

# National Redress Scheme

For people who have experienced  
institutional child sexual abuse

## Information for people applying

Easy Read version



# How to use this document



We want to warn you that this document talks about child sexual abuse in **institutions**.



We explain what institutions are on page 7.



This subject may be very hard to:

- read about
- talk about.

It may bring up difficult feelings and memories.



The Australian Government wrote this document. When you see the word 'we', it means the Australian Government.



We have written this information to make it as easy to read as we can.

We use pictures to explain some ideas.



You may decide to ask for help to read this document.

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



You can call the National Redress Scheme on **1800 737 377**.

You can also ask to talk to someone in a language other than English.

We explain how to do this on page 30.



Support services are also available and can be found on our website [www.nationalredress.gov.au/support](http://www.nationalredress.gov.au/support)

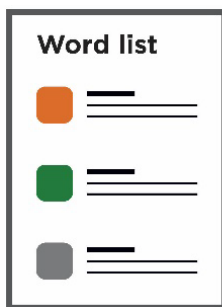
There are also special services for:



- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples



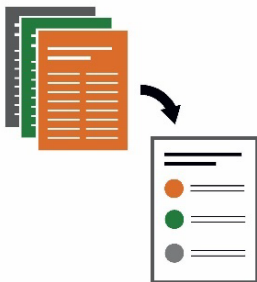
- people with disability.



We have written some words in **bold**.

We explain what these words mean.

There is a list of these words on page 31.



This Easy Read document is a summary of some other documents.



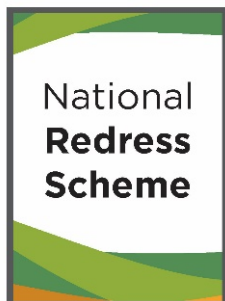
You can find the other documents on our website at

[www.nationalredress.gov.au/about/resources](http://www.nationalredress.gov.au/about/resources)

## 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 child sexual abuse:

- by an institution
- while an institution was supposed to be looking after them.

In this document, we call it the Scheme.

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



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

Child sexual abuse includes:

- sexual touching of any part of the body, with or without clothes, including with an object
- sex of any kind with a child
- showing a child sexual acts.



Child sexual abuse is:

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

An **institution** is a group or organisation set up:



- by the government
- for a religion
- for teaching and learning
- to run a business
- for a social activity
- for sporting activities.

Some examples of institutions are:



- churches
- detention centres
- dormitories and boarding schools
- hospitals
- missions
- orphanages
- schools
- sports clubs
- training farms
- welfare services
- youth centres.





From 2013 to 2017, there was a Royal Commission into child sexual abuse in institutions.



The Royal Commission was a large and formal investigation.

It looked into what happened to children who were abused.



The Royal Commission made **recommendations**.

Recommendations are ideas about what we could do to stop abuse happening again.



The Royal Commission said that we should set up the Scheme.

The Scheme:



- started on 1 July 2018
- will run for 10 years
- will end in 2028.

## What does the Scheme offer?



**Redress** is a way of trying to make things right.

The Scheme will support you if:



- you were sexually abused as a child while an institution was supposed to be looking after you
- you were sexually abused as a child and an institution took part in the abuse.



The Scheme can only help you if an institution responsible for the abuse has joined the Scheme.



You can go online to find out if an institution has joined the Scheme.

[www.nationalredress.gov.au/institutions](http://www.nationalredress.gov.au/institutions)



If you apply and any of the institutions you name haven't joined the Scheme, we will:

- contact you
- explain what you can do.

After we have gone through your application, the Scheme can offer you 3 things:

- **counselling** – talking to someone about how you think and feel.



This can help you:

- reach goals
- feel safe
- learn skills
- understand what happened to you.



- a **payment** of money



- a **direct personal response**.



When you get a payment, you are given some money.

We talk about redress payments in more detail on pages 16 to 18.



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



The institution will tell you what they have done to stop abuse from happening to anyone else.



You can choose to have a senior person from the institution:

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



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



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



If you do, we will give you a phone number.  
You can call the institution when you are ready to set up your direct personal response.



The direct personal response is:

- for you
- about you.

You can choose:



- how it will happen – in person, over the phone or in a letter
- when it will happen
- who will be there.



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

You might ask a:



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



If you choose to have a direct personal response, you can ask for it when you are ready.



You can also change your mind.



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

# What happens when you apply for the Scheme?



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

A redress support service worker can:



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



You can find the contact details for redress support services on our website.

[www.nationalredress.gov.au/support](http://www.nationalredress.gov.au/support)



It may take us some time to work through your application.



We 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.

The amount of payment will depend on what you tell us in your application about:



- what happened when you experienced child sexual abuse
- the effect the child sexual abuse had on your life.



If you can be given redress, your payment could be from less than \$10,000 up to \$150,000.



But if you have been given a payment for the abuse before, your redress payment may be lower.



We will look at how much that other payment would be worth now and take it away from your payment from this Scheme.





We won't include other payments you were given for:

- lawyers
- medical care
- dental care
- counselling
- living expenses.

If you get a payment:



- you won't need to pay tax on it



- it won't count as income



- 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 give your payment to someone else, they will need to let Centrelink know.

## 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 something is true.



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



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 at [www.knowmore.org.au](http://www.knowmore.org.au)

# Who can apply for the Scheme?

You can apply if:



- what happened to you included child sexual abuse
- you experienced child sexual abuse by an institution
- child sexual abuse happened while an institution was supposed to be looking after you
- the institution is part of the Scheme.



The Scheme does not include child sexual abuse by a friend or family member unless an institution was looking after you at the time.



The institution that was responsible for the child sexual abuse needs to have joined the Scheme.



We have a list of institutions that have joined the Scheme on our website.



We update the list when other institutions join the Scheme.



You can go to the website to sign up for email updates about the Scheme.

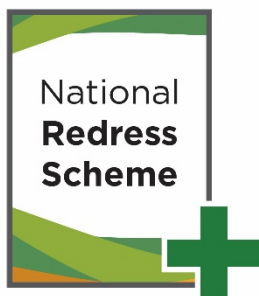
[www.nationalredress.gov.au](http://www.nationalredress.gov.au)

These updates will tell you when other institutions join the Scheme.



Or you can find out which institutions have joined the Scheme by calling

**1800 737 377.**



The government is asking institutions to join the Scheme as soon as they can.



To apply you must be:

- an Australian citizen
- or
- a permanent resident.



The child sexual abuse must have happened before:

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



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

But you need to turn 18 before the Scheme ends in 2028.



We can't offer you redress before you turn 18.



You can apply for the Scheme if you have been convicted of a crime and gone to prison.



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

- your crime
- how long you were in prison.



Some people cannot get redress because they committed very serious crimes.



If you are still in prison you might have to wait until you get out of prison before you can apply.



But this might not be true for everybody. It will depend on your own case.



## How do you apply?

To get help from the Scheme, first you will need to apply.



You can apply by using:

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



The form will ask you to tell us about what happened when you were sexually abused.



You might not have any records from the institution that was supposed to be looking 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.

Institutions don't make decisions about your application.



You can only apply once.

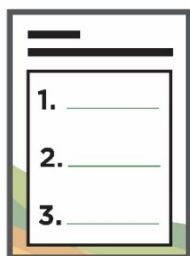
You should include all the information you can.



You can give us any extra information:

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

## What if there is more than one institution?

An icon of a document with a header and three numbered lines (1, 2, 3) for text entry.

There is room on the application form to tell us if you were sexually abused in more than one institution.

If any of the institutions you name in your application 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.



If one of the institutions you named is not on our list, but you want the Scheme to look at your application now, you may receive less money.



This will depend on what happened to you in each of the institutions.

# Free support services for applying

We have services that can help you:



- understand the Scheme



- support you when you apply.



These include services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander survivors that show respect for your:

- culture
- history.



To help you understand your options, we also have:

- legal support services
- financial support services.



You can contact us if you need to use these support services.



There is no cost for these services.

## Contact us



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



[www.nationalredress.gov.au](http://www.nationalredress.gov.au)



**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 any phone number.

## 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.



18↓

### Child sexual abuse

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

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

Child sexual abuse includes:

- sexual touching of any part of the body, with or without clothes, including with an object
- sex of any kind with a child
- showing a child sexual acts.



Child sexual abuse is:

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

## **Counselling**

Talking to someone about how you think and feel.



This can help you:

- reach goals
- feel safe
- learn skills
- understand what happened to you.





## **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 tell you what they have done to stop abuse from happening again.

You can choose to have a senior person from the institution:



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



## **Evidence**

Evidence is proof that something is true.

## Institution

An organisation set up:



- by the government
- for a religion
- for teaching and learning
- to run a business
- for a social activity
- for sporting activities.



## Payment

When you get a payment, you are given some money.



## Redress

A way of trying to make things right.  
It includes offering support if you were sexually abused as a child and while an institution was supposed to be looking after you.



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