

Joint submission from community and legal organisations: SHARED PRINCIPLES

FOR THE INQUIRY INTO THE REDEVELOPMENT OF MELBOURNE'S PUBLIC HOUSING TOWERS (March 2025)

We welcome the opportunity to lodge this short submission to the Victorian Parliament Legislative Council Legal and Social Issues Committee's [Inquiry into the redevelopment of Melbourne's public housing towers](#).

These **Shared Principles** are supported by the undersigned community and legal organisations who work with and support people and their families living in public housing across Victoria.

We call on the Committee to adopt these Shared Principles as recommendations.

Shared Principles

1. Significant impacts of relocations & displacement must be recognised

The Victorian Government should acknowledge the significant impacts of relocation on public housing tenants and local communities displaced by the demolition of public housing towers. This includes upholding the protections to cultural rights, as per the Charter of Human Rights, acknowledging that the towers hold cultural significance for the communities who have lived there for generations, in particular Aboriginal communities. The Government should take active steps to mitigate the disruption through keeping communities together and where requested keeping public housing residents close to the services they use including health services, Aboriginal led services, schools and work; as well as community spaces such as places of worship.

2. Public housing should be retained & protected

(a) The Victorian Government must invest in and grow public housing stock. There should be no reduction of public housing on the renewal sites as a result of the redevelopment.

(b) No public land should be sold off in the redevelopment.

3. The rights of renters who relocate must be safeguarded

(a) The Victorian Government needs to ensure people who are being relocated away from their homes on the public housing sites being demolished are relocated to safe housing with equivalent rights, and have a guaranteed right to return to new homes built in these sites – with the same rights and protections they currently have access to.

(b) Public housing residents relocated into community housing during this time, should continue to be considered public housing renters with same rights and protections, and provided financial support for any differences in rent or services costs.

(c) Relocating public housing renters should receive financial support from the Victorian Government to help with moving and furniture / whitegoods costs that might be required in the new homes (e.g. some residents have needed to buy washing machines as no communal laundry, or fridges to fit smaller kitchen size).

(d) The Victorian Government should survey people currently living on the public housing sites scheduled for demolition, and rebuild public housing homes that meet their needs.

(e) Renters should have equal rights and protections whether they live in public or community housing

(f) The Victorian Government should fund the implementation of Social Housing Regulation Review recommendations that are aimed at increasing equity between public and community housing renters without a reduction in standards, such as the work around the joint service standards.

4. Government decision-making should be open & transparent

The Victorian Government should engage in open and transparent decision-making when deciding to relocate and uproot residents' lives and communities, including being transparent with residents about how decisions are made and what evidence is being relied upon.

5. Government should centre impacted communities in consultations

The Victorian Government should consult with relevant stakeholders – centring the views of community members most directly impacted by any housing or relocation decisions – before decisions are made, in line with established government processes and best practice.

6. Consideration of housing models should consider human impacts

The Victorian Government should consider the human cost and impact of decisions to redevelop public housing properties, as a significant factor as relevant as financial costs, and impact on the Victorian Housing Register waitlist.

7. Building standards should reflect needs of people living there

(a) The Victorian Government should ensure that building standards ensure the homes are large enough and have enough bedrooms for the families who will live in them.

(b) The Victorian Government should ensure that energy efficiency standards are implemented in public and community housing.

8. Self-determination in housing

The Victorian Government needs to invest in Aboriginal housing models in line with their commitment to progressing Aboriginal self-determination. This commitment must also extend to ensuring that Aboriginal communities in the public housing towers are empowered in decision making about their homes, including if this means the preservation of public housing on developed estates.

9. Public housing should stay in Melbourne's inner city

The Victorian Government should ensure that substantial and increased public housing is maintained in Melbourne's inner city, as central locations close to public transport, hospitals, public amenities, community spaces and services.

For information about this submission please contact the Inner Melbourne Community Legal.

The following 37 community and legal organisations have signed on to endorse these principles, listed in alphabetical order:

Organisation name	Logo
ARC Justice	
Annika Legal	
Barwon Community Legal Service	
Brimbank Melton Community Legal Centre (a program of commUnity+)	
CAN (Church of All Nations) Community Support	
CatholicCare Victoria	
Catholic Social Services Victoria	

<p>Centre for Excellence in Child and Family Welfare</p>	
<p>The Centre for Multicultural Youth</p>	
<p>Centre for Urban Research</p>	
<p>Council of Single Mothers and their Children Disability Discrimination Legal Service</p>	
<p>Eastern Community Legal Centre</p>	
<p>Federation of Community Legal Centres</p>	
<p>Fitzroy Legal Service</p>	 <p>Community driven justice.</p>

<p>FlatOut</p>	
<p>The Housing for the Aged Action Group (HAAG)</p>	
<p>Human Rights Law Centre</p>	<p><u>Human</u> <u>Rights</u> <u>Law</u> <u>Centre.</u></p>
<p>Inner Eastern Local learning & Employment Network Inc (IELLEN)</p>	
<p>Inner Melbourne Community Legal</p>	
<p>inTouch Multicultural Centre Against Family Violence</p>	<p>inTouch Multicultural Centre Against Family Violence</p>
<p>Jesuit Social Services</p>	

<p>Jobwatch</p>	
<p>Northern Community Legal Centre</p>	
<p>North & West Melbourne Neighbourhood Centre</p>	
<p>Prahran Place Neighbourhood Centre</p>	
<p>Southside Justice</p>	
<p>Southport Legal Service Inc</p>	
<p>St Brendan's School Flemington</p>	
<p>University of Melbourne Student Union Legal Service</p>	

<p>Victorian Aboriginal Legal Service</p>	 <p>Victorian Aboriginal Legal Service</p>
<p>Victorian Public Tenants Association</p>	
<p>Villamanta Disability Rights Legal Service</p>	 <p>Villamanta DISABILITY RIGHTS LEGAL SERVICE</p>
<p>WEstJustice</p>	<p>Westjustice</p>
<p>West Heidelberg Community Legal</p>	
<p>Women's Legal Service</p>	<p>women's legal service victoria</p>
<p>Wombat Housing and Support Services</p>	 <p>wombat housing & support services</p>
<p>Youthlaw</p>	 <p>YOUNG PEOPLE'S LEGAL RIGHTS CENTRE INC</p>