

Media Release



15 May 2020 / Media contact: Liddy Clark 0403 542 411



Welcome Support for Women as Local Government Elections Proceed

Joint Statement VLGA and GenVic

The local government and gender equity sector welcomes clarity about the timing of the next Victorian local government election, particularly for women candidates.

Covid19 presents a number of complexities for local government, so the announcement that elections will be conducted via postal voting, is a welcome development, providing certainty to candidates and councils. However, the VEC will need to take into consideration when planning for the elections the potential delays inherent in the postal system, particularly for rural and remote communities.

The VLGA and GenVic remain concerned about the impact of the pandemic on achieving the gender equity target 50/50 women in local government by 2025. While it welcomes the additional investment of \$50k announced by the Minister today to support programs like Local Women Leading Change, there is considerable work to be done to address gender inequities in local democracy.

"Pandemic recovery needs women to lead at the local level. It's important women are part of developing local solutions to job losses, economic insecurity, violence prevention and disaster management. That's why we're encouraging women to stand for election through our training, workshops and resources." said Kathryn Arndt, CEO of the VLGA

"Covid19 is exacerbating gender inequities. The jobless figures have shown that 55% of people unemployed as a consequence of the disaster are women, mostly in part time roles. There is a need for targeted support and stimulus for Victorian women in a range of settings - and that includes lifting support for programs which encourage more women to stand for Local Government." said Tanja Kovac CEO of Gender Equity Victoria.

The VLGA and Gender Equity Victoria call for further investment in work that will support women to lead and encourages the state government to invest in further strategies to achieve gender equality in local government by 2025.

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ENDS:

Join VLGA and GenVic

[Gender & Disaster: From Global to Local Webinar](#)

Featuring Professor Maureen Fordham, Director of the Centre for Gender and Disaster within the institute for Risk and Disaster Reduction, University College London

Wednesday 27 May 2020

9:30-11am