

Embargoed:
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#ChangeNeedsYou – needs all of us

2023 Vinnies CEO Sleepout launch

The St Vincent de Paul Society Victoria ([Vinnies](#)) is calling chief executive officers (CEOs), senior executives and business and community leaders across Victoria to register now for the 2023 [Vinnies CEO Sleepout](#) – as cost-of-living pressures plague all corners of the state and local homelessness rates rise, fast.

The 2023 Vinnies CEO Sleepout, launching nationally today, is an annual event held on one of the longest and coldest nights of the year. Senior executives and business owners and community leaders are invited to sleep out and raise money to support a range of Vinnies services, which assist Australians experiencing homelessness and extreme poverty.

The event is hosted in every state and territory – visit ceosleepout.org to see all locations. In Victoria, the event will be hosted from 6:00pm – 6:00am on Thursday 22 June 2023 at the Timber Yard in Port Melbourne.

“Despite its name, the event attracts more than CEOs. Business owners, executive and community leaders are also encouraged to participate – either individually or as part of a team. **This year, our goal in Victoria is to raise \$1.2m and to promote the message #ChangeNeedsYou.** This call to action is a pointed invitation for Victoria’s leaders to register – because we believe those who truly care, will be there,” said St Vincent de Paul Society Victoria (Vinnies Victoria) Interim Group CEO, Paul Turton.

Care remains a cornerstone of the Vinnies CEO Sleepout event. Ever since the first event was hosted in Sydney in 2006, business leaders have raised more than \$82.5 million nationally to support Vinnies’ grassroots support services – which includes crisis accommodation, food, healthcare, counselling, education, employment, and more.

In Victoria, a record year of fundraising in 2022 translated to tangible service investment – including:

- 48 units in our frontline crisis accommodation and homelessness resource centre, Ozanam House, including wrap-around support services;
- Supporting the sustainability of our Soup Van service for people in need. Last year, 91% of people calling our welfare line requested food;
- Vital services and care delivered by Vinnies volunteers, including food parcels and financial assistance with rent, utilities, medical, educational, and other cost of living expenses.

Additionally, Vinnies extended the reach through our specialist homelessness services VincentCare Victoria – including:

- Providing 8,921 nights of emergency accommodation;
- Supported 20 adults and 25 children in refuge with accommodation and case management at our Northern Community Hub;
- Provided 53 adults and 27 children victim-survivors with intervention support in crisis motel accommodation.

“We rely heavily on the Vinnies CEO Sleepout to fund our core programs here at Vinnies. Through the generosity of the executive community and their supporters, we can deliver essential resources to people in dire need of assistance – and importantly, elevate their experiences through advocacy measures, too.

“This year it is more important than ever. With escalating cost of living pressures hitting the community so hard, we have already seen a dramatic rise in calls for help,” said Mr Turton.

In the past 12 months, the Vinnies Melbourne welfare assistance line received 55,693 calls for assistance – recently, up to 300 a day; volunteers provided \$4.3 million worth of cost-of-living expenses, and conducted more than 93,000 home visits to assist people in need. Since last June, Vinnies Soup Vans delivered a further 750,000+ meals on streets across Melbourne and in regional areas – a 25% rise from the previous year.

These growth patterns are supported by national research. Recent figures released by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) reported that **on Census night 2021, the number of Victorians who counted as being without a home rose by a staggering 24 per cent in five years.**

“These figures are deeply concerning and well ahead of the national average rise of around five percent –we are motivated and committed to turning that around,” said Mr Turton.

“Vinnies is proud to provide a vital link between people in need, government and the corporate sector, to positively impact the lives of people experiencing extreme housing stress and poverty. The Vinnies CEO Sleepout is a crucial part of this mission, and an essential platform for advocacy, so I encourage senior executives, business and community leaders to register now. Change needs you – good, positive change needs all of us – working together.”

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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 10,000+ 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.