



Welcome to the St Vincent de Paul Society NSW Social Justice Newsletter for September 2024

Join the 2024 Rosalie Rendu Forum - 16 October

The theme of this year's Rosalie Rendu Forum is, "[Rental Reforms: Is ending no grounds evictions the end of the story?](#)" This is a free online event on Wednesday 16 October, 6.00 - 7.30pm.

People who rent should have stable, healthy and affordable housing that feels like a home. The St Vincent de Paul Society NSW has welcomed the NSW Government's announcement that it will end no grounds evictions for renters on fixed-term and rolling leases. We see first-hand the impact that eviction and the threat of eviction has on vulnerable individuals and families. But what will these changes look like and what other reforms are needed?

Join us as we hear from leaders advocating for a range of reforms to make renting fairer, more affordable and of an acceptable quality for low-income households.

Register by Tuesday 15 October at: <https://bit.ly/3yLwJn5>

For further information, contact: social.justice@vinnies.org.au



NSW Drug Summit 2024

Supporting people with alcohol and drug dependency

The Society NSW looks forward to the NSW Government's upcoming Drug Summit in October 2024. The Summit will bring together medical experts, people with lived and living experience of drug use, representative organisations and other stakeholders, to plot the path forward to address problematic alcohol and drug use in NSW.

With an estimated 4 million Australians struggling with some form of drug dependency, the Summit presents a unique opportunity to tackle current barriers to achieving better health outcomes for people who use drugs in NSW. At present, investment in drug treatment services represents only 22.1% of State Governments' expenditure on responses to address drug use. We need to increase funding for crucial services, including detox programs, residential rehabilitation, day and outreach programs, that are struggling to meet a growing, more complex demand, especially in regional and rural areas.

The Summit will commence with two days of regional forums in October, followed by a Sydney forum on 4th and 5th December.

To find out more about the Society NSW's position on alcohol and drug use, you can read our inaugural [AOD Social Justice Statement](#).

You can also learn more about the personal impact of drug treatment services by listening to the [story of Jarrod's road to recovery](#) at Freeman House in Armidale.



Immediate Aid, Measurable Impact: Tracking the effectiveness of emergency relief

In August, the Society NSW together with the McKell Institute, launched an important report [Immediate Aid, Measurable Impact: Tracking the effectiveness of Emergency Relief](#) at the Hurstville Vinnies Support Centre and Shop. The report was presented to the Honorable Amanda Rishworth MP Federal Minister for Social Services and the Honorable Linda Burney MP, Member for Barton. It was a great advocacy opportunity for Vinnies NSW members, staff and clients to meet with the Ministers to discuss the work of the support centre and the impact the Society NSW had on their lives.

The [report](#) highlights that the cost of living crisis has seen a growing number of people seeking emergency financial, food, clothing and housing assistance. Through a survey of 900 individuals in receipt of emergency relief through the Society NSW, the importance and effectiveness of the emergency relief program is demonstrated. The key findings are at page 10 - highlighting how these programs are critical in the early intervention space and in alleviating poverty, felt by millions of people today. Emergency relief services offer a crucial 'hand up' rather than a 'hand out' - reaching people at their most vulnerable points and providing immediate support to prevent deeper crises. Our members play an amazing and critical role in delivering this support.

This [report](#) is Part 1 of a two part series examining the changing nature of poverty in NSW produced by The McKell Institute in partnership with the Society NSW. The reports will help to inform our advocacy - enabling us to better understand the evolving nature of poverty in Australia, while articulating the levers governments have to address its immediate impacts. We will share the Part 2 report when it's finalised in the coming months.



acSave the Date - Sydney Alliance Convention - 30 October

Calling all supporters! The [Sydney Alliance](#) has now confirmed that its annual convention will be held 6-9pm on 30 October at Bowman Hall, 35 Campbell Street, Blacktown and we need you to attend with your Vinnies blue shirts on. The Sydney Alliance brings together diverse community organisations, unions, religious organisations and schools to advance the common good and achieve a fair, just and sustainable city. The Society NSW is a member of the Alliance.

The Convention will gather 250-400 Sydney Alliance leaders to celebrate recent State Government wins, share stories and cast a vision for action in the lead up to the next Federal election, and meet with politicians. Confirmation of exact timing, venue and more information on the Convention goals and agenda and separate registration link will be forthcoming shortly.

Formal registration details are not yet available but please save the date and register your interest with us at social.justice@vinnies.org.au so that we can contact you once registration opens.



People affected by domestic and family violence left behind

This month, [a new report](#) has revealed the stark reality facing specialist domestic and family violence services, who are having to turn away more and more victim-survivors due to a lack of government funding. The report reflects Federal and State Governments' lack of progress toward ending violence against women and children and found that "demand for crisis services is outstripping service capacity". People who have experienced domestic and family violence have said that "much greater investment is needed across the board from primary prevention through to healing and recovery".

Another [report released from NSW's Domestic Violence Death Review Team](#) has found that almost one third of all homicides in NSW between 2000 and 2022 occurred in the context of domestic violence, with the NSW Government acknowledging that increased funding in emergency support services is just the first step.

Our [Social Justice Statement on domestic and family violence](#) calls on the NSW Government to increase funding for specialist services, invest in prevention initiatives and programs that meet the diverse needs of communities that experience domestic and family violence at higher rates, including First Nations communities. We encourage you to read the Statement, share it with others and use the recommendations in your advocacy to local MPs to end violence against women and children.

To learn more about domestic and family violence in NSW, you can visit [Domestic Violence NSW's Statistics](#) page.



NSW Social Justice Committee August Update

The Society NSW's State Social Justice Committee meets bi-monthly during the year and reports to the NSW State Council about current social justice issues in the regions, policy developments, campaigns and advocacy initiatives. Its highly motivated and dedicated members are passionate about our key priority areas of social and affordable housing, ending homelessness and easing cost of living. You can read more about all of our social justice priorities in our updated social justice statements [here](#).

During August, the Committee held its bi-monthly meeting to share updates on regional social justice issues, listen to a briefing by a Uniting social justice advocate on Uniting's [Fair Treatment campaign](#) and the upcoming 2024 Drug Summit (see article above), an update on the [Affordable Housing campaign](#) in the lead up to the local government elections in September and the Rosalie Rendu forum in October (article above). The Committee continued to raise its concerns about the lack of social and affordable housing in the regions, homelessness (including the gaps in the new medication scheme for people experiencing homelessness) and the continuing cost of living crisis across NSW and its increasing impacts on the people we assist.

Interested and want to find out more?

It's not too late to get involved in the [Affordable Housing campaign](#) - there are [local community forums](#) you can attend or consider writing a letter to your local councillor or candidate and asking for their commitment to 10-15% affordable housing in new developments in their area. Reach out to us at social.justice@vinnies.org.au or the Sydney Alliance at: admin@sydneyalliance.org.au for more information.



Events

Annual Rosalie Rendu Forum

16 October 2024

St Vincent de Paul Society NSW

Free, [Register](#) here.

Gambling Harm, Children and Young People

Sydney Alliance Convention

30 October, 6-9pm, Blacktown

Register your interest -

social.justice@vinnies.org.au

Students and Centrelink - Online community worker training

3 September, online

FAMS

Free, Register - cass@fams.asn.au

10 September, online

Welfare Rights Centre

Free, [Register here](#).

**Do you have a local social justice event or news item to share?
CONTACT US HERE!**

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St Vincent de Paul Society

NSW

good works

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