

**SUPPLIED IN CONFIDENCE TO THE NSW I.C.A.C.**

# [Service NSW 2021 COVID-19 Micro Business Grant] ‘Retrospective Clawback and Extortion Scam’

[2022 - present]



## Witness Personal Account and Victim Impact Statement [Complainant #01]

The following written evidence received from Steven Ridd by email to [steve@naturetrail.com.au](mailto:steve@naturetrail.com.au).

[Emails (most recent at top)]

### START OF EVIDENCE

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**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, 9 July 2024 7:33 PM  
**To:** [steve@naturetrail.com.au](mailto:steve@naturetrail.com.au)  
**Subject:** Micro grant harraseee

Hi Steve,

I have been given your details by [REDACTED].

Sadly it all got too much for her and she paid and is struggling to even talk about it.

So I also received \$10,000 for Micro business and have been harrassed since last year! I'd given everything asked and assumed since the last email we have all we need that, that was the end of it until 3 weeks ago.

I'm so overwhelmed and confused about how to approach this....

I've read through your info from [REDACTED], and even more confused as I believe you received a different amount to ? Micro was 10,000 clear on my bank statement, however in the Service NSW site they state I received \$12,000...

I also am unable to pull up application, was also told by them last year that they also are unable to pull it up as it had been completed and filed.

I'm not great in email and stressed so I'm off to bed (early riser)

I would be so grateful for some support / advise if that is OK with you... ?

**[above email from Complainant #16]**

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From: **Service NSW Small Business Assistance** <[smallbusinessassistance@service.nsw.gov.au](mailto:smallbusinessassistance@service.nsw.gov.au)>

Date: Tue, 21 Nov 2023, 8:16 am

Subject: 2021 COVID-19 Micro-business Grant Update [ ref:!00D4a08aWL.!5008v02osVE:ref ]

To: [REDACTED] >

Dear [REDACTED],

We recently contacted you regarding a compliance audit on your application for the 2021 COVID-19 Micro-business Grant.

This email is to let you know that Service NSW is temporarily pausing compliance audit activity in relation to your grant application. This means that no further action is required from you at this time.

The pause will allow us to review the audit process and identify options to help make it easier for micro-business owners to participate. This includes considering the length of time business owners are given to respond.

We will contact you again at the conclusion of the review to update you on next steps.

We understand that this has been a challenging time, and we are committed to supporting you and your business. Micro businesses are important contributors to our economy, and we appreciate your assistance as part of the audit process, which helps ensure that public money is used appropriately.

If you prefer to continue with the current compliance audit process, you are able to do so, and our assessors remain available to support you.

If you would like to continue the compliance audit, or to discuss your grant application with us, please respond to this email or call us on 13 77 88 to book an appointment with an assessor.

Kind regards

joshua  
Service NSW

\*

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, 4 September 2024 7:50 AM  
**To:** steve@naturetrail.com.au  
**Cc:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** Re: Service NSW Extortion - Media: A Current Affair -(ACA) a proposed 2nd episode

Hi Steve,

Yesterday I had Service NSW escalate the matter to give me 1 day to provide proof of financial loss based on their revised dates not the ones at the time of the grant application. So indeed there is an escalation!

Happy for you to share my email to the others.

Cheers,

[REDACTED]

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**From:** [Service NSW Small Business Assistance](#)  
**Sent:** Monday, 20 November 2023 12:46 PM  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** Please contact us about your 2021 COVID-19 Micro-business Grant application [ ref:I00D4a08aWL.I5008v02osVE:ref ]

Dear [REDACTED],

Thank you for your email.

This is the government requirement, unfortunately we cant amend that.

Please refer to the link below for guidelines :

<https://www.service.nsw.gov.au/2021-covid-19-micro-business-grant-guidelines>

please provide us the information below :

1. Rate Notice dated between 21 April 2021 and 18 October 2021
2. Your Marriage Certificate as the name change document to support your Rate notice
3. Company Income Tax Return FY2021
4. Revised Accountant letter with the dates 12 - 25 June 2021 in compare to 26 June - 30 July 2021

**Need more information or support?**

If you would like to discuss the items outlined in this email, need help understanding what you are required to do or need more time to complete this request, please reply to this email. Alternatively, if you would like to speak to your designated grant assessor you can book a call at a time and date that is most convenient for you <https://book.service.nsw.gov.au/services/grants-mbg/landing>.

Your grant assessor will call you on the number provided at the time of your booking.

Kind regards

Ruchi

Service NSW

T 13 77 88



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End of supplied evidence

This document submitted by Steven Ridd, Managing Director, Wistmans Wood Holdings Pty Limited [ACN 600 331 931] as trustee for Wistmans Wood Trust [ABN 51 965 308 493 ] trading as Nature Trail. Registered Address: 5 Kundibar Street KATOOMBA NSW 2780.]

By email [icac@icac.nsw.gov.au](mailto:icac@icac.nsw.gov.au)

**I·C·A·C**

INDEPENDENT COMMISSION  
AGAINST CORRUPTION

Level 7, 255 Elizabeth Street  
Sydney, New South Wales  
Australia