



# Parity

## A Call for Contributions – October 2024

### “After The Voice: First Nations Responses to Homelessness”

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**Draft submission deadline: COB Thursday 26 September 2024**

**Final submission deadline: COB Friday 4 October 2024**

**Word length: Contributions can be up to 1,600 words. Submissions to be sent to:  
[parity@chp.org.au](mailto:parity@chp.org.au)**

This edition of Parity is sponsored by:



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### Acknowledgement

We acknowledge the ancient and enduring Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples, Clans and Traditional Owner Groups, of the lands upon which Australia is built and pay respect to Elders, past, present and emerging, who are the caretakers of Country. Sovereignty has never ceded on this land and the advocacy for treaty and self-determination is at the forefront of all our work for this edition of *Parity*.



## **Introduction**

The aim of the October “After The Voice: First Nations Responses to Homelessness” edition of *Parity* is to provide a forum in which as many First Nations voices as possible, both organisational, individual and collective, can articulate their views on what should be policy and service response to First Nation’s homelessness. *Parity* is the national publication of the Council to Homeless Persons (CHP) and is the national homelessness publication in Australia. (Please visit: <https://chp.org.au/sector-learning-and-development/parity-magazine/>)

All people working in relevant areas of government, those working in specialist homelessness services, engaged in different forms of advocacy, mainstream government services, social housing providers, involved in grassroots activism and community campaigns or in universities and as well, relevant research bodies, are invited to participate in this discussion and contribute to this edition. Alongside this grounding consideration of homelessness *Parity* values the voices and experiences of those who have lived it, and indeed continue to live it.

The Guest Editor of this edition is Sarah Brinkhege. Sarah is an advocate for First Nations human rights, who has previously worked as an Indigenous education worker and primary school teacher. She is also a student at Deakin University and the recipient of the 2023 Santa Singh and Balwant Kaur First Nations Scholarship. Sarah was born and raised on Bunjalung country.

## **Artwork**

All contributors are welcome to submit any images that they would like to accompany their articles. Also, all those involved in creative programs for people who are, or who have, experienced homelessness, are invited to contribute artwork, poetry, prose and traditional cultural expressions. Please contact the *Parity* editor at [parity@chp.org.au](mailto:parity@chp.org.au) to discuss the inclusion of artwork produced by clients in this edition of *Parity*.

## **Note on language**

The term First Nations is employed in the Australian context, by recognising that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are the First People of this land as it directly relates to their inherent unceded sovereignty. We use the term Indigenous as it relates to Indigenous peoples globally as well as in the human rights context.

## **Note on lived experience**

The names used in lived experience stories do not need to be the real names of community members we support. Shared lived experience can be de-identified if requested to protect the identity of the community we seek to support. Community members retain ownership over their contributions.



## A framework for discussion

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### Chapter 1: The lived experience of First Nations homelessness

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander persons are the traditional owners and custodians of the land upon which all Australians live. It is a grim fact then, that the people with the **greatest right** to this land as their home, are also the group most likely to experience homelessness. In no other human services portfolio is the moral imperative to restore rights more compelling for First Nations than in housing.

The voices of those within community who have lived experience of homelessness, or have engaged with specialist homelessness services, or are at risk of homelessness, should always be central in the development of homelessness policies. This chapter is designed to ensure respectful, meaningful and ethical engagement with community members with lived experience — helping to foster an environment of cultural **respect and collaboration** that values diverse and unique perspectives and experiences.

This is an opportunity for contributors with **lived experience** to provide feedback and opinions on all issues of homelessness reform. In any attempt to review, rebuild or reform the system, it must be acknowledged that being a First Nations person with a lived experience of homelessness is the only true way of ‘knowing’ the unique and specific Indigenous factors, contributing to the levels of housing disadvantage experienced by the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community.

Self-determination in the homelessness sector calls for an **understanding of the historical structural inequality** encoded in Australian society as a result of colonisation. This chapter is a place for truth-telling about the consequences of failed, racist and discriminatory policies that have left a lasting impact on access to culturally safe and appropriate housing for First Nations people. The safety and confidentiality of community members engaging with this process will be maintained. Measures will be implemented to ensure a secure environment when participating in the consultation and personal information will be kept confidential if requested. Community members have the option of opting in or out at any stage.

Commonwealth policies concerned with Native Title, cultural heritage, health, employment, and the criminal justice system are highly relevant to the issue of First Nations housing and homelessness. This chapter calls for lived experience stories that reflect **Indigenous-specific concepts** about housing and homelessness — in particular; the consequences of the historical and ongoing dispossession of First Nations peoples from their lands; incarceration and youth detention; forcible child removal; exploitation; domestic violence; and spiritual homelessness.



These factors are highlighted to mature and evolve our understanding of the issues beyond the dysfunction and trauma so starkly reflected in the statistics, by reminding us that behind each statistic there is a **human story** which data and numbers alone cannot represent.

The experience of social exclusion and isolation while in prison is particularly and purposefully disruptive to connection to family, Country and culture. This chapter seeks **lived experience stories of imprisonment**, including youth detention, and its lasting effects. It asks people who are, or who have been incarcerated to reflect on the paths that led to prison and the stories of family breakdown, homelessness, institutionalisation and racism that resulted from imprisonment.

While domestic and family violence and child abuse is not confined to any one social or ethnic group, it is certainly linked to social deprivation and poverty, a cycle that is most often reflected **generation to generation** and finds expression in forms of lateral violence. The hard reality is that historical and on-going marginalisation and state-sanctioned violence make domestic and family violence a particular challenge in First Nations communities.

Domestic and family violence are not part of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures; they are a **product of policy and structural inequity** and yet First Nations led responses to domestic and family violence are chronically underfunded. It is important that this section calls for submissions from those who have experienced, and indeed still do experience domestic, family and sexual violence and how these experiences contribute to the risk of homelessness.

Aboriginal children continue to feature disproportionately as subjects to child protection services. This section calls for contributions from First Nations persons that have, and continue to be, **systematically removed from their families**. Dismantling the cycles of social deprivation and poverty from generation to generation is necessary to untangle the policies and practices that have led to the current disproportionate levels of First Nations poverty, domestic violence, incarceration and homelessness.

Submissions are also welcome that discuss **spiritual forms of homelessness**. These may derive from: (a) separation from traditional land, (b) separation from family and kinship networks, or (c) a crisis of personal identity wherein one's understanding or knowledge of how one relates to country, family and identity systems is confused.

Also sought are submissions from First Nations public place dwellers. Those who are or have been chronically homeless and pursue/d a lifestyle of living rough for a number of complicated reasons and who consider/ed **public space their home**; what is the meaning of home when



occupying certain public spaces and what causes resistance to reintegration into the mainstream?

The primary purpose of this chapter is to ensure that discussion of First Nation’s homelessness in Australia is firmly grounded in the knowledge and experience of those who have, and indeed still experience, the Indigenous-specific contributing factors of the many dimensions of the experience of homelessness. Such perspective and insights are sought to shape future policy and remediate current support and service gaps. Helpful are reflections and discussions of the kinds of community support services that did provide good services and why these were helpful. A **diverse range of lived experience** stories are ideally sought — including from single women, LGBTQIA+, children and young people, Elders and family stories passed down through generations.

A follow-up process will be established to check in with community members, seek further feedback and provide the opportunity to yarn about the consultative process. Steps will be taken to ensure that community members retain ownership over their contributions. Where appropriate, CHP would like to provide **support** to organisations and individuals to ensure the perspectives of those with lived experience of homelessness are supported and foregrounded.

Anyone needing assistance to contribute can work with Sarah Brinkhege who will record, interview, transcribe or otherwise help anyone who may need assistance in developing their contribution. Please email or phone Sarah Brinkhege ([sarahb@chp.org.au](mailto:sarahb@chp.org.au) or 0402 353 212).

## Chapter 2: Interrogating First Nations homelessness

The aim of this chapter is to provide a map and an overall “picture” of the current state of First Nation’s homelessness in Australia. This chapter will examine empirical issues like enumeration, the character and make-up of the homeless population, the location of those experiencing homelessness and **baseline** issues of homelessness **demographics** and any other information required to understand the size, nature, character and composition of First Nation’s homeless population in Australia.

This chapter will also seek to examine and discuss the **distinctive characteristics** of First Nation’s homelessness in Australia.

- How and in what ways does Indigenous homelessness in Australia differ and/or are similar from that experienced in other countries?
- What are the differences in the nature and character of homelessness in capital cities and in the homelessness experience in its regional cities and surrounds, and particularly in remote communities?



### Chapter 3: The policy context of the response to First Nations homelessness

The aim of this chapter is to contextualise current homelessness policy and programs as they apply to First Nations peoples. A crucial part of understanding this context is to be clear about the history of, and the background to, the development of **current homelessness policy in Australia**. It was clearly demonstrated in a National Analysis of Indigenous Homelessness response prepared by Memmott et al (2002) that 'homelessness' is not always simply created by a lack of 'housing', nor simply addressed by its provision. Many government policies are relevant to contextualising Indigenous homelessness. Mainstream definitions of homelessness pervade policy where **definitions of Indigenous homelessness** are clearly required.

This section calls for a policy context overview that aims to: (a) position current policies in relation to Indigenous specific concepts of homelessness, (b) identify categories of Indigenous homelessness that are inherent in policy or that inform policy, and (c) **identify policy gaps**. In essence, what are the elements of continuity or discontinuity in the evolution and development of First Nation's homelessness policy in Australia and how do they connect to upholding, acknowledging and providing **sovereignty** to traditional lore and customs?

Policy Context Overview:

1. Commonwealth Government Policy
  - 1.1. Housing Minister's Advisory Committee
  - 1.2. The National Homelessness Strategy & the Commonwealth Advisory Committee on Homelessness
  - 1.3. Supported Accommodation Assistance Program
2. State and Territory Government Policies
  - 2.1. Victorian Homelessness Strategies
    - 2.1.1. *Mana-na worn-tyeen maar-takoort*: the Victorian Aboriginal Housing and Homelessness Framework
    - 2.1.2. Submission to the National Housing and Homelessness Plan Victorian Aboriginal Child Care Agency
  - 2.2. New South Wales Partnership Against Homelessness Strategy
  - 2.3. Northern Territory Homelessness Action Plan
    - 2.3.1. Northern Territory's Homelessness Strategy 2018-2023, "Pathways out of Homelessness"
  - 2.4. Queensland Government's Homelessness Strategies for Cairns, Mt Isa and Townsville
  - 2.5. Western Australian Homelessness Strategy
  - 2.6. South Australia Alcohol Strategy and Social Inclusion Plan
3. Local Government Policies



#### 4. Knowledge Gaps in Policy

Government policies **build upon previous policies**, their purported successes and their perceived failures, as well as being developed in response to the different values, principles and priorities of those in different governments.

To fully understand where we are today, and the **challenges of tomorrow**, it is crucial to set out how different policy responses have evolved and changed over time, and likewise what influenced these changes.

#### Chapter 4: Pathways out of homelessness

The aim of this chapter is to discuss and examine how what has worked to prevent and respond to First Nation's homelessness in Australia and in particular what do the principles of self-determination look like in homelessness reform? Only when First Nation's led services develop and implement the policies, facilities and forms of housing that meets mob's needs and requirements, rather than have them imposed by other entities, will there be an opportunity for justice, fairness and an informed, effective response to end homelessness.

This chapter will provide the opportunity for all those responsible for the development and implementation of homelessness strategies to articulate the **key goals** and how they will be met and implemented.

In particular, how have these policies worked to meet the needs of the priority groups identified:

- *First Nations people at risk of homelessness*
- *First Nations children and young people experiencing homelessness*
- *First Nations people experiencing domestic, family and sexual violence*
- *First Nations people who are sleeping rough or experiencing chronic homelessness*
- *First Nations people in remote and rural areas*
- *First Nations people exiting custodial, care or rehabilitation settings (including correctional, out-of-home care and health systems)*
- *First Nations people who are living in insecure housing or whose tenancy is at risk.*

This chapter will also provide all those involved with the response to First Nation's homelessness, as well as the provision of affordable housing, the opportunity to discuss and comment on the **effectiveness** of current homelessness strategies.



## Chapter 5: Where to now, after The Voice?

An edition of *Parity* following the unsuccessful Voice to Parliament referendum would not be complete without a section that calls for contributions about the Indigenous landscape on which this country has been constructed. Always was and always will be, so, how do we keep the fire burning and continue to engage in **treaty negotiations**? The aim of this section is to contextualise current treaty policy and programs. The crucial part of this chapter is to be clear about the history of, and the background to, the campaign for a First Nations Voice to Parliament and the aftermath of the unsuccessful referendum. The pressing issue of Aboriginal homelessness needs to be addressed within the broader context of reconciliation and the **restoration of native title**. A first step is the recognition that Aboriginal people have been dispossessed and made homeless on their own land in the years following the invasion of European settlers. This chapter provides a space for advocates to share **the survival and spiritual depth of Aboriginal connection to country**.

## Chapter 6: Opinion Pages – Developing a framework for the future

The aim of this section is to provide the space for policy makers, services providers, researchers, opinion makers, sector leaders and advocates to address the central question:

- Where to now for the response to First Nation's homelessness in the Australia?
- What should a new/national First Nation's homelessness policy look like?
- Who would make the policy and would it be based on the **principles of self-determination**?
- How would a national policy fit in/ differ to State/Territory and locally determined policies and programs?

## Key information

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**Draft submission deadline:** All those wanting input and feedback on their draft contributions should try to submit them as early as possible, and preferably no later than 26 September 2024.

The *Parity* Guest Editor Sarah Brinkhege will be working at CHP until after the final submission deadline. If you would like assistance from the Guest Editor during that time, please contact: [sarahb@chp.org.au](mailto:sarahb@chp.org.au)

**Final submission deadline:** All contributions need to be submitted by COB Friday 4 October 2024.





**Submissions format:** All contributions should be submitted as Word documents, emailed to [parity@chp.org.au](mailto:parity@chp.org.au).

**Word length:** Contributions can be up to 1,600 words (including references). This equates to a double page spread in *Parity*. Single page articles can be up to 800 words in length. Contributions of a greater length should be discussed with the *Parity* Editor.

**Artwork:** Contributors are invited to submit the artwork they would like to accompany their article. Inclusion is dependent on the space being available. If artwork is not provided and is required, it will be selected by the *Parity* Editor.

**Embedded media:** Contributors are able to make suggestions for the placement of relevant hyperlinks, video and other multimedia within their content which can be embedded in the *Parity* online edition. Any suggestions will be reviewed by and decided upon by the *Parity* editor.

**Content:** By providing your contribution, you confirm and agree that (except where you have referenced or cited any other's work) the contribution is your original work and has not been copied from any other source.

**Use:** If your contribution is accepted, it will be published by or on CHP's behalf in an edition of the *Parity* magazine. *Parity* is available in hard copy and online.

**Questions:** The *Parity* Editor Noel Murray and Intern Guest Editor Sarah Brinkhege can be contacted on:

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## References

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All works that are cited or referred to in an article should be referenced. *Parity* does not encourage contributors to list a bibliography of references used in the development of an article but are *not* cited in the article. There is simply insufficient space for the inclusion of extensive bibliographies.



## In-text citations

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CHP uses numbered-citation for all in-text citations.

- Number references consecutively in the order in which they are first mentioned in the text. The first reference you cite will be numbered (1) in the text, and the second reference you cite will be numbered (2), and so on.
- A number is assigned to each reference as it is used. Even if the author is named in your text, a number must still be used.
- References are listed in numerical order at the end of the document.
- If you use a reference consecutively assign the consecutive number and use *Ibid*.
- If the same reference elsewhere in your article, assign the consecutive number and use *op. cit.* For example, Seung S 2012, *op cit*, p. 34.
- The number can be placed outside the text punctuation to avoid disruption to the flow of the text.
- If a single sentence uses two or more citations, simply identify the references one after the other.

For example:

International research has found that resilience in a homeless youth sample correlates with lower levels of psychological distress, suicide ideation, violent behaviour and substance abuse. (4) (5)

## *Parity* referencing style

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All references used in *Parity* articles should be listed using the following guidelines:

### **Books**

Author's surname, initial(s), year of publication, Title of book, Publisher, Place of Publication, Page number(s).

For example:

1. Seung S 2012, *Connectome: How the Brain's Wiring Makes Us Who We Are*, Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, Boston, p.90.



## Journal Articles

Author's surname, initial(s), year of publication, 'Title of article', *Title of Journal*, volume number, issue number, Page number(s).

For example:

Trevithick P 2003 'Effective Relationship Based Practice', *Journal of Social Work Practice*, vol.17, no.2, pp.163-176.

## Newspaper articles

### With identified author:

Authors Surname Initial Year of publication, 'Title of article', *Name of publication*, Date and year of publication, Page number(s) or <URL> if applicable.

For example:

Kissane K 2008, 'Brumby calls for tough sentences', *The Age*, 29 October 2017, p. 8.

### With no author:

Use 'Unknown'

For example:

Unknown 2008, 'Brumby calls for tough sentences', *The Age*, 29 October 2017, p. 8.

## Webpage/document within a website or blog post

Author's surname (if known) Initial, 'Page/Blog/Document Title', *The person or organisation responsible for the website*, Year of Publication (if known) <URL>

For example:

Greenblatt S, 'A special letter from Stephen Greenblatt', Australian Council of Social Services, 2017 <<http://acoss.org/media/greenblatt>>

## Audio podcast

Speaker/Hosts surname Initial, 'Title of episode', *Title of Podcast*, Year and date of Publication, <URL> (if available).

For example:

Todd B 2018, 'What homelessness looks like for women', Stuff Mom Never Told You, 14 March 2018 <<https://www.stuffmomnevertoldyou.com/podcasts/what-homelessness-looks-like-for-women.html>>

## Online video/film or documentary

*Title* Date of recording, Format, Publisher.



For example:

*Indigenous homelessness* 1992, video recording, Green Cape Wildlife Films.

### **Personal communication**

Personal communication may include (but are not limited to) email, fax, interview, conversations, lectures, speeches, telephone conversations and letters. Usually personal communications do not appear, as the information is not retrievable. However, due to the numbered citations used in *Parity*, we ask that they be included as follows:

Author's surname First name, Method of communication, Date and year of Communication

For example:

Johnson George, Telephone interview, 12 August 2018.

### **Citing the same reference more than once**

When a reference is cited a number of times, use *op cit.* after the year has been given. If the page number is different from the first use, cite the new page number as well.

For example:

Asante K O and Meyer-Weitz A 2015 *op cit.* pp. 230-231.

### **Citing the same reference consecutively**

Use *Ibid.* when the same reference appears consecutively. If the page number is different from the first use, cite the page number as well.

For example:

1. Florn B H 2015, 'The cost of youth homelessness', *Journal of Adolescence*, vol.17, no.2, pp.163-176.

2. *Ibid.* pp.32-33.

### **Multiple Authors**

For every reference type, give all the authors Surnames and first Initials followed by a comma in the bibliography. The last author listed should be preceded by 'and'.

For example:

Sharp J, Peters J and Howard K 2002, *The management of a student research project*, Gower, Aldershot, England.