

GETTING OUT

GOING TO COURT

Going to court is always an anxious time, especially if you are worried you may be sent to prison. The courts have recently changed how they work to prevent the spread of the virus. In some cases, this means that you may need to do something differently. If you have legal matters going on after your release, it is very important to find out what you need to do. This will help you avoid getting into more trouble with the court. You can call CRC on (02) 9288 8700 to talk about what you need to do and get support.

You may be tempted not to go to court but this is never a good idea. If you don't show up, it goes onto your criminal record as a 'failure to appear', which means that you will find it much more difficult to ever get bail again in future.



I have a court matter at the local court coming up.

Do I still have to attend?

If you are due to go to court because you have been charged with an offence, you must go unless you have made other arrangements with the court. There are likely to be new arrangements because the court wants to have as few people as possible there.

You must attend court if you:

- are a party to a court or matter and no arrangements have been made to attend court in another way (such as by video-link or your solicitor appearing for you online)
- require face-to-face services of the registry and you cannot do this remotely.

How can I find out what I need to do?

If you are not sure, you must check as soon as possible. Ask your solicitor, but if they are difficult to get hold of, ask the Courts Service Centre. You can contact the Courts Service Centre by calling 1300 679 272 or you can email nswcs@justice.nsw.gov.au

I am in the community and have a legal matter coming up and I need to talk with a lawyer. Who can I talk to?

Call LawAccess on 1300 888 529 between 9am and 5pm, Monday to Friday (except public holidays). This is the best way to contact Legal Aid, unless you already have a solicitor who has given you their direct office phone number.

If you are Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander, you can contact the Aboriginal Legal Service on one of their toll-free numbers:

1800 765 767 for police charges and court matters

1800 733 233 for care and protection and family matters



I am in prison and am worried that visits have stopped. Can I still organise to see a lawyer?

Call the Prisoners Legal Service (free call on CADL list) and ask for advice over the phone or by audio-visual link.

Websites and phone numbers for further information

Courts Service Centre: 1300 679 272

Law Access: 1300 888 529

Aboriginal Legal Service: 1800 765 767 (police charges and court matters)

Aboriginal Legal Service: 1800 733 233 (Care and Protection and Family Matters)

Prisoners Legal Service: Free Call on the CADL for people inside prison or (02) 8688 3888 for families on the outside.

www.coronavirus.dcj.nsw.gov.au/services/courts-tribunals-and-legal-services

www.localcourt.justice.nsw.gov.au

www.districtcourt.justice.nsw.gov.au

www.supremecourt.justice.nsw.gov.au/Pages/coronavirus_covid19_announcement.aspx

www.lawaccess.nsw.gov.au/Pages/news-articles/coronavirus.aspx

www.alsnswact.org.au/coronavirus_information

