

## Rooming house 'blitz' must get results: Homeless Persons' Legal Clinic

MEDIA RELEASE

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The PILCH Homeless Persons' Legal Clinic (HPLC) has welcomed the Victorian Government's move to establish a Taskforce to consider a new set of minimum standards, and the improved enforcement of standards for private rooming houses through inspections, but urged the Government to commit to acting upon any recommendations of the Taskforce to protect Victoria's most vulnerable people.

The HPLC's Manager/Principal Lawyer, Caroline Adler, labelled the Government's move a step in the right direction, with the potential to help address the current homelessness and housing crisis facing Victorians.

'Thousands of Victorians are in desperate need of safe and affordable housing options, and the best way to achieve this is through more effective regulation, accountability and stringent enforcement of rooming house regulations', said Ms Adler.

'The Taskforce and inspections will provide the Government with an insight into the significant issues affecting many rooming house residents, but it is essential that these steps are followed by effective and targeted action that is aimed at ensuring that all rooming houses operating in Victoria are safe, secure and affordable.'

The HPLC considers that improved regulation of private rooming houses must include a number of core minimums, including:

- a set of comprehensive standards for rooming houses
- more effective registration, monitoring and enforcement to ensure that rogue operators are brought within the regulatory system
- a licensing system to regulate the management of private rooming houses and prevent exploitation
- enforced compliance through greater penalties for breaches, and
- upholding resident's rights through targeted education and community awareness programs.

'Private rooming houses in Victoria currently provide vulnerable and disadvantaged members of the Victorian community with a form of substandard, dangerous and unacceptable accommodation. This announcement must be a first step towards effectively addressing the appalling living conditions experienced by Victorians living in private rooming houses,' said Ms Adler.

'All rooming houses in Victoria should be registered, monitored and meet reasonable minimum standards. Improved protection of resident's rights must also be a core component of the government's response.'

### Contact

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