Open Letter to Western Australian State and Federal Members of Parliament

Dear Members of Parliament,

Over the past year, Western Australians have taken the time to share their concerns about poverty in our state and call on elected representatives to act.

Through workshops, community events, festivals, markets and libraries, No Place for Poverty collected 998 advocacy postcards addressed to politicians chosen by the people who wrote them.

Together, these postcards provide a snapshot of community concern, with people from all walks of life speaking up about poverty and calling for change. Their voices and priorities are brought together in the accompanying report, **The Power of a Postcard**, which we encourage you to read alongside this letter.

Despite WA's prosperity, poverty has more than doubled over the past decade, with an estimated 456,000 Western Australians now living in poverty.[1] Behind these numbers are people struggling to afford essentials, keep a secure home and participate fully in community life.

The message from community is clear: **poverty is not inevitable and more must be done to address it.**

The community is calling for change in three policy areas:

1. Ensure everyone can live with dignity

The Federal Government to urgently lift JobSeeker, Youth Allowance, Parenting Payment and related payments to at least $600 per week so people can afford to meet their basic needs.[2]

2. Make sure everyone has a safe, secure and affordable place to call home

Federal Government

- Make Rent Assistance more widely available for people on low incomes to reduce housing stress.[3]

State Government

- Ensure at least 10 per cent of all housing stock is social housing.[3]
- Incentivise *genuinely* affordable housing in all new developments with affordability assessed against the incomes of lower-income households rather than market prices.[3]
- Ensure proposed state legislation set minimum standards for all rental properties to ensure safe, habitable homes with basic contemporary amenities, free from mould, pests and exposure to extreme temperatures.[2, 3]
- Introduce measures to improve rental affordability and protect tenants from excessive rent increases. [3, 4]

3. Measure poverty and track progress in addressing it

Adopt a consistent, nationally agreed definition of poverty with measures to better understand its scale and impact, recognise people's experiences, and track progress in eliminating it.

As elected representatives, you have an important role in helping create a WA where everyone has fair opportunity to live with dignity, security and belonging.

We ask you to listen to these community voices and provide a response to these policy requests by **Friday 11th December 2026.**

No Place for Poverty will make the responses publicly available and share them with the community through our social media channels, so the people who contributed their voices can see how their elected representatives respond.

Yours sincerely,

No Place for Poverty
On behalf of the 998 Western Australians who contributed their voices through the Power of a Postcard initiative.

NO PLACE FOR POVERTY

1. Bankwest Curtin Economics Centre, 2026 Poverty Snapshot: The Changing Face of Poverty in Western Australia
2. raisetherate.org.au - Campaign led by Australian Council of Social Service (ACOSS).
3. everybodyshome.com.au - National Campaign with 500 organisations, businesses and councils, and more than 43,000 individuals
4. makerentingfairwa.org.au - Coalition of Western Australian organisations and community