# ADVANCE WOMEN'S EQUALITY

As the peak body for Domestic and Family Violence services in Queensland, QCOSS acknowledges that the Queensland Government has demonstrated an ongoing commitment to end violence against women in Queensland. This includes the commitment to implementing recommendations from the Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce in the *Hear Her Voice* reports,<sup>31,32</sup> alongside significant financial investment towards ending domestic, family, and sexual violence.

Despite this, women in Queensland continue to have lower levels of participation in the workforce, lower superannuation balances and higher levels of underemployment, even while larger numbers of women complete tertiary education.<sup>33</sup> Further, one in four women have experienced physical or sexual violence from a current or previous partner since the age of 15, and one woman is killed by an intimate partner every 10 days.<sup>34</sup>

QCOSS welcomes the recent permanent uplift in funding for domestic, family and sexual violence services, however the quantum is grossly inadequate. Frontline services are stretching to meet the significant and sustained increase in demand for their specialist support and without long-term improvements in the sustainability and level of funding for these organisations, women in Queensland will continue to live at risk of violence.

In amplifying the voice of the domestic and family violence sector, QCOSS reiterates the recommendations of Ending Violence Against Women Queensland (EVAWQ),<sup>35</sup> who call for:

- A strong and sustainable specialist domestic, family, and sexual violence sector
- Growing, developing, and retaining specialist workforces
- Investing in First Nations communities, initiatives, and services.

QCOSS considers the Queensland Government to have a pivotal role in addressing the unequal position of women in Queensland. The Queensland Government can show leadership through its procurement practices, ensuring it uses its purchasing power to support the economic security of women. Robust gender responsive budgeting processes are also essential in advancing women's equality.

QCOSS welcomes recent investment to support the [Queensland Women and Girls' Health Strategy 2032](#). We encourage continued engagement with diverse communities across Queensland to ensure that the goals of the strategy are fully supported through additional and ongoing investment.

<sup>31</sup> Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce. (2021). *Hear her voice Report one, Addressing coercive control and domestic and family violence in Queensland*. <https://www.womenstaskforce.qld.gov.au/publications>

<sup>32</sup> Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce. (2022). *Hear her voice Report two, Women and girls' experiences across the criminal justice system*. <https://www.womenstaskforce.qld.gov.au/publications>

<sup>33</sup> State of Queensland. (2024). *Women's Budget Statement, Queensland Budget 2024-25*. Queensland Treasury. [https://budget.qld.gov.au/files/Budget\\_2024-25\\_Womens\\_Budget\\_Statement.pdf](https://budget.qld.gov.au/files/Budget_2024-25_Womens_Budget_Statement.pdf)

<sup>34</sup> State of Queensland. (2024). *Domestic and Family Violence Training and change Management Framework*. Department of Justice and Attorney-General. <https://www.publications.qld.gov.au/dataset/dfv-training-change-framework/resource/5b008641-88fc-4f17-af46-585fdfeb0f67>

<sup>35</sup> Ending Violence Against Women Queensland. (2024). *Ending Violence Campaign*. <https://www.evawq.org/campaign>

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QCOSS and the community services sector is seeking a commitment from the Queensland Government and the State Opposition to:

- Increase funding for domestic, family and sexual violence services in line with the [EVAWQ Election Platform](#).
- Continue engaging with diverse communities across Queensland to ensure that the goals of the Queensland Women and Girls' Health Strategy 2032 are fully supported through additional and ongoing investment.
- Expand gender responsive budgeting processes by building further capacity of departmental staff, providing further insight on how a gender lens helps to shape all government spending, expanding gender disaggregated data collection and expanding gender policy impact analysis processes.
- Expand gender responsive procurement activities by:
  - Expressly embedding gender equality principles, and include an explicit commitment to advance gender equality through procurement, within both the Queensland Procurement Strategy and the Queensland Procurement Policy. This commitment should be coupled with clear targets and the implementation of additional gender responsive procurement measures at the pre-tender, tender, and post-tender stages.
  - Generate awareness of gender-responsive procurement measures among procurement staff.
  - Establish a gender responsive procurement strategy with an incremental implementation plan. This should also bring together and guide industry-specific strategies which include procurement-related initiatives and goals.
  - Consider what opportunities the 2032 Olympic Games offers for advancing gender equality, such as the Women into Construction project established for the 2012 London Olympics.

# CONTINUE THE DEVELOPMENT OF A HUMAN RIGHTS RESPECTING CULTURE IN QUEENSLAND

Regardless of who forms government after 26 October 2024, Queensland has unfinished business related to the proper protection, respect and fulfillment of human rights. An Independent Review of the *Human Rights Act 2019* (Qld) is currently under way. The findings and recommendations of that review should be appropriately responded to and acted upon.

The Queensland Government supported in-principle all of the recommendations from the Queensland Human Rights Commission (‘QHRC’) report, *Building belonging, review of Queensland’s Anti-Discrimination Act 1991*, (‘Building Belonging Report’).<sup>36</sup> The Respect at Work Bill 2024, introduced into Parliament in June, reflects the first stage of reforms coming out of the Building Belonging Report.<sup>37</sup> Following the passage of the Respect at Work Bill 2024, the second stage of reform should occur as soon as possible in close consultation with the QHRC. This should include updating and replacing the *Anti-Discrimination Act 1992 (Qld)* (‘the AD Act’) to ensure Queensland’s equality laws are fully modernised and fit for purpose.

Queensland’s Path to Treaty process honours generations of First Nations Peoples who have called for self-determination, truth-telling and agreement making.<sup>38</sup> The *Path to Treaty Act 2023* (Qld) established the Truth-telling and Healing Inquiry and the First Nations Treaty Institute. The Truth-telling and Healing Inquiry will be held for three years, unless extended. These essential structures and processes must be underpinned by ongoing bipartisan support.

The Queensland Government has committed to the appointment of an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children’s Commissioner through the *Community Safety Plan for Queensland* and the *Safe and Supported First Action Plan*. This role will be essential in supporting Queensland to meet its commitments under the *National Closing the Gap Agreement* and meeting the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and their families.

The final report for the Inquiry into the provision and regulation of supported accommodation in Queensland was released in June 2024, following a comprehensive inquiry into supported accommodation, in particular level three supported accommodation.

An independent review of Specialist Homelessness Services is currently underway in Queensland. Phase one findings were released in July 2024, with the final report due to be delivered in January 2025.

<sup>36</sup> State of Queensland. (2023). *Queensland Government response to the QHRC Anti-Discrimination Act review*. <https://www.justice.qld.gov.au/initiatives/qld-govt-response-qhrc-anti-discrimination-act-review>

<sup>37</sup> Minister for Health, Mental Health and Ambulance Services and Minister for Women, the Hon Shannon Fentiman, and Attorney-General and Minister for Justice and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence the Hon Yvette D’Ath. (2024). *Joint statement, Stronger laws to protect workers from discrimination and harassment*. <https://statements.qld.gov.au/statements/100587>

<sup>38</sup> State of Queensland. (2023). *Queensland’s Path to Treaty*. <https://www.qld.gov.au/firstnations/treaty/queensland-path-to-treaty/about>

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QCOSS and the community services sector is seeking a commitment from the Queensland Government and the State Opposition to:

- Respond to and act upon the Independent Review of Queensland's Human Rights Act within the first year of the next term of government.
- Proceed with stage two of reforms to the Anti-Discrimination Act within the first year of the next term of government.
- Support the ongoing activities of the Truth-telling and Healing Inquiry and the First Nations Treaty Institute.
- Appoint an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children's Commissioner.
- Respond to the recommendations in the final report by the Queensland Parliamentary Community Support and Services Committee for the Inquiry into the provision and regulation of supported accommodation in Queensland.
- Respond to the findings and recommendations of the Independent Review on homelessness response in Queensland.