

Counselling and the National Redress Scheme

A fact sheet for people living in NSW who experienced child sexual abuse

People who experienced child sexual abuse can access counselling services under the National Redress Scheme. If you have accepted an offer under the National Redress Scheme and live in NSW, you are entitled to up to 22 hours free counselling. Additional hours may be approved.

This is provided by Victims Services. We can help find you an Approved Counsellor.

Who are Approved Counsellors?

Approved Counsellors are social workers, psychologists, clinical psychologists or psychiatrists who have proven experience in working with victims of crime. They are paid by Victims Services and are available in the metropolitan and most rural and regional areas in NSW. Counselling may be in person or over the phone.

We can help with:

- arranging an interpreter or finding an Approved Counsellor who speaks your language
- any disability requirements you have
- specialist counselling for young people.

How can counselling help me?

Counselling may help you to:

- talk about and understand your feelings about what happened
- recover from psychological and emotional impacts of the abuse
- cope with symptoms, including not sleeping, avoiding socialising, or drug and alcohol abuse.

I've accepted my Redress offer and would like counselling. What's next?

Please email or call us and we can help you find a Victims Services Approved Counsellor.

You can then contact your chosen counsellor, let them know that you are a Victims Services client and provide your claim number. They should offer you an appointment within 21 working days.

If you have a different counsellor who you would like to continue seeing, they can contact us to discuss how they can become an Approved Counsellor.

Can I change my counsellor?

Yes, you can change your counsellor at any time if you feel that they're not right for you. If you would like to do this, please let us know and we will find someone new. You can only see one counsellor through Victims Services at a time.

What if I move to another state in Australia?

We will work with you to find an Approved Counsellor in another state. If there are no suitable counsellors in your new location, we may refer you to another states redress counselling service or offer you phone counselling instead.

Will my privacy be protected?

Yes. Victims Services is required to comply with the Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998 and the Health Records and Information Privacy Act 2002.

Your counselling information is confidential and will only be released in rare instances where it is ordered by a court or required by law.

Can I make a complaint or give feedback?

You can make a complaint at any time. You can do this by email, post or over the phone.

We also welcome any other feedback. Everything you say will be treated confidentially.

Who should I contact to find out more?

Victims Access Line: 1800 633 063 | **Aboriginal Contact Line:** 1800 019 123

Business hours: Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm (excluding public holidays)

Email: vsredress@dcj.nsw.gov.au **Website:** victimservices.justice.nsw.gov.au