

# The Gender Equality Act 2020

## BENEFITS OF THE ACT

The Gender Equality Act 2020 takes effect on March 31st, 2021 and requires entities to measure and monitor progress within their respective organisations towards workplace gender equality.<sup>2</sup>

The Act covers a wide range public entities including<sup>1</sup>:



Local Councils



Universities



Victoria Police



Emergency Services



Water, gas and electricity services

## ECONOMIC



- Reduction in the national gender pay gap.<sup>3</sup>
- Equal workforce participation through balanced recruitment practices.<sup>4</sup>
- Challenging structural barriers that prevent female representation in leadership positions.<sup>4</sup>
- Greater organisational growth.<sup>5</sup>
- Increase in employee retention.<sup>5</sup>

## SOCIAL



- Increasing flexible working arrangements and reducing discrimination.<sup>3,4</sup>
- Challenging gender stereotypes and improving the value of shared caring roles.<sup>4</sup>
- Improvements in overall wellbeing and long-term health outcomes.<sup>3</sup>
- Reduction in workplace sexual harassment.<sup>4</sup>

## OBLIGATIONS UNDER THE ACT

The Act aims to tackle the key drivers of gender inequality through the enactment of a series of obligations, that apply to both internal and external aspects of organisations.<sup>1</sup>

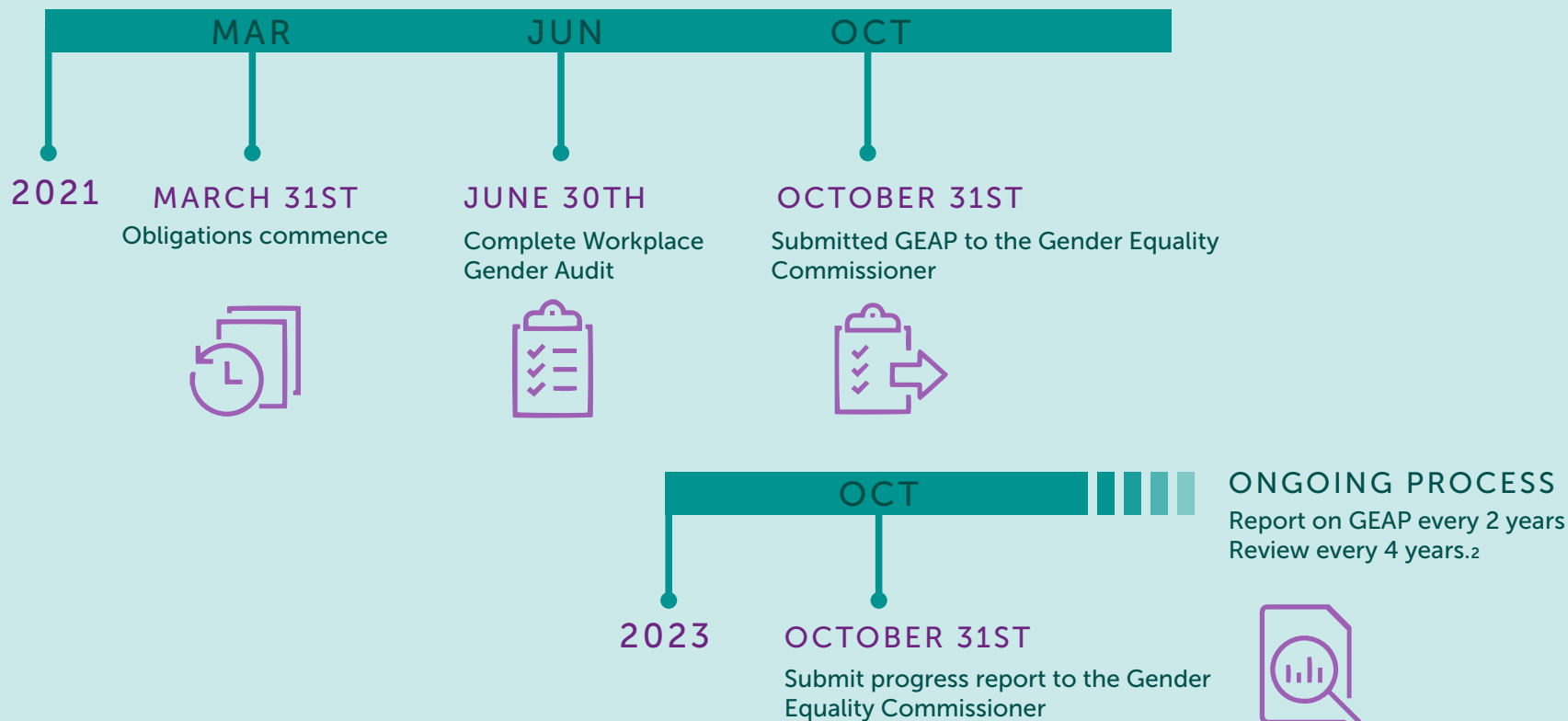
### INTERNAL

- Workplace gender audit
- Gender Equality Action Plan (GEAP)
- Report and review cycle of GEAP

### EXTERNAL

- Gender Impact Assessments of new policies, services and programs that directly and significantly impact the public.<sup>2</sup>

## TIMELINE OF OBLIGATIONS



## INTERNAL

### WORKPLACE GENDER AUDIT

Organisations must regularly conduct workplace gender audits using a series of indicators to understand where change is needed, and monitor progress over time toward workplace gender equality.<sup>6</sup>

The audit should include gender disaggregated data and additional demographic data such; as age, ethnicity, Aboriginality and sexual orientation.<sup>6</sup>

#### Indicators

- Gender composition of all levels in the workforce.
- Gender composition of governing bodies (i.e. boards, councils, committee, and management).
- Gender pay equity.
- Sexual harassment in the workplace.
- Recruitment and promotion practices in the workplace.
- Leave and flexibility, the availability and utilisation of conditions in regards to parental leave, flexible work arrangements and family violence leave.
- Gendered segregation within the workplace.<sup>1</sup>

### GENDER EQUALITY ACTION PLANS (GEAP)

Following the completion of the workplace gender audit organisations must develop a GEAP. The GEAP uses workplace gender audit results to develop a series of strategies and measures that address workplace gender inequality. This action plan must be submitted to the Gender Equality Commissioner and publicly available on the organisation's website.<sup>6</sup>

## EXTERNAL

### GENDER IMPACT ASSESSMENT (GIA)

Organisations under the Act will conduct a GIA when delivering new programs, policies, or services, as well as those up for review. GIAs must use gender disaggregated data to assess how individuals of different genders may be impacted by these policies, programs or services and state how polices, programs or services will be varied to meet these needs.<sup>7</sup>

The four-step process to conduct a gender impact assessment includes the following:

1

#### Define the issue and challenge the assumptions

Aims to challenge internal work environment biases/assumptions and increase understanding of issues and barriers in the policy, program, or service.

2

#### Understanding the content

Aims to further build an understand of how gender shapes the dissemination of strategies through data and research.

3

#### Conducting an options analysis

Aims to conduct a cost and benefit analysis and develop a range of potential solutions to the barriers associated with the policy, program, or service.

4

#### Making recommendations

Aims to review the process of the GIA and make final recommendations.<sup>8</sup>

## WOMEN'S HEALTH EAST

Women's Health East works across Melbourne's Eastern Metropolitan region and supports organisations to embed gender equality through the provision of information and practical tools, consultation, gender auditing, tailored delivery of training across your organisations, workshops and facilitated conversations.

For more information visit [www.whe.org.au](http://www.whe.org.au)

☎ (03) 9851 3700 or  
✉ [health@whe.org.au](mailto:health@whe.org.au)

For further details and latest updates visit the Gender Equality Commission website:  
[www.genderequalitycommission.vic.gov.au](http://www.genderequalitycommission.vic.gov.au)

## REFERENCES

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