

Sex Workers Welcome Victorian Government Announcement to Decriminalise Sex Work

14 August, 2021

The announcement that sex work will be decriminalised in Victoria is welcomed by sex workers throughout Australia. Victoria will become the fourth jurisdiction in the world to decriminalise sex work. Legislative reforms will ensure that sex workers are treated in the same way as other workers, by removing the existing laws that criminalise consensual adult sex work.

Repeal of the outdated *Sex Work Act 1994* (Vic) will greatly improve sex workers' access to the health and safety mechanisms that keep other Victorians safe in their workplaces. In particular, we anticipate significant decreases in the levels of violence and exploitation experienced by sex workers as a result of sex work having been criminalised in the first place.

A Sex Work Law Reform Victoria spokesperson says *"These reforms are a major achievement for sex workers in Victoria, following decades of campaigning by sex workers and their supporters. Treating sex work as work sends an important message that sex workers are valued members of the community. We also look forward to stronger anti-discrimination protections for sex workers, giving us equal access to social and financial support systems."*

Sex Work Law Reform Victoria thanks the many sex workers and supporters who have campaigned for this reform for decades. We acknowledge the pivotal role played by Reason Party leader Fiona Patten, MP, who chaired a review in 2020 into sex work laws which has led to today's announcement.

Sex Work Law Reform Victoria says *"There is a great deal of work ahead in the wake of the reform to bring Victoria's diverse sex industry into mainstream business practices, and to ensure sex workers' access to health and welfare services. We look forward to seeing various parts of the Victorian Government work closely with sex workers from across all sectors of the industry, to ensure reforms lead to the fair and safe working conditions to which sex workers are entitled."*

Sex workers and stakeholders are encouraged to participate in the current Victorian Government [public consultation](#) into the details of the reforms, closing at 5pm on 27 August, 2021.

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Sex Work Law Reform Victoria is a not-for-profit sex workers' rights organisation led by Victorian sex workers. Founded in 2018, the organisation advocates to all levels of government regarding the legal rights of sex workers in Victoria.