

Chris Steel MLA

Treasurer

Minister for Planning and Sustainable Development

Minister for Heritage

Minister for Transport

Member for Murrumbidgee

RESPONSE TO QUESTION ON NOTICE**Questions on Notice Paper No 5****11 April 2025****Question No. 296****MR CAIN MLA** - To ask the Minister for Planning and Sustainable Development:

1. What financial assistance is available to homeowners who are struggling to afford the necessary modifications to comply with the new pool safety standards.
2. Can the ACT Government provide more information on any low-cost compliance options or financial relief programs for residents facing significant expenses due to these reforms.
3. How will the ACT Government support homeowners who may need to make extensive and costly changes to their existing pool barriers to meet the new safety requirements.
4. What steps are being taken to ensure that the financial impact on homeowners is minimised while still achieving the desired safety outcomes of the pool fencing reforms.
5. What consultation is being undertaken with homeowners impacted by the implementation of the new home swimming pool safety reforms.

MINISTER STEEL MLA - The answer to the Member's question is as follows:

1. Homeowners are encouraged to engage with experts to explore low-cost solutions to upgrading their swimming barrier to meet modern safety standards. There are no financial assistance schemes.
2. The ACT Government recommends that homeowners engage with authorised persons or building certifiers to explore low-cost options available to achieve compliance with modern safety standards in their circumstances. Detailed information is available on the planning website at <https://www.planning.act.gov.au/projects-priorities/building-regulatory-system/home-swimming-pool-safety-reforms>.
3. The ACT Government has prepared detailed guidance to support homeowners to understand the new requirements and how they may need to upgrade their safety barriers to meet modern



safety standards. To help homeowners manage costs associated with required upgrades, a four-year transition period began on 1 May 2024. This period allows homeowners to plan for their transition and explore low-cost solutions.

4. The changes that need to be made to safety barriers will depend on several factors. These include the type of safety barrier that is currently in place and the location of the swimming pool or spa in relation to other buildings, structures and boundary fences on the property. During the transition period, homeowners are encouraged to consult with authorised persons for guidance on options to achieve compliance. The reform scheme also accommodates situations where a swimming pool or spa may not be able to fully meet the safety standards. In these cases, individuals can apply for [a ministerial exemption](#), provided they meet the specified criteria justifying their inability to comply (see [Building \(Ministerial Exemptions for Regulated Swimming Pools\) Guidelines 2024](#) for details).
5. Public consultation has played a crucial role in shaping the reforms. A six-week consultation period in early 2023 with homeowners, industry and targeted market research with a representative group of pool owners and the general community, sought feedback on the reforms through a variety of channels. Written feedback was received from 362 individuals, including pool owners and industry representatives. This comprehensive approach allowed the views of affected residents to be considered, and their feedback contributed to shaping effective and practical safety reforms for home swimming pools in the community. Feedback from residents during the transition period is welcomed and can be provided to the Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate at epsddbbuildingreform@act.gov.au.

Approved for circulation to the Member and incorporation into Hansard.



Chris Steel MLA

Minister for Planning and Sustainable Development

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This response required 2hr 10mins to complete, at an approximate cost of \$221.59.