



Australian Government

National Redress Scheme

For people who have experienced
institutional child sexual abuse

Information for people applying

Easy Read version



How to use this document



This document is about child sexual abuse in **institutions**.

We explain what institutions are on page 7.



Child sexual abuse might be hard for you to read about and talk about.

This document might bring up difficult feelings and memories.



You can ask for help to read this document.

A friend, family member or support person may be able to help you.



There are free support services.

We explain them on page 29.



You can also find free support services on our website.

www.nationalredress.gov.au/support



And you can call us for help.

1800 737 377



The Australian Government wrote this document.

When you see the word 'we', it means the Australian Government.



We wrote this information in an easy to read way.

We use pictures to explain some ideas.

Bold

We wrote some important words in **bold**.

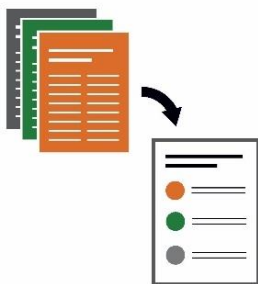
Not bold

This means the letters are thicker and darker.



We explain what these bold words mean.

There is a list of these words on page 32.



This is an Easy Read summary of some other documents.

This means it only includes the most important ideas.

What's in this document?

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What is the National Redress Scheme?

The National Redress Scheme is a way to support people who:



- experienced sexual abuse as a child while
- an institution was supposed to look after them.

In this document, we call it the Scheme.



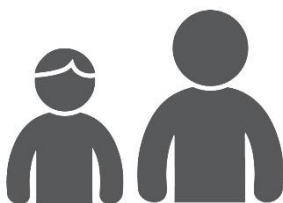
Redress is a way of trying to make up for the harm that was done.

Child sexual abuse is when a person younger than 18 is included in or shown sexual acts that:



- are against the law
- they don't understand
- the community thinks are wrong.

Child sexual abuse includes:



- sex of any kind with a child
- showing a child sexual acts.



It also includes sexual touching of any part of the body.

This can be:

- with or without clothes
- with an object.



Child sexual abuse is:

- wrong
- a crime
- never the child's fault.



You can apply to the Scheme instead of going through the courts.



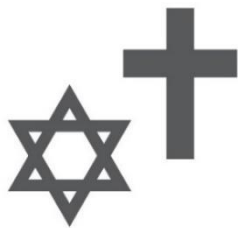
You have until 30 June 2027 to apply to the Scheme.

What is an institution?



An **institution** is a group or organisation.

The institution might have been set up:



- for a religion



- for teaching and learning.



Or it might have been set up for activities.

For example:

- social activities
- sporting activities.



Institutions include:

- churches
- temples
- missions.



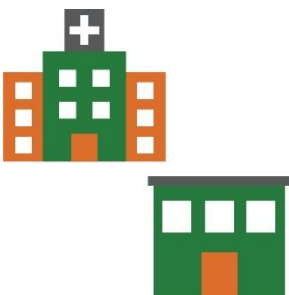
They include:

- schools
- training farms.



They also include:

- sports clubs
- youth centres.



Institutions can be:

- hospitals
- detention centres.



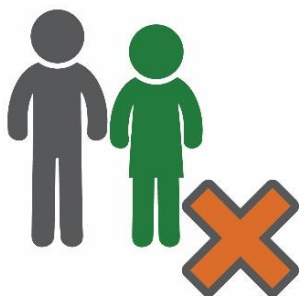
And they can be:

- orphanages
- welfare services.

Can you apply for the Scheme?



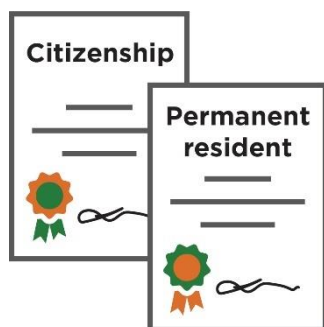
You can apply if child sexual abuse happened while an institution was supposed to look after you.



The Scheme does not include child sexual abuse by a friend or family member.

But it does if an institution was looking after you when it happened.

When you apply for redress you must be:



- an Australian citizen
- or
- a permanent resident – you're allowed to live in Australia but you're not a citizen.

18 ↓



The child sexual abuse must have happened before:

- you turned 18
- 1 July 2018 – when the Scheme started.

18 ↓



You can apply for the Scheme if you're still under 18.

But we can't offer you redress until you turn 18.



You need to turn 18 before the Scheme ends in 2028.



You can apply for the Scheme if you have:

- committed a crime
- gone to prison.

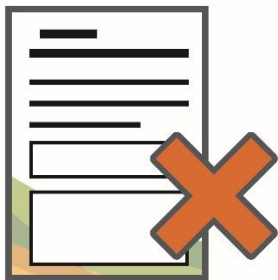


If you have been to prison, we'll think about:

- your crime
- how long you were in prison.



If you are in prison you can apply to the Scheme.



Some people can't get redress because they committed very serious crimes.



But this might not be true for everybody.

It will depend on your own case.



You can call us for free from prison if you have questions about the Scheme.

Is the Scheme right for you?



The Scheme might be right for you if child sexual abuse happened while an institution was supposed to look after you.



You need to send in an **application**.

An application is a form you fill in when you apply for the Scheme.



After we have gone through your application, the Scheme might offer you 3 things.

A **payment** of money.



When you get a payment, the government gives you some money.

We talk about redress payments in more detail on pages 16 to 20.

Counselling – talking to someone about how you think and feel.



This could help you:

- understand what happened to you
- feel safer and start to heal
- reach goals.

A **direct personal response**.

A direct personal response means the institution will say sorry for the child sexual abuse that happened to you.



The institution will also tell you how they are stopping abuse happening to anyone else.

We talk about direct personal responses in more detail on pages 21 to 23.



You can choose what you would like to accept from the offer.

If you do not agree with the offer, you can ask us to check it.

What will happen when you apply for the Scheme?



To apply for redress, you will need to talk or write about what happened to you.



You can ask someone you trust to help you fill in the application form.



A Redress Support Service can:

- help you fill in your application
- give you emotional support during the process.



Redress Support Services:

- are free
- won't share your information with anyone else.



You can find the contact details for Redress Support Services on our website.

www.nationalredress.gov.au/support



We will try to work through your application within 12 months.

But it might take longer.



An **Independent Decision Maker** will look at your application to decide:

- if you can receive redress
- what types of redress you can receive
- how much the payment will be.



Independent Decision Makers think about all the information:

- in your application form
- we have about the institutions.



Independent Decision Makers have experience in different areas.

For example:

- law
- services that help people.

What is a redress payment?

The payment you receive will depend on what you include in your application about:



- what happened when you experienced child sexual abuse while an institution was supposed to be looking after you
- the effect the child sexual abuse has had on your life.



\$150,000

If you can get redress, your payment could be up to \$150,000.



But if you had a payment for the abuse before, your redress payment might be lower.

We will:



- decide how much that other payment would be worth now
- take that amount out of your redress payment.

This doesn't include payments you were given for:



- lawyers



- medical care



- dental care



- counselling



- living costs.



You can choose to get your payment in:

- one amount
- smaller amounts over time.



You might be able to get part of it before the Independent Decision Maker looks at your application.

We call this an ‘advance payment’.



To get an advance payment you need to be an older person.



Or you need to be very sick.

And this needs to affect how long you might live for.

If you get a redress payment:



- you won't need to pay tax on it



- it won't count as income – money you earn by working.



But it might count in an **assets** test for a government payment.

Your assets are things you own that have value, such as:



- a car
- land
- a house, a flat or a unit
- money you have saved or put away.



If you get Centrelink payments, you must tell them you're getting a redress payment.



You need to do this within 14 days after you get your redress payment.



If you give any of your redress payment to someone else, you need to tell Centrelink.



If they get Centrelink payments, they also need to tell Centrelink about your redress payment.

What is a direct personal response?



A direct personal response is:

- for you
- about you.



We will ask you if you want to have a direct personal response.

For example, if you want the institution to say sorry.



You can choose if you want to have a direct personal response or not.



If you want a direct personal response, a senior person from the institution can:

- meet with you in person
- talk to you over the phone
- send you a letter.



You can choose what happens.



You can ask for your direct personal response when you're ready.



You can call us to help you set up your direct personal response with the institution.

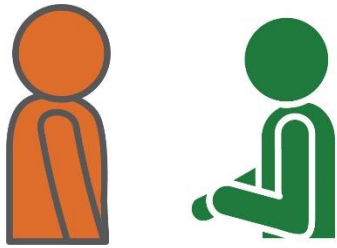
1800 737 377



You can ask someone to help you deal with the institution to get the personal response you want.

We call this person a 'nominee'.

You can ask a:



- family member or friend
- support worker
- redress support worker
- counsellor.



They will need to fill out a Redress Nominee form.

www.nationalredress.gov.au/document/76



You can also change your mind at any time.



You can get a direct personal response any time before 30 June 2028.

The Scheme is different to the court system



Getting redress through the Scheme is different to getting a payment through the court system.



Some people will choose to go to court rather than getting a payment from the Scheme.



They might do this because a court may get them a bigger payment.



Courts need strong **evidence** about the abuse.

Evidence is proof that what you shared happened.



You need less evidence to get a payment from the Scheme.



Getting redress through the Scheme means you don't have to deal with an institution directly.



It may also be faster than going through the courts.



You can contact knowmore to help you work out which option is better for you.



knowmore is a free legal service that supports people who have experienced child sexual abuse.



You can visit their website.

www.knowmore.org.au

How do you apply?

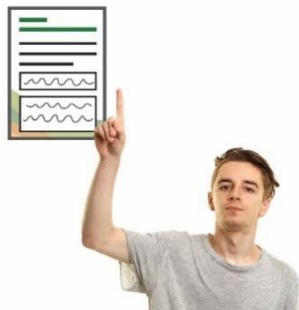
You can apply by filling out:



- a paper form
- or
- the form on our website
- or
- the form on myGov.



The form will ask you to tell us about what happened to you.



You can only apply once.

You should include all the information you can.



You can give us more information:

- after you have applied
- but before we make a decision.



You might not have any records from the institution that was supposed to look after you.

That's ok.



We'll ask institutions for information we need to help with your application.



We do this to prove that the institution was looking after you at the time.



You don't have to deal with the institution yourself.



Institutions:

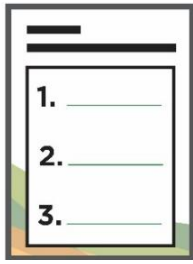
- don't make decisions about your application
- can't contact you.



On our website, you can find out if an institution has joined the Scheme.

www.nationalredress.gov.au/institutions

What if there's more than one institution?



1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

You can tell us if you experienced child sexual abuse in more than one institution when you apply to the Scheme.

Or when you get support from a Redress Support Service.



If any of these institutions haven't joined the Scheme, we will:

- contact you
- explain what you can do.



You can wait until the institution joins the Scheme.

Or you can ask the Scheme to look at your application now.



You might receive less money if:

- one of the institutions you named hasn't joined the Scheme
- you want us to look at your application before they join.



The amount of money you receive will depend on what happened to you in each of the institutions.

Free support services for applying

Redress Support Services can:



- help you understand the Scheme



- help you decide if you want to apply



- support you when you apply



- support you after you apply.



Redress Support Services can also give you emotional support.



You can find the contact details for Redress Support Services on our website.

www.nationalredress.gov.au/support



To help you understand your options we also have free:

- legal support services
- financial support services.



You can contact us to find out how to use these support services.



These services are free.

You don't have to pay to use them.

Contact us



You can contact us to find out more about the Scheme.



You can visit our website.

www.nationalredress.gov.au



You can call us.

1800 737 377



If you speak a language other than English, you can call the Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS National).

131 450



TIS National can:

- connect you to the Scheme or a service
- help you speak in your own language.

Word list



Assets

Your assets are things you own that have value, such as:

- a car
- land
- a house, a flat or a unit
- money you have saved or put away.



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The institution might have been set up:



- for a religion
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Or it might have been set up for activities.

For example:

- social activities
- sporting activities.



Payment

When you get a payment, the government gives you some money.



Redress

A way of trying to make up for the harm that was done.



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