

CONSUMER FACT SHEET

# Information for people eligible for compensation (redress)

## What is a redress scheme?

A redress scheme is a program set up to support and compensate groups of people who have experienced harm because of a specific thing or place. In Victoria, examples of redress schemes include those for survivors of institutional child sexual abuse and members of the Stolen Generations.

An institution is an organisation created for religious, educational, or social purposes. Examples of an institution include schools, churches, clubs, orphanages, and children's homes.

Redress schemes aim to support and recognise the impact of this harm on survivors. There are different schemes available to survivors, depending on their situation and where the harm happened.

Some of the redress schemes you may be able to apply for include the [National Redress Scheme](#), [Stolen Generations Reparations Package](#), or the [Redress for Historical Institutional Abuse](#).

## What is 'claim farming' and what should I do if I am contacted?

Claim farming is when a person gets your contact information and contacts you without you asking them to and wants to talk to you about bad things that have happened in your life. This may be a person who is known to you and someone you trust. It could even be another person who is a survivor of experiences similar to yours. Or it may be a person you do not know, and you may not know how they got your details. These calls are usually unexpected and may be upsetting. The claim farmer will ask personal questions about your experience and may put pressure on you to agree to make a legal claim.

The person who contacts you may be paid to pass on your information. This can end up being passed on to a lawyer. Sometimes, these lawyers can try and make you think you need to pay for their help to apply for

redress. Otherwise, they may try to put pressure on you to make a legal claim in the court without giving you the full story about your options.

When lawyers deliberately try and make you feel like you have less choices than you actually do about applying for compensation or don't give you the full story about what could happen, they are not behaving ethically. This is bad behaviour, and it can cause a lot of extra hurt and harm to survivors.

If you are contacted in this way, out of the blue when you have not asked for anyone to contact you to discuss your options, try not to give them any information about yourself. If you can, get the person's name, as well as their phone number or email address. You can always contact them another time when you have thought about what you want to do.

Always contact a trusted organisation like [Knowmore Legal Service](#) before you make any decisions. Knowmore is a free and confidential nationwide service. This service supports survivors of institutional childhood sexual abuse and advises and supports the Stolen Generations in a culturally safe and trauma-informed way.

## If you are worried about the behaviour of a lawyer

If a person passes on your information to a lawyer who then puts you under pressure to take action about your experiences or is dishonest with you, you can contact us. Our job is to make sure lawyers are doing the right thing. You can contact us by:

- using the consumer enquiry form at [lsbc.vic.gov.au/consumers/consumer-enquiry-form](https://lsbc.vic.gov.au/consumers/consumer-enquiry-form)
- emailing us at [consumerenquiry@lsbc.vic.gov.au](mailto:consumerenquiry@lsbc.vic.gov.au)
- calling us on 1300 796 344

## **Where else can I get help?**

There is 24/7 support if you are experiencing symptoms of emotional distress or supporting someone who is.

- [13YARN](#) – call on 139 276

A free 24/7 crisis support line for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

- [Full Stop Australia](#) – call on 1800 385 578

## **Should I apply for redress or make a civil claim (sue for compensation)**

Deciding whether to ask for compensation and which type to ask for can be a very hard choice.

There are free services to help you decide, and to help your healing. The staff at these services work with survivors in a respectful and supportive way. Knowmore is a support service that also provides free legal advice and can talk with you about the best choice for your situation.

Both choices have good things and bad things about them that may make them a better or worse choice for you. Getting free advice that talks about your situation is always the best first step. If you get free help from a support service it doesn't mean you can't go back to a lawyer who contacts you, it just means you will have a better idea of all your options.

## **Where can I get free legal advice and support?**

[Knowmore Legal Service](#) is a free and confidential nationwide service. This service supports survivors of institutional childhood sexual abuse and advises and supports the Stolen Generations in a culturally safe and trauma-informed way.

The support includes:

- free access to lawyers who will talk to you about your options for compensation,
- advice on a redress application you have submitted, or a compensation offer you have received, and
- free referral options if you choose to go to court.

[Redress Support Services](#) are support services for survivors of institutional childhood abuse. They offer emotional support and assistance to complete an application if you are eligible for the National Redress Scheme.

Support includes counselling, information, referrals, and practical support to access the National Redress Scheme.