

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 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 may be processed differently.

The NRS will seek further information from the applicant and will be asked to fill out a 'Serious criminal convictions additional information form'

Assessing the additional information

There is a special assessment process for people with certain types of particularly serious offences, or where there may be a risk to the integrity of the NRS in allowing access to redress. These serious offences are where a person has been sentenced to imprisonment for 5 years or longer and include unlawful killing, a sexual offence, a terrorism offence, or certain related offences.

Where a person has a serious criminal conviction that fits in the categories above, or where they might be a risk to the integrity of the NRS, the NRS will send information to and seek advice from the Attorneys-General of the jurisdictions where the abuse occurred and where the person was convicted. The Attorneys-General will make a recommendation to the NRS about whether the person should be able to access redress.

A decision will then be made by the NRS about whether the person's application for redress can proceed.

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 can contact knowmore while they are in jail or after they are released for free advice about making an NRS application and other compensation options. Contact knowmore on 1800 605 762

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.

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