

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 #16]

The following written evidence received from Steven Ridd by email to steve@naturetrail.com.au .

[Emails (most recent at top)]

START OF EVIDENCE

*

From: [REDACTED]
Date: Thu, 19 Sept 2024, 10:58 am
Subject: Covid grant claw back harrasment
To: <nswombo@ombo.nsw.gov.au>

Hello,

I write this respectfully under duress.

For over a year since April 2023 I've had multiple back and forth emails and calls, including a letter of demand for payment from Service NSW and state debt recovery.

Both accountants have given clear information on my eligibility for Micro business grant.

My business is still suffering I'm barely coping emotionally, physically and professionally.

I've given info that was requested, I was approved and paid..

I was informed if I did not pay by August 15th they confiscate my possessions.

I've had at least 5 people email with no visible information in front of them, I've given proof of my earnings that had declined by at least 50%.

I have 3 different case or reference numbers.

They've asked different time frames, dates etc minimal consistency.

Continued to ask me to do their work they are vague and seem lost themselves.

My stress is on overload I can't do this any longer, I need help or I see no point anything anymore I done get to \$50,000 per year.

[REDACTED]

*

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: Tuesday, 17 September 2024 5:16 AM

To: [REDACTED]

Cc: steve@naturetrail.com.au; [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Subject: Re: Service NSW Micro Business Grant clawback [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Omg hello group,

I've not replied on here as the anxiety is just overwhelming as you all can relate.

My mind is always on overload so when I write or txt it can be rather messy, that's because my fingers can't keep up with my mind.

Anyway I'll get to the point...

During locking isolated as a single person in a unit, not pets either, fear for the future, life and this worlds safety didn't allow a clear mind for very many, so whilst filling out my CG application the only thing I added which may have been an issue was a part of Excel work sheet (should not have done so) other than that it was all very clear that I was well within the percentage of what entitled me to the support. I've also had multiple case workers with their scripted emails, a debt rev letter demanding I pay by August 18th in desperation to be left alone I rang asking for information and

stating that I had nothing to pay with they informed me they'd come and take my belongings/possessions. I informed them that I'd filled out the form honestly then the guy on phone put me on hold came back to let me know that they had missed the fact that it was now on hold till October 15th 😞.

I'm ready to email them with the very simple and point form facts and advise I'm going to Ombudsman and media but procrastinating out of fear of the result as they don't seem to care...

[REDACTED]

*

From: **Service NSW Customer Support** <customersupport@service.nsw.gov.au>

Date: Wed, 4 Sept 2024, 1:21 pm

Subject: Re: Review on grant application for MB Support Grant 21 - Application for [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]



Dear [REDACTED]

As you are aware, the outcome of your Internal Review is due on 15 August 2024. However, we are writing to advise that there will be a delay in providing the outcome of your Internal Review.

We are currently prioritising your request and are aiming to provide you with a response as soon as possible.

We apologise for an inconvenience to you as a result of this delay.

We appreciate your understanding in this matter.

Sincerely,

Craig
Customer Payments Support team - Internal Reviews
On behalf of Director of Customer Payments

Service NSW

T 13 77 88



----- Original Message -----

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 23/7/2024, 3:53 pm
To: customersupport@service.nsw.gov.au
Subject: Re: Dispute Internal Review [ref [REDACTED]]

[CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organisation. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognise the sender and know the content is safe.]

Is anyone reading my replies here?

I've had no response.

Application approved by NSW Service of \$10,000.

On Wed, 17 July 2024, 2:16 pm [REDACTED] wrote:

Thank you.

However, my application should legally be available to you and myself.
Service NSW will not allow me access which is in breach of my human rights.

So I will be needing it and an explanation as to how it was approved by you when I had put my trust in the government helping us whilst we had been immorally isolated from others including work.

On Wed, 17 July 2024, 12:55 pm Service NSW Customer Support,
<customersupport@service.nsw.gov.au> wrote:



Dear [REDACTED]

Thank you for your email.

Unfortunately, I am unable to provide a copy of the application. However, I have arranged for the Business Customer Resolutions Team to contact you regarding your request.

Please note that during your previous audit compliance review, it was determined that you did not meet the eligibility criteria based on your total business income for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2020, which was \$ [REDACTED].

According to the guidelines for the Micro Business Grant:

3. Eligibility criteria

3.1 Businesses and not-for-profit organizations impacted by the Public Health Order will be eligible if:

- They had an aggregated annual turnover of more than \$30,000 and less than \$75,000 for the year ended June 30, 2020.

If you have any further documentation or additional information you would like to be considered in your dispute, please provide it at your earliest convenience.

I have also attached Micro Business Guidelines and Terms and Conditions for your own records.

Sincerely,

Linda

Customer Payments Support team - Internal Reviews

On behalf of Director of Customer Payments

Service NSW

T 13 77 88



ref: [REDACTED]

*

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: Friday, 26 July 2024 5:30 AM

To: steve@naturetrail.com.au

Subject: Fwd: Service NSW Programme - Reference Number [REDACTED]

Hi Steve,

I'm away today, but may be able to get a call through this afternoon otherwise Monday if that's ok?

I'm sitting down Sunday going back through all notes, emails, paperwork etc

The above email you'll see is stating on hold till October 17th.

My brain hurts but I'm not giving up.

Was reading through all your links, last night & missed your call, sorry about that. I have a lot of writing to pin point discrepancies.

Another confusion is the amounts... I was under the impression Micro was 10,000 not varied amounts ???

Cheers [REDACTED].

*

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: Tuesday, 23 July 2024 1:52 PM

To: steve@naturetrail.com.au

Subject: [REDACTED]

2168

Spoke to Mark on hold 17 Oct 2024

NSW Customer Service
ABR 91 913 830 179

TAX INVOICE – PAY NOW

INVOICE NUMBER [REDACTED]

AMOUNT DUE \$12,000.00

ISSUE DATE 09 JUL 2024

DUE DATE 08 AUG 2024

Pay by the due date to avoid additional fees

FEE DETAILS

COL application number: [REDACTED]

Date of Decision: 05.07.24

REASON FOR DETERMINATION

The fees have been charged for the MB Support Grant 21 - Application as the eligibility criteria were not met.

CONTACT US: revenue.nsw.gov.au | 1300 655 805

This matter has been referred to Revenue NSW to commence collection of this invoice on behalf of Service NSW regarding the MB Support Grant 21 - Application.

If you wish to discuss this matter further, dispute the calculation findings or provide further information, please contact Revenue NSW on 1300 655 805.

Online: Visit www.revenue.nsw.gov.au to pay by Mastercard or Visa.*
*A card payment fee may apply. This fee is not subject to GST.

Phone: Call 1300 655 805 to pay by Mastercard or Visa.*
*A card payment fee may apply. This fee is not subject to GST.

Bank: Use your BSB Code 200907 and your Reference No. [REDACTED] to pay using your cheque or savings account. Account details are unique for each invoice.

Pay in-store at Australia Post by cash, cheque or EFTPOS. Please write your payment reference number and name on the back of the cheque.

Payment Reference No: [REDACTED]

Amount Due: \$12,000.00

Due Date: 08 AUG 2024

You are HERE

1234

INVOICE ISSUED	DEBT NOTICE	DEBT RECOVERY ORDER	DEBT RECOVERY ACTION
Invoice(s) has been issued to you in relation to fees/services provided by the referring agency. Pay by the due date. See below for other ways to finalise this notice.	A Debt Notice has been issued to you for an overdue invoice. Pay the amount owing or take alternative action by the due date to save an \$65 additional cost and late payment fees being applied.	A Debt Recovery Order has been issued against you because you have not paid the outstanding amount owed. If you do not pay the outstanding amount (including added costs) by the due date, debt recovery action may be commenced against you without further notice.	Debt Recovery Action may be taken against you because you have not paid the outstanding amount owed. Debt Recovery Action includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Taking money from your bank account or wages• Seizing goods or property you own• Being compelled to provide information• Registering an interest in property you own Additional costs may be added for each debt recovery action.
\$12,000.00 INVOICE AMOUNT	\$0.00 Amount owed	+ \$65 Debt Recovery Order Cost	+ \$65 (min cost) Debt Recovery Costs

Other ways to finalise this notice

What if I cannot afford to pay this notice by the due date?

You can apply for a payment plan by calling Revenue NSW on 1300 655 805. You must apply to pay by instalment prior to the due date.

What if I have a query relating to these fees?

If you have a query relating to the fees charged, please contact Revenue NSW on 1300 655 805 for more information.

Revenue NSW contact details

Phone: 1300 655 805

Overseas callers: +612 7808 6041

Website: www.revenue.nsw.gov.au

For people with hearing or speech impairment

TTY: 133 677 | Speak and Listen 1300 655 727

Privacy Collection Notice: Your information is being collected by Revenue NSW under the State Debt Recovery Act 2018. We collect your information to manage your fees and charges obligations. Revenue NSW handles your personal information in accordance with Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998 and Health Records and Information Privacy Act 2002. Your information may be provided to third parties as required or permitted by law. Please go to www.revenue.nsw.gov.au for more information or to make a privacy complaint.

*

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Saturday, 13 July 2024 4:12 PM
To: steve@naturetrail.com.au
Subject: [REDACTED]

Hi Steve,

Thanks for chatting with me today, it is greatly appreciated 😊

*

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, 9 July 2024 7:33 PM
To: 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... ?

I have another 9am phone call with them this Friday.

My contact details are

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

I'm free either tomorrow before 11am or Thursday.

Also congratulations on your win 🏆👏👏👏

Regards [REDACTED] 🙏

*

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



INDEPENDENT COMMISSION
AGAINST CORRUPTION

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