

Legal information for young people and youth workers in NSW

1 General legal information

The Law Handbook (Thomson Reuters, 15th edition, 2020) is a comprehensive guide to the law in New South Wales. All chapters are available online at <https://legalanswers.sl.nsw.gov.au/law-handbook-your-practical-guide-law-nsw>.

The **Legal Aid NSW** website contains information about Legal Aid office contact details, how to apply, forms, etc. There are also pamphlets on a wide range of legal topics. These can be ordered from Legal Aid or downloaded straight from the website at www.legalaid.nsw.gov.au/publications.

The **Find Legal Answers** service is managed by the State Library of NSW. It provides quality, plain English legal information for the people of NSW through NSW public libraries and online. All libraries hold the Find Legal Answers Tool Kit, a collection of plain language books to answer everyday questions about the law. Most of these books are also available online at www.legalanswers.sl.nsw.gov.au.

LawAccess is a NSW government service which provides free legal information and referrals for the general public. The site contains a range of legal information and links to other legal sites: www.lawaccess.nsw.gov.au.

The NSW government's **Justice** website contains links to NSW courts, tribunals and criminal justice agencies: <https://www.justice.nsw.gov.au/>.

The Shopfront Youth Legal Centre has a range of legal fact sheets for young people and youth workers at <https://www.theshopfront.org/legal-information-for-youth-workers>.

Youth Law Australia is an Australia-wide legal information site for young people under 25. It provides answers to common legal questions for young people in all states and territories of Australia: www.yla.org.au/.

Youth Action is the peak body for youth organisations in NSW. Their website contains useful information about legal and policy issues, including some fact sheets for youth workers: www.youthaction.org.au.

2 Criminal law and police powers

Legal Aid NSW has numerous factsheets and pamphlets on criminal law topics at <http://www.legalaid.nsw.gov.au/publications/factsheets-and-resources>.

Get Street Smart: Under 18? Know your Legal Rights is a wallet-size guide produced by Legal Aid NSW, explaining young people's rights on the street and with the police. <http://www.legalaid.nsw.gov.au/publications/factsheets-and-resources/get-street-smart-under-18s-know-your-legal-rights>.

The Shopfront Youth Legal Centre has a number of fact sheets on criminal law and police powers, at <https://www.theshopfront.org/legal-information-for-youth-workers>.

Burn is a short film and website which is part of a crime prevention initiative of Legal Aid NSW. The film tells the story of a 16-year old whose car trip with a group of older boys escalates into a serious act of violence. It demonstrates how dangerous group behaviour can quickly get out of control. The website also contains useful fact sheets on legal topics such as group offending, robbery, assault, Legal Aid and police interviews. <http://burn-movie.com.au/>.

Defend Yourself (T Anderson, Federation Press, 3rd edition, 2014) provides information about criminal court procedure, trials and sentencing, particularly for those who are representing themselves. Chapters are available online at http://www.legalanswers.sl.nsw.gov.au/guides/defend_yourself/index.html

3 Victims of crime

Victims Services provides information about victims' rights and services in NSW, including victims compensation. It also includes *Justice Journey*, which helps victims navigate their way through the court process: <https://www.victimsservices.justice.nsw.gov.au/>.

NSW Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions website contains information about the ODPD including their prosecution policy and guidelines, and witness assistance service, at www.odpp.nsw.gov.au.

Wirringa Baiya Aboriginal Women's Legal Centre has fact sheets on issues such as sexual assault, domestic violence and child abuse at <https://www.wirringabaiya.org.au/fact-sheets>.

Women's Legal Service (WLS) has a guide to *Sexual Assault: your rights and the law* at <http://www.wlsnsw.org.au/resources/sexual-assault/>.

4 Domestic violence and AVOs

LawAccess provides practical information about AVOs for people seeking protection, and also for people who have AVOs taken out against them: http://www.lawaccess.nsw.gov.au/Pages/representing/lawassist_avo/lawassist_avo.aspx.

Legal Aid NSW has fact sheets for people experiencing domestic violence, and also for people who have been charged with domestic violence offences or have AVOs taken out against them: <https://www.legalaid.nsw.gov.au/publications/factsheets-and-resources>.

Inner City Legal Centre has fact sheets about domestic and family violence in LGBTIQ relationships at <https://www.iclc.org.au/fact-sheets/>.

5 Fines

Fined Out (5th edition, March 2021) is a comprehensive guide to the fine enforcement process in NSW, produced by Legal Aid, Inner City Legal Centre and Redfern Legal Centre: <https://rlc.org.au/article/fined-out-practical-guide-for-people-having-problems-fines>.

Legal Aid NSW provides information about Work and Development Orders (WDO) for people who are unable to pay fines at <http://www.legalaid.nsw.gov.au/publications/factsheets-and-resources/work-and-development-orders-help-for-people-who-cant-pay-their-fines>.

The **Revenue NSW** website provides information about how to deal with outstanding fines at <http://www.revenue.nsw.gov.au/fines>.

6 Driving

The **Transport for NSW** (formerly Roads and Maritime Services) site provides information about driver licensing, traffic laws, demerit points, etc. <https://roads-waterways.transport.nsw.gov.au/>

Licensing: <https://roads-waterways.transport.nsw.gov.au/roads/licence/index.html>

Registration: <https://roads-waterways.transport.nsw.gov.au/roads/vehicle-registration/index.html>

Road Rules: <https://roads-waterways.transport.nsw.gov.au/roads/using-roads/index.html>

The **Shopfront Youth Legal Centre** has some traffic fact sheets at <https://www.theshopfront.org/legal-information-for-youth-workers>.

Legal Aid NSW has information on traffic offences, licensing issues and motor accidents at <https://publications.legalaid.nsw.gov.au/Website/FactsheetsAndResources/Search?publicationTopicId=16>.

7 Partying

The **Inner City Legal Centre** website provides information about your rights and partying at <https://www.iclc.org.au/party-rights/>.

Inner City Legal Centre also hosts the **Fair Play** site, with information on rights for people attending Mardi Gras and other LGBTQI events. <http://www.fair-play.org.au/>.

The **NSW Police** website provides information to help young people minimise the risks of having a party, to avoid getting in trouble with the police, at https://www.police.nsw.gov.au/online_services/party_safety/safe_party_tips.

8 Protesting

CounterAct provides a guide for activists in NSW on the right to protest, including protestors' rights when dealing with police: <https://counteract.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/NSW-Your-Right-to-Protest-booklet-Dec-2020.pdf>.

Redfern Legal Centre has a pre-recorded webinar (recorded in December 2020) on police powers and protesting: <https://rlc.org.au/training/resources/protests>.

9 Family Law and child protection

The **Federal Circuit Court** website has fact sheets about parenting, separation and children at <https://www.fcfcga.gov.au/fl>.

The **Family Relationships Online** website contains information and fact sheets, including information for children, at <https://www.familyrelationships.gov.au/documents>.

The **NSW Children's Court** website provides some information about the court's care and protection jurisdiction at <http://www.childrenscourt.justice.nsw.gov.au/>.

Legal Aid NSW provides factsheets and videos on family law, child protection, and adoption at <https://publications.legalaid.nsw.gov.au/Website/FactsheetsAndResources/Search?publicationTopicId=3>.

Women's Legal Service (WLS) has a guide to women and family law in New South Wales, covering a range of topics such as divorce, children, property settlements and AVOs: <https://www.wlsnsw.org.au/resources/women-and-family-law/>.

WLS also provides information for parents whose children have been removed: <https://www.wlsnsw.org.au/help-facs-has-removed-my-children/>.

The NSW government **Keep them safe** website provides information for people working with children and young people, including guidelines for reporting children and young people at risk, at <http://www.keepthemsafe.nsw.gov.au>.

10 Civil law issues for young people

Legal Aid NSW provides *What are my legal rights? A handbook for young people*. It covers common day-to-day (civil law) problems and talks about your rights when dealing with other people or organisations and what you can do to resolve issues like unpaid fines, problems with your landlord, debts and more: <https://www.legalaid.nsw.gov.au/publications/factsheets-and-resources/what-are-my-legal-rights-a-handbook-for-young-people>.

11 Mental Health and cognitive impairment

The **Mental Health Rights Manual**, published by the Mental Health Coordinating Council, is a guide to the legal and human rights of people with mental illness in NSW, including what happens when someone is admitted to hospital as an involuntary patient: <http://mhrm.mhcc.org.au/home/>.

Legal Aid NSW provides information for people who have been involuntarily admitted to hospital. <http://www.legalaid.nsw.gov.au/publications/factsheets-and-resources/have-you-been-involuntarily-admitted-to-a-hospital>.

The **Intellectual Disability Rights Service** provides some fact sheets about legal issues affecting people with intellectual disabilities at <https://idrs.org.au/resources/fact-sheets/>.

The **Guardianship Division of the NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal (NCAT)** has fact sheets about legal issues affecting people who may be incapable of managing their own affairs: <https://ncat.nsw.gov.au/ncat/publications-and-resources/fact-sheets/guardianship-division-fact-sheets.html>.

12 Housing

The **Tenants' Union of NSW** has factsheets on the rights and responsibilities of tenants in NSW. <https://www.tenants.org.au/publications>.

The **Tenants' Rights Manual: A practical guide to renting in NSW** (Federation Press, 4th edition, 2012) was a very useful guide for tenants. However it is out-of-date and has been pulled down from the "Find Legal Answers" website. Hopefully an updated edition is forthcoming.

13 Consumer issues and debts

The **Financial Rights Legal Centre** provides a range of helpful fact sheets about debts, loans, insurance and financial services at <http://financialrights.org.au/self-help-centre/get-started/>.

Redfern Legal Centre provides fact sheets about money problems and consumer complaints at <http://rlc.org.au/publications/money-problems-consumer-complaints>.

Legal Aid NSW has information on dealing with debts, including mortgages and loan repayments: <https://publications.legalaid.nsw.gov.au/Website/FactsheetsAndResources/Search?publicationTopicId=4>.

Fair Trading NSW provides information for consumers at <http://www.fairtrading.nsw.gov.au/>.

14 Social security

The **Welfare Rights Centre** has a range of factsheets to assist individuals with Centrelink issues: <https://welfarerightscentre.org.au/factsheets>.

Economic Justice Australia (EJA) provides information on dealing with Centrelink debts at <https://www.ejaustralia.org.au/wp/wp-content/uploads/Debts-3.pdf>.

15 Employment

Legal Aid NSW has published *Ripped off*, a guide for young workers about unpaid wages and entitlements at work: <https://www.legalaid.nsw.gov.au/publications/factsheets-and-resources/ripped-off>.

Fair Work Australia provides information about employee entitlements, bullying and harassment, as well as industrial action and union membership at <http://www.fairwork.gov.au/employee-entitlements>.

16 Discrimination

The **Discrimination Toolkit** is published by Legal Aid NSW: <http://www.legalaid.nsw.gov.au/get-legal-help/factsheets-and-resources/discrimination-toolkit/discrimination-basics>.

The **Australian Human Rights Commission** provides reports and publications on various areas of discrimination:

Sex discrimination: <https://www.humanrights.gov.au/our-work/sex-discrimination>.

Racial discrimination: <https://www.humanrights.gov.au/our-work/employers/racial-discrimination>.

Disability rights: <https://www.humanrights.gov.au/our-work/disability-rights>.

Indigenous: <https://www.humanrights.gov.au/our-work/aboriginal-and-torres-strait-islander-social-justice>.

The **Anti-Discrimination Board of NSW** provides information on all the categories of discrimination covered under the NSW Anti-Discrimination Act. As well as providing an overview of the law, the website provides information on how to resolve discrimination and make a complaint: <https://www.antidiscrimination.justice.nsw.gov.au/>.

Justice Connect has a factsheet on dealing with gender discrimination for young people and their families at <https://justiceconnect.org.au/resources/how-to-deal-with-gender-discrimination-and-transphobia-nsw/>.

Inner City Legal Centre has a fact sheet on discrimination law at <https://www.iclc.org.au/factsheets/>.

The **Australian Centre for Disability Law** provides a guide on using disability discrimination law in NSW: <https://disabilitylaw.org.au/resources/legal/>.

17 Complaints

The **NSW Ombudsman** website has information about your rights and the process of making a complaint about government agencies in NSW: <http://www.ombo.nsw.gov.au/complaints>.

Complaints against NSW Police are now dealt with by the **Law Enforcement Conduct Commission (LECC)**: <https://www.lecc.nsw.gov.au/>.

Redfern Legal Centre provides some guidelines about making police complaints at <https://rlc.org.au/our-services/police-complaints/making-police-complaints>.

The **Health Care Complaints Commission** deals with complaints against health services in NSW. Their website provides information about making complaints at <https://www.hccc.nsw.gov.au/>

The Shopfront Youth Legal Centre
Updated September 2021