

Recent actions reveal federal party positions on issues affecting women

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Where the federal political parties stand on women's issues has become apparent as the federal election approaches.

The Morrison Government recycled announcements in the federal Budget and failed to effectively address structural issues, in particular for single mothers and women over 50, such as superannuation, Newstart, childcare, tax, poverty in retirement and homelessness, according to media reports analysing the Budget.

A number of community groups representing women, children and Aboriginal Australians that routinely attend the Budget lockup were excluded. Initially just one place was made available to the Equality Rights Alliance, which appointed the National Foundation for Australian Women to attend. The Office of Women made representations to Treasury and later the Women's Electoral Lobby was notified an additional spot was being made available to them.



[Prior to the Budget in Reply speech, Labor launched its Women's Budget Statement.](#)

Labor committed to a range of initiatives and targets including: strengthening the Office for Women, ensuring there is a gender impact assessment on Cabinet submissions and policy proposals, measuring and reporting on progress (including United Nations goals) and reconvening the Ministerial Council on Gender Equality with states/territories.

The Women's Budget Statement was introduced by the Hawke government in 1984/85 with Dr Anne Summers, who led the Office for the Status of Women. She designed a world-first pilot program to analyse how our economy affected all women. The statement was dropped by the Coalition under Tony Abbott's leadership in 2014 and neither Malcolm Turnbull nor Scott Morrison has reinstated it.

To fill the void, the National Foundation for Australian Women started its Gender Lens on the Budget analysis and Labor has produced Women's Budget Statements from Opposition.

If elected, Labor plans to reinstate government analysis of the federal Budget's impact on women.

Labor has also committed to:

- a National Sexual and Reproductive Health Strategy for all women to "access legal, safe, affordable reproductive health services"
- closing the gender pay gap through a range of mechanisms including changes to the Fair Work

- Commission that would be able to “order pay increases for undervalued female-dominated industries”
- improving access to education including “reserving half of Labor’s 10,000 fee-free TAFE places for women” and establishing a “new Apprenticeship Advocate to develop strategies to improve women’s access to and completion of quality apprenticeships”.

Labor has since announced that in government it will more than double Commonwealth funding to prevent and respond to family violence to more than \$660 million. The Morrison Government announced \$328 million prior to the Budget. Labor has committed to a range of support including legislating 10 days of paid domestic violence leave as part of the National Employment Standards as well as flexible support packages and a Safe Housing Fund.

The Greens has also [published its policies](#) and committed to achieving equality for women by building housing, financial and workplace security. The Greens has pledged to ensuring legal, workplace and economic reforms that directly address the key causes of inequality for women are established and maintained. The Greens has outlined its 10-year, \$5.3 billion plan for a National Partnership Agreement on Domestic Violence and Violence Against Women between state and federal governments — committing to programs that provide safety for women in the home, workplace and in the community; to abolishing the gender pay gap; and making abortion safe, legal and accessible for all women.

Early intervention and education, frontline services, emergency accommodation and legal services will all receive a significant boost under Labor and the Greens policies.

[Women’s Snapshot media release from federal Minister for Women Kelly O’Dwyer](#)

[Media release from Women’s Electoral Lobby Australia convenor Jozefa Sobski](#)

[Women’s Agenda](#)

[A range of papers are being posted as they are finalised by National Foundation for Australian Women](#)

— **Leeanda Smith, Women’s Coordinator**