

Applying for redress for people in jail and people with serious criminal convictions

This fact sheet helps people currently in jail and people convicted of serious criminal offences understand the National Redress Scheme (NRS). knowmore can provide free legal advice about the NRS.

What is the National Redress Scheme (NRS)?

The NRS:

- acknowledges that many children were sexually abused in Australian institutions
- holds institutions accountable for this abuse
- helps people who have experienced institutional child sexual abuse gain access to justice and redress.

The NRS can provide:

- a payment of up to \$150,000 depending on each survivor's experiences
- counselling and other support services
- a direct personal response from the institution (e.g. an apology).

Can a person in jail make an NRS application?

People currently in jail cannot make an application for the NRS unless there are exceptional circumstances as assessed by the

NRS. Examples of exceptional circumstances include if the person is:

- likely to be too ill to complete the application process after release
- expected to be in jail until after the Scheme stops accepting applications on 30 June 2027.

'Jail' includes a prison, youth training centre, remand, or community correction centre.

To make an application for exceptional circumstances use the '*Applying from gaol additional information form*'.

The NRS may ask the relevant Attorneys-General for their recommendation.

If no exceptional circumstances are found the NRS application will be invalid. The survivor needs to speak to the NRS and resubmit the application when they are out of jail or if exceptional circumstances later arise. The survivor will need to resubmit their application by 30 June 2027.

An NRS application requires confidential information and a jail may not be a safe space to complete an application.

knowmore free legal help
for survivors

1800 605 762 | knowmore.org.au

Image inspired by original artwork by Ngunawal man Dean Bell, depicting knowmore's connection to the towns, cities, missions and settlements within Australia.

knowmore acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the lands and waters across Australia upon which we live and work. We pay our deep respects to Elders past and present for their ongoing leadership and advocacy.

People who have received a prison sentence of 5 years or more

A person who has received a prison sentence of 5 years or more for a single criminal offence can still apply for redress, but their application will be processed differently.

The NRS will seek further information from the applicant and may be asked to fill out 'Serious criminal convictions additional information form'. The NRS will then make a decision about whether or not the person can receive redress.

Assessing the additional information

To make the assessments above, the NRS might send information to and seek advice from the Attorneys-General of the jurisdictions where the abuse occurred and where the person was convicted.

Other compensation options

While in jail a person may be able to file a civil claim for damages for injury and loss arising from the sexual abuse they suffered. An experienced civil lawyer can provide advice about this. knowmore can provide free advice and refer survivors to a civil lawyer.

Financial Counselling

People in jail who receive an NRS payment may have limitations in accessing the payment. Each jail and bank has different rules about accessing money from jail. knowmore has a team of financial counsellors who can speak to you about your individual situation before you accept an NRS payment.

About knowmore

knowmore provides free and independent legal advice and support for survivors of child sexual abuse.

How to contact knowmore

- Visit: www.knowmore.org.au
- Free call: 1800 605 762
- Email: info@knowmore.org.au
- By mail: PO Box 267,
Darlinghurst NSW 1300

If there are difficulties with reading or writing, prison support officers can help a survivor contact us.

People who expect to be released from jail before 30 June 2027 and want to make an NRS application, should contact knowmore on 1800 605 762 as soon as they are released. People can contact knowmore while in jail for free advice on other compensation options.

More help

More information about the National Redress Scheme and other support services can be found by phoning 1800 737 377 or visiting www.nationalredress.gov.au.

**** Disclaimer:** The information provided in this fact sheet is for information only. It must not be relied on as legal advice. You should seek legal advice about your own particular circumstances. | Last updated February 2023
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