

---

**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 #33]

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

[oldest at the top]

### START OF EVIDENCE

---

\*

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, 1 October 2024 4:37 PM  
**To:** [steve@naturetrail.com.au](mailto:steve@naturetrail.com.au)  
**Subject:** Micro business grant victim

Hi Steve,

I can't thank you guys enough with the info you have provided regarding the claw back Micro business grant.

I have become victim to this drama and been ripping the internet apart to find any information with others having the same issues, hence how I stumbled across your site.

We've been in business for over 21 years and we definitely don't need this drama trying to get back on our feet.

Also just to top the cake Service NSW has fabricated the micro business grant from \$15214 to \$18214. I spoke to a Greg (no surname) from Service NSW last year regarding this error and to my surprise he admitted it was a mistake, only issue it wasn't in writing, just verbal over the phone. Since then I have been battling these clowns and now I am dealing with Revenue NSW. I wish I found you guys earlier as I would've taken a different approach to the whole scenario.

I will be taking this whole matter to court but wasn't sure if it was the right steps and was going to ask if you guys have received an invoice from Revenue NSW to date? I'd love to hear from you guys when you get a chance.

Hope you have an amazing day and chat soon.

Kind Regards

[Redacted signature]

\*

**From:** [Redacted]  
**Sent:** Thursday, 3 October 2024 3:51 PM  
**To:** steve@naturetrail.com.au  
**Subject:** Service NSW Claw Back Grant

Hi Steve,

Thank you so much for the phone call and support today, I really appreciate you spending the time and effort with everything you have done with me today.

As requested I have attached our Revenue NSW bills as PDF's above, I have deleted the name and address but the rest of the document is untouched. They are trying to claw back \$18214 from us and they only paid \$15214.

Everyone I have spoken to from Service NSW doesn't seem to have a care in the world and they won't reply to my original email instead they reply on a totally separate email.

Regardless hope you have an amazing day and chat to you soon.

Kind Regards

[Redacted signature]

\*



**DEBT NOTICE – PAYMENT DUE NOW**

REFERENCE NUMBER	[REDACTED]
ISSUE DATE	14 AUG 2024
AMOUNT DUE	\$18,214.00
DUE DATE	06 SEP 2024

If you do not pay by the due date, we will take further action. Debt Recovery Action will result in additional costs and if not resolved, may lead to a bank or wage garnishee order, property seizure order sanctions.

Your payment options are below. You can view other ways to finalise this notice over the page.

**CONTACT US** [revenue.nsw.gov.au](http://revenue.nsw.gov.au) | 1300 655 805

**FEE DETAILS**

You have outstanding charges

Invoice Number	[REDACTED]
Invoice Issue Date	9 July 2024
Invoice Amount	\$18,214.00

**Why have I been sent this debt reminder notice?**

Revenue NSW has been engaged by Service NSW to recover outstanding charges. You have been sent this debt notice because you have not paid the overdue fees.

If you need to discuss this matter, please contact us today on 1300 655 805.



**Online:** Visit [www.revenue.nsw.gov.au](http://www.revenue.nsw.gov.au) to pay by Mastercard or Visa.\*  
\*A card payment fee may apply. This fee is not subject to GST.

Payment Reference No: [REDACTED]



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

Amount Due: \$18,214.00



**BPAY:** Quote **Biller Code 265967** and your **Reference No.** [REDACTED] to pay using your cheque or savings account. Access BPAY via your financial institution's website or phone banking service. The BPAY details are unique for each invoice.

Due Date: 06 SEP 2024



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.





You are HERE



### INVOICE ISSUED

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.

### DEBT 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.**

### DEBT RECOVERY ORDER

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

Debt Recovery Action may be taken against you because you have not paid the outstanding amount owed.

Debt Recovery Action includes:

- 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.**

**\$18,214.00**  
Invoice amount

**\$18,214.00**  
**Amount owed**

**+ \$65**  
Debt Recovery Order Cost

**+ \$65** (min cost)  
Debt Recovery Cost

## Other ways to finalise this notice

### What if I cannot afford to pay this debt 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 want to seek a review of the fees?

If you are seeking a review of the fees charged, you must request this in writing together with supporting documentation and a return residential address and submit to Revenue NSW. All review must be submitted and received by Revenue NSW prior to the due date.

### What if I want to have these fees decided in court?

To have the matter determined by a court, contact us on 1300 655 805 to arrange to have the court election form sent to you. You can also contact Law Access NSW for information about legal processes on 1300 888 529 or visit [www.lawaccess.nsw.gov.au](http://www.lawaccess.nsw.gov.au).

There are strict timelines for requesting a matter be decided by the courts. You can request a matter be heard by the court if:

- A previous review by the referring agency has been conducted and a determination has been made. You have 28 days from the date of the review outcome to lodge a request to have the matter heard in court.
- If a Debt Recovery Order has been issued, a request to have the matter heard in court must be submitted and received by Revenue NSW prior to the due date of the Debt Recovery Order.

If you elect to have the matter dealt with by a court and the judgment of the court is favourable to the Chief Commissioner, you may be required to pay the State's costs in the proceedings.

### Revenue NSW contact details

Phone: 1300 655 805

Overseas callers: +612 7808 6941

Website: [www.revenue.nsw.gov.au](http://www.revenue.nsw.gov.au)

**For people with hearing or speech impairment**

TTY 133 677 | Speak and Listen 1300 555 727

**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](http://www.revenue.nsw.gov.au) for more information or to make a privacy complaint.

**Service NSW Programme  
Fees and Charges as of 14 August 2024**

Account Number [REDACTED]

Account Name [REDACTED]

**Overdue**

Transaction Reference	Description	Amount Due
[REDACTED]	MB Support Grant 21 - Application	\$18,214.00

**TOTAL OWING \$18,214.00**

**PAYMENT DUE NOW \$18,214.00**



**DEBT RECOVERY ORDER – PAY NOW**

ACCOUNT NUMBER	[REDACTED]
ISSUE DATE	13 SEP 2024
DUE DATE	13 OCT 2024
DEBT AMOUNT	\$18,214.00
COST INCURRED	\$65.00
<b>AMOUNT OVERDUE</b>	<b>\$18,279.00</b>

If you do not pay by the due date, funds may be deducted from your bank account and additional costs will be applied.

CONTACT US [revenue.nsw.gov.au](http://revenue.nsw.gov.au) | 1300 655 805

**FEE DETAILS**

The total amount owed may be more than this order, please refer to the attachment for details.

**Why have I been sent this Debt Recovery Order?**

You have not paid your outstanding fee to Service NSW. We have issued a debt recovery order for the unpaid amount, with an additional cost of \$65.

If you cannot afford to pay this debt recovery order in full by the due date, you need to contact Revenue NSW before the due date to discuss this matter on 1300 655 805.



Online: Visit [www.revenue.nsw.gov.au](http://www.revenue.nsw.gov.au) to pay by Mastercard or Visa.\*  
\*A card payment fee may apply. This fee is not subject to GST.

Payment Reference No: [REDACTED]



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

Amount Due: \$18,279.00



BPAY: Quote **Biller Code 265967** and your **Reference No.** [REDACTED] to pay using your cheque or savings account. Access BPAY via your financial institution's website or phone banking service. The BPAY details are unique for each invoice.

Due Date: 13 OCT 2024



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.





### INVOICE ISSUED

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.



### DEBT 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.**

You are **HERE**

### DEBT RECOVERY ORDER

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

Debt Recovery Action may be taken against you because you have not paid the outstanding amount owed.

Debt Recovery Action includes:

- 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**

**\$18,214.00**  
Invoice amount

**\$18,214.00**  
Debt Notice

**+ \$65**  
Debt Recovery Order Cost

**+ \$65** (min cost)  
Debt Recovery Cost

**\$18,279.00**  
**Amount Now Due**

## Other ways to finalise this notice

### What if I cannot afford to pay this debt recovery order 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 want to seek a review of the fees?

If you are seeking a review of the fees charged, you must request this in writing together with supporting documentation and a return residential address and submit to Revenue NSW. There are strict timelines for requesting a review and if a Debt Recovery Order has been issued for the outstanding fees, all reviews must be submitted and received by Revenue NSW prior to the due date of the Debt Recovery Notice. No applications will be processed after this date and you will need to pay the full amount, including added costs.

### What if I want to have these fees decided in court?

To have the matter determined by a court, contact us on 1300 655 805 to arrange to have the court election form sent to you. You can also contact Law Access NSW for information about legal processes on 1300 888 529 or visit [www.lawaccess.nsw.gov.au](http://www.lawaccess.nsw.gov.au).

There are strict timelines for requesting a matter be decided by the courts. You can request a matter be heard by the court if:

- A previous review by the referring agency has been conducted and a determination has been made. You have 28 days from the date of the review outcome to lodge a request to have the matter heard in court.
- If a Debt Recovery Order has been issued, a request to have the matter heard in court must be submitted and received by Revenue NSW prior to the due date of the Debt Recovery Order.

If you elect to have the matter dealt with by a court and the judgment of the court is favourable to the Chief Commissioner, you may be required to pay the State's costs in the proceedings.

### Revenue NSW contact details

Phone: 1300 655 805

Overseas callers: +612 7808 6941

Website: [www.revenue.nsw.gov.au](http://www.revenue.nsw.gov.au)

For people with hearing or speech impairment

TTY 133 677 | Speak and Listen 1300 555 727

**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](http://www.revenue.nsw.gov.au) for more information or to make a privacy complaint.

# Unpaid charges

Enquiries 1300 655 805 Speak and Listen 1300 555 727  
TTY 133 677  
Website [www.revenue.nsw.gov.au](http://www.revenue.nsw.gov.au)

## Details for this Debt Recovery Order

Transaction Reference	Transaction Details	Issue Date	Due Date	Balance
[REDACTED]	MB Support Grant 21 - Application	09/07/2024	13/10/2024	\$18,214.00
	Debt Recovery Order Issue Cost (Debtor Cost)	13/09/2024		\$65.00
				<b>\$18,279.00</b>

Account Number

Total debt owing

[REDACTED]  
\$18,279.00



**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Monday, 7 October 2024 8:48 PM  
**To:** [steve@naturetrail.com.au](mailto:steve@naturetrail.com.au);

**Subject:** RE: Service NSW Micro Business Grant clawback battle [REDACTED]  
**Sensitivity:** Confidential

Hi Steve,

I can't thank you enough for your support, it is such a pleasure being a part of this group with everyone involved with this claw back scam. By the way, I received another email today regarding the grant, I didn't realize Revenue NSW works on a public holiday J This is a dead giveaway that Revenue NSW has outsourced their work. Scam email from Revenue NSW is bellow...

-----

Dear Sir/Madam,

You have an overdue Service NSW fee of \$18279.00. Unless payment is made immediately, funds may be deducted from your bank account and additional costs may apply.

You can pay using any of our payment options, including by cash at Australia Post. Visit [www.revenue.nsw.gov.au](http://www.revenue.nsw.gov.au) or contact us on 1300 655 805 to finalise this matter.

State Debt Collections  
Revenue NSW

-----  
Please do not reply to this message as it will be routed to an unmonitored mailbox. For more information, go to [www.revenue.nsw.gov.au](http://www.revenue.nsw.gov.au) or call 1300 655 805.

Hope everyone had an amazing long weekend.

Kind Regards

[REDACTED]

\*

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Monday, 7 October 2024 10:55 PM  
**To:** [steve@naturetrail.com.au](mailto:steve@naturetrail.com.au);

**Subject:** RE: Service NSW Micro Business Grant clawback battle [REDACTED]  
**Sensitivity:** Confidential

Hi Steve,

As requested I have attached the original email from so called Revenue NSW above, this is their 3<sup>rd</sup> email by the way.

I'll definitely be going to the bank tomorrow and taking out all available funds. I'm pretty sure my account has a redraw facility so I'll have to chat to the bank and sort that out also before they leave me high and dry with a massive debt to repay. I also have a credit card with them so not sure how far they can go with that?

Thank you so much for the info Steve, I really appreciate all your efforts.

Kind Regards

■

■■■■■■■■■■  
■■■■■■■■■■  
■■■■■■■■■■  
■■■■■■■■■■

\*

**From:** statedebt@revenue.nsw.gov.au  
**Sent:** Monday, 7 October 2024 9:02 AM  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** Service NSW: Payment is overdue (Account Number [REDACTED])

Dear Sir/Madam,

You have an overdue Service NSW fee of \$18279.00. Unless payment is made immediately, funds may be deducted from your bank account and additional costs may apply.

You can pay using any of our payment options, including by cash at Australia Post. Visit [www.revenue.nsw.gov.au](http://www.revenue.nsw.gov.au) or contact us on 1300 655 805 to finalise this matter.

State Debt Collections  
Revenue NSW

-----  
Please do not reply to this message as it will be routed to an unmonitored mailbox. For more information, go to [www.revenue.nsw.gov.au](http://www.revenue.nsw.gov.au) or call 1300 655 805.

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Friday, 18 October 2024 10:05 PM  
**To:** steve@naturetrail.com.au  
**Subject:** [REDACTED] outcome from Service NSW

Hi Steve,

As promised I have attached the PDF from Service NSW, they still couldn't get the amount correct after all this time lol.

Thank you so much for everything you have done mate. You are a true gentleman and I'm here to fight for everyone else J

Hope you have an amazing evening and chat to you soon bud.

Kind Regards

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

\*



Reference: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] – ABN [REDACTED]

By Email: [billiss@optusnet.com.au](mailto:billiss@optusnet.com.au)

## Hardship Review of your application for the Micro Business Support Grant 2021

Dear [REDACTED]

I refer to your application for abovementioned grant made on 26 July 2021. You have requested a review on your application as you disagree with the audit outcome that was communicated to you by Service NSW.

I am authorised by delegation of the Minister for Customer Service and Digital Government under section 5.7(4) of the Government Sector Finance Act 2018, to conduct a review of and determine a final outcome for your application, in accordance with the terms and conditions set by the Minister for this Program.

- your initial application dated 26 July 2021
- Statements made with Liz Stockell, Director of Fraud Management and Customer Payments, Risk, Strategy and Customer Support Service NSW and supporting documents supplied via email on 17 October 2024

Your eligibility has been considered against the following:

- Micro Business Support Grant 2021 - Terms and Conditions dated 24 July 2021, which was in force as at the date of your initial application, and
- Micro Business Support Grant 2021 – Guidelines dated 24 July 2021, which was in force as at the date of your initial application.

### Outcome

I am pleased to advise that your business, [REDACTED] has been removed from compliance activities after hardship considerations have been accepted.

We note that a payment of \$18,214.00 was paid to you and no further monies are payable. You are not required to make any repayments.

### Hardship considerations

You supplied:

- Medical Certificates

Documents supplied have been reviewed and accepted to meet with Hardship considerations.

## Conclusion of your matter

If you are dissatisfied with the way Service NSW has handled your application, audit, or review, you may lodge a complaint through our website at <https://www.service.nsw.gov.au/contact-us/customer-complaints>.

Yours sincerely

Sean

## Customer Payments Team – Hardship Reviews

For and on behalf of the Director Customer Payments

18 October 2024



**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, 6 November 2024 11:41 AM  
**To:** steve@naturetrail.com.au  
**Subject:** FW: Revenue NSW on behalf of Service NSW Programme - Review Outcome (Ref [REDACTED])

Hey Steve,

Hope you're doing well from your end buddy. I received an email from Revenue NSW yesterday and I had to forward it to you.

I couldn't stop laughing at the *"Thank you for your patient in relation to your Service NSW fees"* hahaha

What bloody fees, it was a GRANT not a fee...

Regardless hope you have a great day and chat to you soon.

Kind Regards

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



INDEPENDENT COMMISSION  
AGAINST CORRUPTION

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