

Can I get compensation?

New South Wales

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If you have been injured in a violent act, including if you survived childhood sexual abuse, you may be able to get compensation. You might want compensation to recognise the wrongdoing done to you and to recover money you've paid or will need to pay to help you get better.

You might be able to get compensation by:

- making a Victims Support Scheme application
- making an application for crimes compensation with a court
- taking legal action against the person and/or institution responsible for your injuries (civil claims)
- applying to an institutional redress scheme
- from 2018 through the Commonwealth Redress Scheme

It is important that you get legal advice about the best option, so contact knowmore

What is the Victims Support Scheme?

The Victims Support Scheme provides information, financial support and referral services to victims of crime.

Can I make an application?

If you've been injured in a violent crime, you may be able to apply for financial assistance and other support, such as counselling services.

What support can I get?

If you were injured, you can make an application for financial assistance to help you cover the costs of:

- counselling
- medical treatment and
- safety changes.

If you were working at the time of the injury, you may also be able to get some help for lost wages. You may also be able to get some money to recognise the wrongdoing done to you. This is called a "recognition payment".

How long do I have to make a claim?

Usually you have two years from when the crime took place to make an application for financial assistance.

Special rules apply for people who were injured in a sexual crime that happened when they were under 18 years of age.

You should get some legal advice to see whether you can make a claim, so contact knowmore for legal help.

How do I make an application?

You can make an application by contacting Victims Services on 1800 633 063. All applications must include specific documents. For example, if you want a recognition payment, you must include a police report or a report from a government agency and a medical report. This might apply to you, so contact knowmore to get legal help.

Can I get counselling?

Yes, any victim of a violent crime can get counselling. You can contact knowmore or call the Victim Access Line on 1800 633 063 to discuss your situation.

Does someone have to be charged?

No, the person who injured you does not have to be charged for you to get financial assistance.

Do I have to have made a report to the Police?

If you want full financial assistance or a recognition payment, you must report the crime to the Police or government agency. You still must do this even if the crime happened a long time ago.

Will the person who injured me find out?

They might, but only if they are found guilty of the crime they committed and Victims Services asks

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the person to pay back some or all of the financial assistance given to you.

Will I have to go to Court?

No, because the decision about whether you can receive financial assistance is made only on your written application and evidence.

What is an application for Crimes Compensation?

If the person who injured you has been found guilty of the crime, you may be able to make an application for crimes compensation with the court that convicted them.

These types of applications are complicated and you should seek legal advice, so contact knowmore for legal help.

Taking legal action

You might be able to sue the person and/or institution responsible for your injuries in the civil courts. These claims are often called “civil claims”.

How long do I have to make a civil claim?

If you experienced child abuse in New South Wales, there is no time limit for making a civil claim. “Child abuse” can mean serious physical or sexual abuse but you should contact knowmore to get more advice about this.

These types of applications are very complicated and you should get a lawyer to help you with the claim. knowmore can help you find lawyers who are experienced with childhood sexual abuse.

What is an institutional redress scheme?

Some institutions like the Catholic Church might accept complaints about physical, emotional and sexual abuse committed by their staff.

These complaints go through what is often called an “institutional redress scheme”. Sometimes these schemes will pay compensation and provide other support, such as counselling.

These schemes are very different to the options already talked about. If you would like to know more about them and whether one is available to you, contact knowmore.

Commonwealth Redress Scheme

The Australian Government is establishing a Commonwealth Redress Scheme for survivors of institutional childhood sexual abuse. The scheme will be established in 2018. As more information comes to hand, we will post details on our website.

Contact knowmore

Free advice line 1800 605 762

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