

# NEW MEMBER

INFORMATION PACK

Victorian  
**Labor**

# WELCOME TO THE PARTY

## Welcome to the Victorian Labor family!

We are a group of individuals passionate about the society in which we live.

We are driven by social justice and are united by our desire to make the world a better place.

This booklet aims to help you navigate our Party's structures and get involved in whatever interests you. Whether that's branch events, policy forums or advocating and campaigning on issues with others who share similar values, we are sure you'll enjoy making a difference.

It's what separates us from the other parties – being able to be in government to enact progressive change for disadvantaged members of our society.

The labour movement is best when it's driven by the needs of our members.

We are brought together by our shared values of fairness, justice, and equality for all. Whether that's in our workplaces, schools or hospitals. We believe it's not where you live that determines what life outcomes you should have. We as members carry these values and we encourage you to act on them by being an active and positive force within our Labor movement.

## We are stronger together.

# ACKNOWLEDGMENT TO COUNTRY

Victorian Labor is committed to working alongside Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to deliver a long overdue treaty and substantial constitutional reform that ensures a voice for our first nations peoples. We pay our respects to elders past, present and emerging and acknowledge that this land always was and always will be Aboriginal land.



## Values Statement

Victorian Labor values achieving social justice, fairness and equality. The Party is a collective cause and larger than any individual. We are proud of our deep roots and history in the labour movement. We support workers organising in union to achieve justice for all. Our members, volunteers and supporters are our greatest assets. Prejudice and discrimination - including sexism, racism and homophobia - have no place in our party. We celebrate the diversity of our Party. We support one another because we are stronger together.

## This is Labor.

## Code of Conduct

The Party aims to ensure equal opportunity to participate in all its forums. A key part of this is through the creation of safe and inclusive environments for everyone at all levels. The safety and wellbeing of members, staff and volunteers is crucial.

The Party has a zero-tolerance policy against bullying, harassment, intimidation, discrimination and misconduct in all forms. Members, staff and volunteers must treat others with dignity and respect and comply with the relevant laws, all Party rules and policies.

A complete Code of Conduct can be found on [www.viclabor.com.au/resources](http://www.viclabor.com.au/resources)

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# HISTORY OF THE VIC BRANCH

The Australian Labor Party (ALP) is Australia's oldest political party, first formed in Queensland in 1891. During the ten years that followed, separate Labor parties emerged in other colonial states. All were started by the trade union movement, which participated actively in the foundation of the infant political movement. The Victorian Branch was formed at federation.

Like Australia itself, the ALP is a federal organisation. Each state and territory has its own branch, with its own membership, rules and policies. These branches come together to form a national ALP organisation, with federal election campaigns co-ordinated by the National Secretariat based in Canberra.

As a federal party, we are 20 years older than the Country Party (now known as the National Party) and 45 years older than the Liberal Party.

The ALP, both nationally and in Victoria, is a genuine labour party in the sense that trade unions are part of our structure. This distinguishes a labour party from a social democratic party (although we may have common ideals and philosophies) and from broad-based progressive parties such as the United States' Democratic Party.



# LABOR & UNIONS

The labour movement formed the ALP in the 1890s. The party was designed to be the political wing of the movement with the aim of electing members to Parliament who would represent the interests of working people. Trade union members were largely responsible for the formation of ALP policy and setting in place an organisation capable of winning elections.

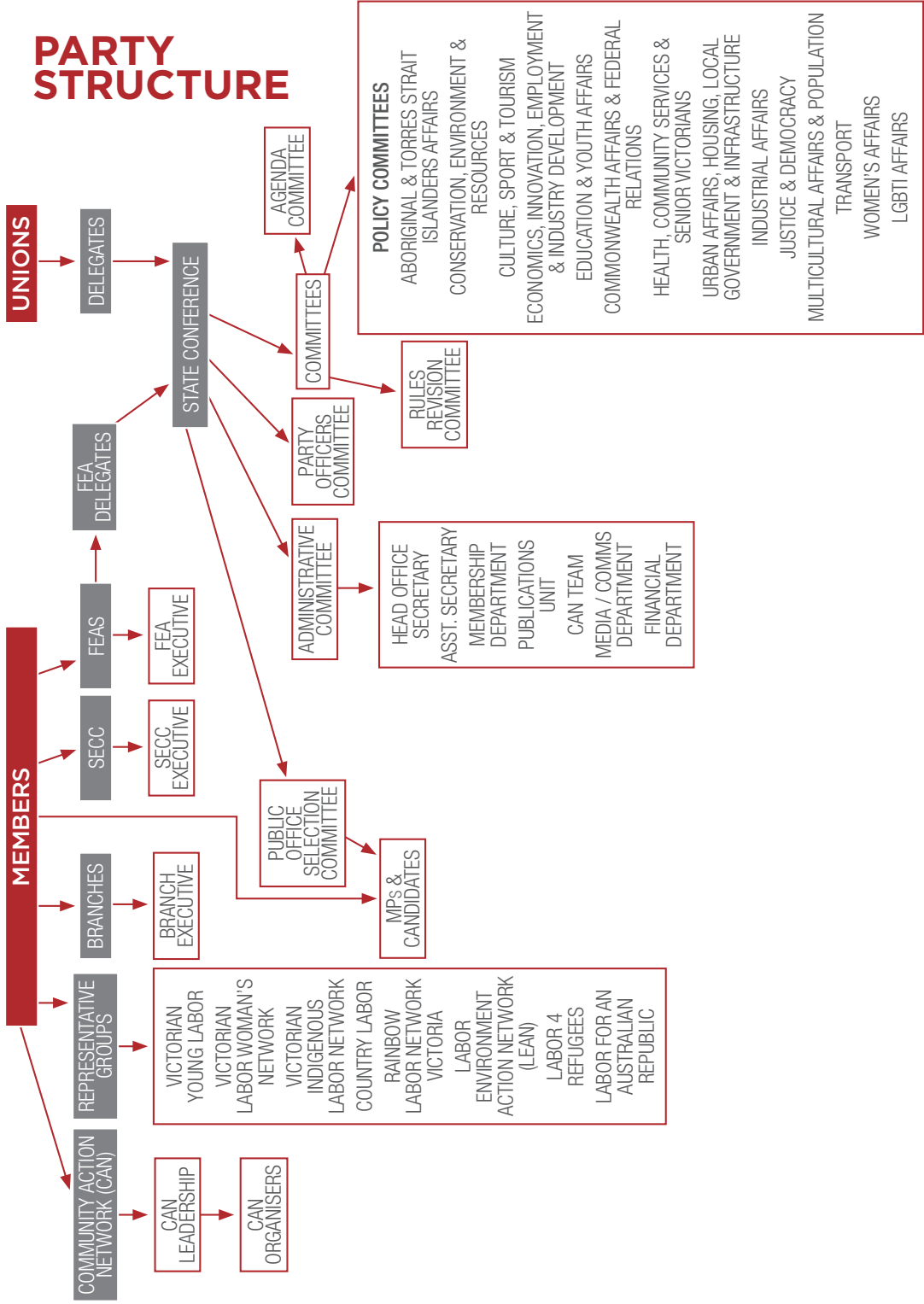
The ALP aims to support trade unions in pursuit of their industrial goals and many unions support the ALP in pursuit of its political goals. Many – though not all – Australian unions are formally affiliated to the ALP.

Affiliation to the ALP occurs at a state level – state branches of unions are affiliated to their respective state branches of the ALP. Affiliated unions have voting rights at State Conference.





# PARTY STRUCTURE



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## MEMBERSHIP

Our party's decision-making starts with its members and our local branches.

After a new Party member attends their local branch meeting, signs the Official Branch Attendance Book, and shows their photo ID for the first time, they can participate in the election of their Branch Executive. Furthermore, 2 years after attending their first local branch meeting, new Party members can vote in all party elections. These elections include delegates to State and National Conferences, members of Victorian Labor's decision-making bodies, and pre-selection of candidates for State and Federal parliament.

The Victorian Branch groups its members in different ways, including by the federal electorate in which they live, by the state electorate, and by their local branch.

Members who have held their membership for a total of 40 years are granted life membership in recognition of their support.

## FEDERAL ELECTORATE ASSEMBLIES (FEAS)

Each FEA has an executive, which acts as the steering committee for their local federal election campaign. The FEA Executive also convenes and prepares the agenda for meetings of the FEA members and creates a yearly report to the branches in that Federal Electorate.

FEA elections occur every two years to elect executive members and State Conference delegates. FEA elections are voted on by Victorian Labor members within each FEA.

## STATE ELECTORATE CAMPAIGN COMMITTEES (SECCS)

While members are grouped by the federal electorate in which they are enrolled, local members also play a role in state elections, based on the state electorates with which they are connected.

Within each state electorate, a campaign committee is formed consisting of the candidate, the campaign director and five other members. The SECC acts as a steering committee for the election campaigns within the state electorate and to campaign on an ongoing basis between state elections.



## BRANCHES

As per the rules, there is one branch per state electorate.

State seats may have more than one branch per state electorate if:

- If an existing branch in a state electorate has more than 300 members
- If a state electorate exceeds 1,350 square kms in size, or
- Where the relevant FEA includes five or more state electorates

Local branch meetings are usually held once a month, giving members an opportunity to come together and discuss current branch activities and events, such as local campaigning, fundraising and presenting motions to the broader Party.

Local branches also have the opportunity to develop and present resolutions to State Conference.

## STATE CONFERENCE

State Conference is the Party's most important decision-making forum. Held every year, State Conference is where members are elected to Party decision-making bodies as well as the forum for our Party to debate policies, Party rule changes and in an election year, the Party platform.

State Conference also offers an opportunity for you to get a broader sense of everyone who makes up Victorian Labor. Many groups within Victorian Labor hold 'Fringe' or special interest events at State Conference to interact with members.

Any Victorian Labor member can attend State Conference, either as an observer, or as an elected delegate.

Delegates from each Victorian FEA are elected to represent their local branch and membership. There are currently 300 delegates elected from Victorian FEAs. The number of members in an FEA determines the number of delegates that each FEA sends to State Conference.

These delegates sit alongside 300 delegates appointed by affiliated unions, 2 delegates appointed from the Victorian members of the Federal Parliamentary Labor Party, and the leader and deputy leader of the State Parliamentary Labor Party in both houses of the Victorian Parliament.

## ADMINISTRATIVE COMMITTEE

The Administrative Committee is Victorian Labor's decision-making body between state conferences and its role is to oversee all governance matters relating to the administration of the Party, including implementation of the Party's rules.

The Committee, often referred to as 'Admin', is made up of 20 voting members – 17 members elected at State Conference and the three Party Officers. The Party Officers are the President, Senior Vice President and Junior Vice President, are all elected at State Conference.

The Administrative Committee has three Sub-Committees:

- The Membership Sub-Committee
- The Finance, Risk & Audit Sub-Committee
- The Governance Sub-Committee

The Administrative Committee is currently not in operation, following the Administration period. The Administrative Committee will be elected at State Conference in 2023.

Its functions are performed by the Interim Governance Committee, which is made up of five members who were appointed by the National Executive.

The co-convenors of the Victorian Labor Women's Network along with the three Victorian Young Labor Presidents all have non-voting roles at the Administrative Committee.

## STATE OFFICE

Victorian Labor's state office is located in Docklands, Melbourne.

This is where our State Secretary and two Assistant State Secretaries are located.

Victorian Branch is the organisational body of Victorian Labor and the place where membership, finances, communication and campaigns are all coordinated. Victorian Branch also provides support to branches,

members, electorate officers and Members of Parliament in relation to the Party and campaigning.

Members can always contact State Office at [info@vic.alp.org.au](mailto:info@vic.alp.org.au)

## PUBLIC OFFICE SELECTION COMMITTEE (POSC)

The POSC has 100 members elected at State Conference. The role of this committee is to consider and vote on the preselection of Victorian Labor endorsed candidates for public office pre-selections.

The POSC shares the responsibility of pre-selecting candidates alongside local branch members.

A ballot of local branch members is held to select the candidate for their seat, with the results of that ballot having a 50% weighting. A ballot of the Public Office Selection Committee is held after the local ballot and those results make up the other 50% of the pre-selection process.

There are 88 Lower House and 40 Upper House seats in the Victorian Parliament. All 128 candidates will be chosen through the POSC and local branch process if required.

Federally, the House of Representatives' candidates will be chosen through the POSC and local branch process, and the Senate seats will be chosen through the POSC.

# POLICY COMMITTEES

One of the most important ways Victorian Labor articulates how its values can shape society is through our policy committees. It is through these committees that Labor members can suggest and debate the ideas that become the basis of Victorian Labor's platform of policies upon which we campaign during an election. The Platform forms the foundation of what a Victorian Labor government will do if (and when) elected.

There are 14 policy committees, with 20 members of each policy committee elected at state conference and a number of members elected by both the state and federal parliamentary caucuses.

The policy committees are:

- Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islanders Affairs;
- Conservation, Environment & Resources;
- Culture, Sport & Tourism;
- Economics, Innovation, Employment & Industry Development;
- Education & Youth Affairs;
- Commonwealth Affairs & Federal Relations;
- Health, Community Services & Senior Victorians;
- Urban Affairs, Housing, Local Government & Infrastructure;
- Industrial Affairs;
- Justice & Democracy;
- Multicultural Affairs & Population;
- Transport;
- Women's Affairs;
- LGBTI Affairs.

Any member of the Victorian Branch is able to nominate for election to a policy committee. If unsuccessful, that member is still able to attend and participate (without a vote) in policy committee discussions.

## OTHER COMMITTEES

There are a number of other committees elected at State Conference such as Agenda Committee, which sets out the agenda for State Conference; and the Rules Revision Committee, which makes recommendations about rule changes to state conference.

## REPRESENTATIVE GROUPS

Victorian Labor is comprised of a diverse membership with a wide variety of cultural and lived experiences.

In addition to Victorian Labor's basic structure of branches, conferences and committees, you may wish to join one of the many groups that represent a particular demographic, or a shared interest in progressing particular areas of policy.

### Some of these groups include:

- Victorian Young Labor
- Victorian Labor Women's Network (VLWN)
- Victorian Indigenous Labor Network (VILN)
- Country Labor
- Rainbow Labor Network Victoria (RLNV)
- Labor Environment Action Network (LEAN)
- Labor for an Australian Republic (LFAR)
- Labor Enabled

Please contact [info@vic.alp.org.au](mailto:info@vic.alp.org.au) for information on how to join these groups.

## **VICTORIAN YOUNG LABOR (VYL)**

Any Victorian Labor Party member under the age of 26 is automatically a member of Victorian Young Labor (VYL). VYL undertakes regular events and campaigns aimed at encouraging the involvement of young people in the ALP.

Unlike many other groups within the Party, Young Labor is a federal body within the Australian Labor Party, with a branch in each state and territory. VYL elects an executive, holds an annual conference and sends delegates to the Australian Young Labor Conference.

## **LABOR VICTORIAN WOMEN'S NETWORK (VLWN)**

The Victorian Labor Women's Network's (VLWN's) core mission is to increase the number of women active in the ALP.

Any woman who is a member of the Victorian Labor Party can immediately become a member of the VLWN. The VLWN offers its members opportunities to participate in events, network and develop skills to participate in the ALP at all levels.

## **VICTORIAN INDIGENOUS LABOR NETWORK (VILN)**

The Victorian Indigenous Labor Network is responsible for determining its own objectives and procedure including means of participation of indigenous supporters of the Party in the VILN.

All Indigenous people who are members of the Party immediately become members of VILN. Non-Indigenous Party members can nominate to be associate members of VILN with non-voting rights.

## **COUNTRY LABOR**

Country Labor forms the voice of regional Victoria within the Victorian Branch of the ALP and aims to promote the needs of rural and regional Victorians to the ALP and promote ALP policies in rural and regional areas.

All Victorian Labor members who live in electorates no less than 4000 square km's in size are automatically members of Country Labor.



## RAINBOW LABOR NETWORK VICTORIA

Rainbow Labor Network Victoria is the official LGBTIQ association of the ALP's Victorian branch. Its purpose is to promote equality and diversity within the Labor Party, advance the rights of LGBTIQ people, and build networks with the broader LGBTIQ community. Rainbow Labor is made up of LGBTIQ-identifying party members, friends and supporters.

Contact Rainbow Labor for more information at [rainbowlaborvictoria@gmail.com](mailto:rainbowlaborvictoria@gmail.com)

## LABOR ENVIRONMENT ACTION NETWORK (LEAN)

Labor Environment Action Network (LEAN) is a grassroots network of ALP members across the country that engages and mobilises ALP members to influence the policies of the ALP in support of strong action on climate change and the environment.

## LABOR FOR AN AUSTRALIAN REPUBLIC (LFAR)

LFAR is the official body of Victorian Labor members who support Australia becoming a Republic. The aim of LFAR is to promote Labor's belief that modernising our Constitution also entails a transition to an Australian Republic, with an Australian Head of State, who can fully represent our traditions, values and aspirations as a nation.

## LABOR ENABLED

Labor Enabled Victoria seeks to advocate for, include and empower people with lived experience of disability or people passionate about this policy area.

Labor Enabled is comprised of self-identifying party members who live with disability, carers, friends and supporters.

These are just some of the groups within Victorian Labor.

To find out more, contact your local branch or [info@vic.alp.org.au](mailto:info@vic.alp.org.au)

# HOW TO GET INVOLVED?

## MEMBERSHIP

As a member you can get involved in your local branch, your FEA, State Conference, representative groups and campaigns.

## FINANCIAL

Apart from your annual membership fee, you can provide financial support to the party, to help us win elections and install Labor governments. At each election at a state and federal level we face opponents who have millions of dollars to throw at their campaigns. While money isn't the only way we win elections, you can help us to kick off our campaigns on a more even playing field.

## VOLUNTEER

Be one of our great volunteers! We are a party of volunteers - we don't exist without them. There are many ways to volunteer to help the party run - you can volunteer through your local member and learn the skills to talk to voters and win elections; if your passion is based on a particular area of focus, join one of our representative groups such as LEAN, Labor for Refugees, Rainbow Labor or Victorian Labor Women's Network.

From volunteering on a doorknock, to running a fundraiser in your local seat, you can be a big part of our party and movement.

# CONTACTS

## **Victorian Young Labor**

**Email:** [young.labor@vic.alp.org.au](mailto:young.labor@vic.alp.org.au)

**Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/vicyounglabor](http://www.facebook.com/vicyounglabor)

## **Victorian Labor Women's Network**

**Email:** [vlwn@vic.alp.org.au](mailto:vlwn@vic.alp.org.au)

**Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/VictorianLaborWomen](http://www.facebook.com/VictorianLaborWomen)

## **Victorian Indigenous Labor Network**

**Email:** [viln@vic.alp.org.au](mailto:viln@vic.alp.org.au)

## **Country Labor**

**Email:** Marg Lewis – [lewis.marg.j@gmail.com](mailto:lewis.marg.j@gmail.com)

## **Rainbow Labor Network Victoria**

**Email:** [rainbow@vic.alp.org.au](mailto:rainbow@vic.alp.org.au)

**Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/rainbowlaborvic](http://www.facebook.com/rainbowlaborvic)

## **Labor for an Australian Republic (LFAR)**

**Email:** [lfar.alp@gmail.com](mailto:lfar.alp@gmail.com)

**Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/pg/LaborforanAustralianRepublic](http://www.facebook.com/pg/LaborforanAustralianRepublic)

## **Labor Environmental Action Network (LEAN)**

**Email:** [vic@lean.net.au](mailto:vic@lean.net.au)

**Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/leanvic](http://www.facebook.com/leanvic)

## **Labor Enable**

**Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/VicLaborEnabled](http://www.facebook.com/VicLaborEnabled)

## **Labor for Refugees**

**Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/laborforrefugeesvictoria](http://www.facebook.com/laborforrefugeesvictoria)

# Organiser

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