

CatholicCare Victoria

On 1 January 2021, Centacare Ballarat, CatholicCare Melbourne/Gippsland and CatholicCare Sandhurst will merge to form a new entity: CatholicCare Victoria.

Centacare Ballarat	CatholicCare Gippsland
<p>Established in 1977 as the social welfare agency of the Catholic Diocese of Ballarat.</p> <p>Office locations: Ballarat (head office), Ballarat Family Relationship Centre, Peplow House Ballarat, Mildura, Horsham, Warrnambool, Hamilton, Swan Hill and Maryborough.</p> <p>Core services: Family and Youth Services; Family and Relationship Services; Pastoral Care; Mental Health Services; Victims of Crime; Employment Services; Housing and Homelessness Services</p> <p>www.centacareballarat.org.au</p>	<p>Established in 1998 as the social service agency of the Catholic Diocese of Sale.</p> <p>In 2013, management of CatholicCare Gippsland transferred to CatholicCare Archdiocese of Melbourne.</p> <p>Office locations: Pakenham, Traralgon and Warragul.</p> <p>Core services: Family and Relationship Services ; Emergency Relief; Post-separation programs; Bushfire Community Recovery Service</p> <p>www.ccam.org.au</p>
CatholicCare Melbourne	CatholicCare Sandhurst
<p>Founded in 1935, by pioneer social workers Norma Parker and Connie Moffit, to provide social services in the Archdiocese of Melbourne.</p> <p>Office locations: East Melbourne (main office), Dandenong, Epping, Footscray, Geelong, Melton, and Wyndham Vale.</p> <p>Core services: Family and Relationship Services; Post-separation programs; Pastoral Care (prisons, youth justice precincts, hospitals); Refugee and Asylum Seeker services, Emergency Relief; and School Counselling.</p> <p>www.ccam.org.au</p>	<p>Founded in 1986 as the social welfare agency of the Catholic Diocese of Sandhurst.</p> <p>Office locations: Bendigo (main office), Shepparton, and Echuca.</p> <p>Core services: Family and Relationship Services; Communities for Children; Family Mental Health program; Parenting programs; Youth Justice Group Conferencing ; Integrated Family Services; Post Separation Co-operative Parenting; Family Dispute Resolution; ParentsNext</p> <p>www.ccds.org.au</p>

CatholicCare Victoria:

- Will draw on a **combined 184 years of experience in delivering excellence** in a broad range of child, family and community services. It also consolidates leadership and expertise in the areas of school counselling, pastoral services, social housing, employment and advocacy services.
- Will operate from **20 office locations and a further 107 delivery sites**, including offices in Melbourne, Ballarat, Bendigo, Geelong and Shepparton and a footprint that extends to all corners of Victoria, from Mildura to Warrnambool, and Wodonga to Traralgon.
- A workforce of **500 staff and 200+ volunteers** working together, inspired by Catholic Social Teaching, in a shared mission for a stronger, more inclusive society - where everyone can reach their potential and live life to the full.
- Will **support 50,000 people each year**: children, individuals and families experiencing difficulty or disadvantage, people in prisons, newly arrived refugees and asylum seekers, people with disabilities, people who are sick, unemployed, or who are homeless.

What will this mean for people in Victoria?

Improved access through enhanced service coordination

The three agencies have synergies in many service areas. As CatholicCare Victoria we can implement a single entry point for some of these programs, streamlining access for clients needing crucial supports such as Emergency Relief, and Family and Relationship Services.

Greater choice of services

Each agency has specialist programs that can be scaled up and replicated in other areas of Victoria. For example, Centacare Ballarat's expertise and experience in providing social housing would be a great asset to establishing similar programs in other areas of need. CatholicCare Sandhurst has a strong track record as a provider of children's support services, which can be leveraged to enhance and grow programs across the state. And CatholicCare Melbourne has a strong School Counselling program which could be scaled up to support student wellbeing statewide.

Case study

Settle Well is a program that has been operating in North Geelong for a number of years. It provides case management and support for newly arrived refugee and asylum seeker youth and is unique in that it is embedded within two secondary schools. It has delivered excellent results in helping refugee youth to navigate pathways to further education and employment, ensuring participants are given every opportunity to settle well.

CatholicCare Victoria could see Settle Well replicated in other schools with high numbers of refugee youth.

Solutions to address the root causes of poverty and disadvantage

With statewide data and a deeper understanding of the issues affecting families, CatholicCare Victoria will be better able to inform and influence long-term solutions for the structural causes of entrenched disadvantage.

Quotes

Most Rev Peter A Comensoli, Archbishop of Melbourne:

Our Christian mission in action is a call to go to those most in need. This new state-wide approach to offering social services in the way of the Gospel will have at its heart the going out in love, justice, assistance and friendship.

Most Rev Paul Bird CSsR, Diocese of Ballarat:

Our Centacare staff offer great support to people in need throughout our diocese of Ballarat, covering the western half of Victoria. As CatholicCare Victoria, we will be combining our efforts with Catholic social services in the other dioceses to provide support to people state-wide.

Most Rev Shane Mackinlay, Diocese of Sandhurst:

CatholicCare Victoria will be a very concrete way in which we continue across Victoria the mission of Jesus to care for those in need and promote their interests, building on the decades of commitment and service of the agencies in each diocese.

Mgr Greg Bennet, Bishop-elect Diocese of Sale:

In moments of struggle, distress and crisis CatholicCare Gippsland has accompanied, supported and assisted individuals and communities on their journey toward healing. A new chapter now opens with the establishment of CatholicCare Victoria which will enhance our Gospel mission and strengthen our voice on behalf of the vulnerable, marginalised and forgotten.