

# WOMEN'S HEALTH SERVICES NETWORK

RESPONSE TO THE EXPOSURE DRAFT - THE ASSOCIATIONS INCORPORATION REFORM REGULATIONS  
2023

*The following submission to the exposure draft is provided by the Victorian Women's Health Services Network on behalf of the 12 Victorian Women's Health Services.*

Who are the Victorian Women's Health Services?

The Women's Health Services sector of Victoria comprises 12 individual, not for profit organisations who are all incorporated associations under the Associations Act. They all have independent Boards of Governance, constitutions, and all comply with Australian regulation and law including the Associations Act and the Australian Charity and Not for Profit Commission (ACNC). They all receive funding from Victorian Government under a common set of guidelines and indicator framework

The sector comprises:

### *3 State Wide services*

- Women's Health Victoria
- Multicultural Centre for Women's Health
- Women with Disabilities Victoria

### *4 Metropolitan Based organisations*

- GenWest
- Women's Health East
- Women's Health in the North
- Women's Health in the South East

### *5 Rural Based organisations*

- Women's Health Loddon Mallee
- Women's Health Grampians
- Women's Health and Wellbeing Barwon South West
- Gippsland Women's Health
- Women's Health Goulburn North East

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## RESPONSE TO QUESTIONS:

*HARMONISING THE FINANCIAL REPORTING THRESHOLDS TO THE TIERS UNDER THE AUSTRALIAN CHARITIES AND NOT-FOR-PROFITS COMMISSION REGULATIONS 2022 (CTH) (THE ACNC REGULATIONS)*  
 Part 4 of the proposed Regulations revise the reporting thresholds for tier one, two and three incorporated associations, which will re-align Victoria to the thresholds for small, medium and large charities under the ACNC Regulations.

HOW DO THE CHANGES TO THE FINANCIAL REPORTING THRESHOLDS IMPACT YOU OR YOUR ASSOCIATION?

It does not impact our associations.

*INCREASING THE ASSET CEILING FOR VOLUNTARY CANCELLATION / WINDING UP OF AN INCORPORATED ASSOCIATION*

Part 6 of the proposed Regulations prescribes a new asset ceiling for the voluntary cancellation or winding up of an incorporated association. The reform will mean that if an incorporated association has assets less than \$50,000 it is eligible for voluntary cancellation.

DO YOU CONSIDER THIS AMOUNT REASONABLE?

It does not impact on our associations. We believe it to be a reasonable amount.

*CLARIFYING THE USE OF TECHNOLOGY UNDER THE MODEL RULES*

The proposed Regulations and the Model Rules at Schedule 4 have been modernised to enable more flexible use of technology by incorporated associations.

DO YOU THINK THE NEW REGULATIONS ADEQUATELY CAPTURE THE VARIOUS WAYS IN WHICH YOUR ASSOCIATION COULD UTILISE TECHNOLOGY IN ITS ACTIVITIES?

Yes, we think that the new regulations adequately capture the ways in which the Women's Health Services can utilize technology throughout our work. For instance, it increases accessibility and provides more flexible options for members and the board to have hybrid meetings and it is cost saving.

*INTRODUCING A NEW DISCIPLINARY APPEALS PROCESS*

The new dispute resolution process under Division 2 of Part 3 of the Model Rules provides for the establishment of an appeals subcommittee constituted by impartial members.

DO THE NEW REQUIREMENTS ADDRESS CONCERNS AROUND UNBIASED DECISION MAKING?

Yes, they do address concerns around unbiased decision making.

*REVISING THE PRESCRIBED FEES PAID TO THE REGISTRAR*

Schedule 2 of the proposed regulations sets out new amounts in relation to the fees to be paid to the Registrar. The context to setting the new amounts is set out in the Regulatory Impact Statement and in particular, the key pricing principles set out on page 28.

DO YOU HAVE ANY FEEDBACK ON THE NEW FEES?

The new fees schedule appears appropriate however we would ask that as much as possible, the exemptions available to the Women's Health Services (eg fundraising) are not impacted by the regulation reforms.