



2024

#WHAT WOMENS SERVICES NEED

ACT ELECTION PLATFORM



**PRIORITISE ENDING DOMESTIC,
FAMILY AND SEXUAL VIOLENCE**

**RECOGNISE AND RESOURCE
SPECIALIST APPROACHES TO
END SEXUAL VIOLENCE**

**PROMOTE WOMEN'S HEALTH
AND WELLBEING**

RESOURCE WOMEN'S POLICY

VALUE WOMEN'S WORK

Prioritise ending domestic, family and sexual violence

Domestic, family and sexual violence remains prevalent in the ACT. The impacts of violence are most significant for women and people in communities experiencing compounding marginalisation, such as the impacts of colonisation, insecure visa status, ableism and other forms of discrimination.

Women's services need investment to prevent and respond to domestic, family and sexual violence in the ACT.

- Fund Aboriginal community-controlled women's services to provide culturally competent support to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.
- Implement the ACT Government's commitment to fund an Aboriginal community-controlled women's refuge.
- Develop a comprehensive, intersectional, evidence-based strategy to end domestic, family and sexual violence in the ACT.

- Commit to transparently allocating investment that is intended for people living with all forms of violence and frontline community-based services to its intended recipients, including from the Commonwealth and the Safer Families Levy.
- Substantially increase the supply of social and affordable housing and the capacity of supported accommodation crisis services to meet current and future demand.
- Expand accessible refuge places, including by allocating funding to existing services to increase physically accessible shelters and temporary housing.
- Scope a program to remove and store belongings of people experiencing DFV after leaving.
- Increase funding to crisis services to recognise children as individual users and to meet their additional case management needs.



Prioritise ending domestic, family and sexual violence

- Ensure the transparent, consistent and effective application of Housing ACT's existing Domestic and Family Violence Policy so that consideration is given to safety, security and the best interests of children in applications by people experiencing violence, and that shared assets are waived when determining hardship.
- Develop accessible reporting procedures for women with disabilities to report violence, abuse or neglect.



Recognise and resource specialist approaches to end sexual violence

Women's services need:

- Resource subject matter experts to develop a complex trauma model for responding to victim/survivors of sexual violence.
- Resource the expansion of sexual violence prevention and early intervention practices including training, awareness raising and driving social reform around recent and historical sexual violence.
- Commit to resourcing frontline crisis services providing crucial support to victim/survivors of sexual violence who are women, LGBTQIA+ or victim/survivors with disability.
- Adequately resource sexual assault crisis services to implement Recommendation 11 of the Sexual Assault (Police) Review in an ongoing capacity.



Promote women's health and wellbeing

Women experience health and wellbeing differently. Sexual and reproductive health influences the lives of women and people with uteruses throughout the lifecourse. Gender discrimination in sexual and reproductive healthcare compounds with other forms of marginalisation, such as ableism, to undermine the health and wellbeing and human rights of women and gender diverse people.

Women's services need additional, targeted attention to sexual and reproductive health and wellbeing.



- Increase funding for no cost early medication abortion to meet shortfall, including for management.
- Commit to an inquiry into forced sterilization.
- Commit to implementing affordable, accessible Assisted Reproductive Technology.
- Commit the funding required to build ACT's first residential perinatal mental health facility in the 2025-26 Budget.
- Scale MACH new parent groups to all parents of young infants, not just first-time parents.

Resource women's policy

Gender responsive policy is essential to achieve gender equality. Women make up a little more than half of the population of the ACT but investment in gender responsive policy is piecemeal.

Women's services need gender responsiveness to be mainstreamed and greater investment in policies that reduce gender inequity across the lives of women in Canberra.

- Increase internal resourcing to the Office for Women to coordinate and drive gender equitable policy for women across government.
- Commit funding for the development and implementation of the next ACT Women's Plan, including for implementation outside of government.



Value women's work

The gender pay gap persists and women continue to do the majority of paid and unpaid care and domestic work. Respecting and valuing care work in feminised industries such as community services and early childhood education and care is critical for economic equity. Women's community services are struggling without enough resourcing for our essential work.

Women's services need their work to be respected and economically valued.



- Commit to fund the common clauses of the ACT Community Sector Multi-Employer Agreement.
- Provide uplift funding for services to meet demand through a population-based funding model.
- Invest in initiatives for intersectional and cross-disciplinary skill development in community sector workers, including qualification frameworks.
- Develop and fund opportunities for women's services to connect and work collaboratively.
- Establish an incentive program for businesses to employ women who have experienced complex crisis or who have recently exited prison.
- Increase funding for out of home care emergency placement of children aged 0-5 years in early learning services to adequately resource and meet demand without reducing capacity of services to provide mainstream placements.

ENDORSED BY



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This document is a set of asks for ACT 2024 Election and is not a comprehensive policy agenda for the women's sector.

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