

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – OCTOBER 8, 2017

Better support for Victorian tenants welcome: Jesuit Social Services

Government changes to strengthen safeguards and rights for Victorian tenants have been welcomed by Jesuit Social Services.

“Many of the people we work with at Jesuit Social Services are renters and we understand the many challenges and frustrations that can come with navigating the private rental market. We welcome the Victorian Government’s announcements that will help make renting fair for everybody”, says Jesuit Social Services CEO Julie Edwards.

Removing the 120 day ‘no specified reason’ notice to vacate will provide increased security and protection to tenants, by ensuring that landlords need a valid reason to end a tenancy. This is important because it is increasing power to tenants, who until now have never had a strong voice in Victorian politics.

A key announcement is that upfront rent will be limited to one month’s rent for properties under \$760 per week (the vast majority of rental properties in Victoria). This will help prevent bidding wars between prospective tenants and ensure people without the means to offer large sums of money upfront are not discriminated against in the selection process.

“We welcome the announcement of a Commissioner for Residential Tenancies and look forward to an independent expert who can shape future policy, programs and resources as well as improved dispute resolution services to benefit the more than half a million rental households in Victoria”, says Ms Edwards.

“Many of the people we work with have multiple and complex needs including people exiting prison, people with mental illness or drug and alcohol problems, or people who have experienced homelessness. State and federal Governments must continue to invest in and implement reforms that provide access to safe, secure and affordable housing, especially for our most highly vulnerable tenants.”

For many disadvantaged or marginalised Victorians, navigating the private rental market is extremely complex. Jesuit Social Services looks forward to working closely with the Victorian Government to ensure all Victorians have increased rights and protections that make renting fair.

Media enquiries – Kathryn Kernohan, 0409 901 248 or kathryn.kernohan@jss.org.au