
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 #31]

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

[Emails (most recent at top)]

START OF EVIDENCE

This complainant had received a threat of retrospective re-assessment (labelled a so-called 'audit') by Service NSW's Grant Clawback Scheme from 2022. This is despite his business have been originally manually assessed, approved and paid by Service NSW in 2021.

This is also despite his business having complied with the Grant's original Terms and Conditions of 2021 'Attachment C' that provided for alternative circumstances to satisfy this Grant's eligibility criteria. See below.

This is another example of how Service NSW's Grant Clawback Scheme unconscionably treats long approved grant recipients retrospectively as contrived 'ineligible' and default guilty fraudsters until proven innocent. It is during this repeated reassessment process that Service NSW debt collectors are tasked to find any flaw or loophole to disprove grant eligibility and this involves fabricating different terms and conditions to suit its mischievous ulterior agenda. The reassessment tactic is a maliciously fabricated debt collection scam, and in no way any 'audit' by any definition.

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From [REDACTED]

Sent: Tuesday, 17 September 2024 12:13 PM

To: steve@naturetrail.com.au

Subject: Micro business grant review outcome

Hi Steve

As I advised in our brief telephone conversation on Sunday night my request for a review of the Service NSW decision to decline my original grant application has now been successful.

Like so many other grant applicants my aggregated annual turnover fell short of the \$30,000 (\$ 495.00 was the shortfall !).

I am attaching two pages from the original grant guidelines specifically attachment C relating to alternative circumstances for applicants to meet the grant's turnover eligibility criteria.

I provided them with a travel itinerary confirming I was overseas from 19/06/2019 to 25/07/2019 thereby allowing me to comply within turnover guideline # 3 " **Sole trader or small partnership impacted by sickness , injury or leave** ".

I have now received written confirmation of their decision and like yourself feel a huge burden lifted from my shoulders!!!!

Best regards

[REDACTED]

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Attachment C: Alternative rules for businesses that do not meet standard eligibility criteria for the COVID-19 Micro-business Grant

Alternative circumstances	How to demonstrate aggregated annual turnover	How to demonstrate decline in turnover
<p>1. Businesses that commenced after June 2019 (note: businesses must have been operating on 1 June 2021 to be eligible for support)</p>	<p>Businesses applying for the Micro-business Grant must show the equivalent of more than \$30,000 and less than \$75,000 in annual turnover.</p> <p>If a business is unable to demonstrate turnover for a full year, a shorter period can be accepted provided that shorter period is representative of the "normal operating environment" of the business. The turnover for this shorter period will be annualised to get an equivalent annual turnover figure for the business.</p>	As per the guidelines
<p>2. Businesses that have been impacted by acquisition, disposal, or restructure</p>	<p>Businesses should generally use a minimum 3-month period to demonstrate turnover, and should provide:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a Business Activity Statement (BAS) for at least one quarter (or 3-monthly BAS), or • an Australian Tax Return annotated to show when the business commenced during the financial year. 	
<p>3. Sole trader or small partnership impacted by sickness, injury or leave</p>	<p>Businesses should generally use a minimum 3-month period to demonstrate turnover, and should provide:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a Business Activity Statement (BAS) for at least one quarter (or 3-monthly BAS), or • an Australian Tax Return annotated to show when the business commenced during the financial year. 	

Where a business does not have the evidence outlined above (for example, because the business started between 1 January and 1 June 2021 or is a microbusiness that does not submit a BAS), the following may be provided as evidence of annual turnover:

- letter from a qualified accountant, registered tax agent or registered BAS agent; or
- business bank account statement for a minimum three-month period (separate from any personal accounts), or the period for which the business has been operating if less than 3 months, or
- a profit and loss statement from an accounting software for a minimum 3-month period, or the period for which the business has been operating if less than three months, and one of the following documents
- an annotated personal bank statement for the same period, or
- a personal income tax return annotated to show when the business commenced during the financial year.

4. Businesses impacted by natural disasters (e.g. drought, bushfire, flood)

As per above

As per the guidelines, **or** a business can show a decline in turnover of 30% or more due to the Public Health Order over a minimum 2-week period within the period of restrictions (commenced 26 June), compared to the same period in 2018.

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



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AGAINST CORRUPTION

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