

MEDIA RELEASE**28 October 2021****Vinnies Victoria Shops thrilled to be opening doors again**

Vinnies Victoria Shops is so excited to be opening the doors again at our 58 metro Melbourne outlets as retail restrictions in the capital ease at the end of this week.

Our Brunswick shop will be the first to throw open its doors at 6.00pm this Friday 29 October to cheers of delight from volunteers and customers keen to resume their op-shopping passion. The remainder of our metro shops will re-open at 10.00am Saturday 30 October. Anticipation has been building in the pre-loved shopping community online in recent days. We have been seeing comments like, “we are counting down the days” and “can’t wait to be back”.

The Vinnies Shops team deeply appreciate that people have been storing their donations at home until the time that we could accept them again. Donations will be heartily welcomed at all shops once doors open. We ask people to bring their good-quality, pre-loved items into our shops so we can personally say ‘thank you’. More [information is HERE](#).

We also have two new shops that have been fully stocked and waiting to open in Melbourne’s western suburbs growth corridor – in Derrimut and Braybrook. Our market research showed that its rapidly expanding population demanded more Vinnies outlets – both new shops are approximately 500sqm and bursting with goods.

While there will be a focus on major retailers re-opening, we invite the media to give some attention to the second-hand sector, which is much loved by the public. We are so looking forward to welcoming back the 80,000+ shoppers a week who normally visit our shops throughout the state.

The extended lockdowns have had a considerable impact on Vinnies Victoria’s revenue, to the tune of millions of dollars. Because all our profits go back to helping our communities and Victorians experiencing hardship, the public’s support of our shops is more valued than ever as we recover from the pandemic.

Vinnies Executive General Manager Commercial Services Jeff Antcliff is available for interview and can speak about what types of donations we would love to receive now, the impact of the closures, how our volunteers can’t wait to get back to serving their local communities and having fun with their Vinnies family, how important the pre-loved retail sector is to reinvigorating the circular economy – and our hopes for 2022.

Consequently, we have a number of photo opportunities we invite the media to attend:

6.00pm Friday 29 October 2021: Brunswick Vinnies, 107 Sydney Rd.

Jeff Antcliff will be on site to personally greet our first returning customers with small gifts.

10.00am Saturday 30 October 2021: Ascot Vale Vinnies, 155 Maribyrnong Rd.

Jeff will also be at our Ascot Vale shop – our oldest shop that opened in 1926 – Saturday morning when doors open for the first time in months to share the excitement with volunteers and customers.

10.00am Wednesday, 3 November 2021: Derrimut Vinnies, Unit 3, 20 Mt Derrimut Road.

Jeff will be present again when our newest shop opens its doors for the first time. This shop has generated much interest in the community and we already have 40 new volunteers signed up.

St Vincent de Paul Society Victoria Group CEO Sue Cattermole says: “We are absolutely thrilled to be opening our doors again. The revenue from our shops underpins a great deal of our work in the community, and the funds generated from our shops go toward assisting people in need and helping prevent tonnes of garments going

to landfill. Shopping at Vinnies is a guilt-free experience, and you never know what treasure you'll find. Welcome back op-shoppers!"

In accordance with government regulations, customers attending Vinnies Shops will not immediately be required to provide information on their vaccination status. Vinnies Shops will adhere to government regulations thereafter and will outline entry requirements on appropriate signage. We expect our customers will kindly follow all necessary regulations, and thank them for their understanding.

For any further inquiries about this story or to arrange an interview with Jeff Antcliff, please contact our media office via the details below.

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ABOUT THE ST VINCENT DE PAUL SOCIETY:

The St Vincent de Paul Society and its wide network of members and volunteers provide practical frontline support, advocacy and friendship for the most vulnerable members of our community. Key services include home visitation; Vinnies Shops; youth programs; soup vans; assistance for asylum seekers and refugees; education and tutoring; and professional accommodation and health services through VincentCare. The St Vincent de Paul Society in Victoria has more than 13,000 members and volunteers, and more than 60,000 across Australia. Internationally, the Society operates in 149 countries and more than 950,000 members. To find out more visit www.vinnies.org.au.