



**Stolen Wages Reparation Scheme WA
Frequently Asked Questions**



WHAT IS STOLEN WAGES?

Under past legislation such as the *Aborigines Act 1905* and the *Native Welfare Act 1963*, employers, including the State Government, held money and property belonging to Aboriginal people in a complex network of trust accounts.

The Stolen Wages Taskforce was established in 2007 in an attempt to identify individuals who had their legitimate earnings, pension entitlements and other property held in trust and not returned, and the value of these entitlements.

The Taskforce found extensive evidence of systemic, direct control over Aboriginal people's money throughout the period in question.

WHAT IS BEING DONE TO COMPENSATE THOSE WHO WERE SUBJECTED TO THIS PRACTICE?

The State Government has announced a reparation scheme of up to \$2000 Ex gratia payment to Aboriginal people born prior to 1958 who are deemed to have potentially experienced direct Government control over their income during their residency at Native Welfare settlements in Western Australia.

WHO IS ELIGIBLE FOR THIS PAYMENT?

Aboriginal people born prior to 1958 who are deemed to have potentially experienced direct Government control over their income during their residency at Native Welfare settlements in Western Australia.

WHAT DO I NEED TO DO TO APPLY FOR THIS PAYMENT?

An application pack, which includes an Application Form and Guidelines, can be obtained by calling the Stolen Wages Reparation Scheme help line on 1800 441 570 or downloaded from the Department of Indigenous Affairs website www.dia.wa.gov.au.

WHY AN AMOUNT OF \$2000?

The Stolen Wages issue is complex in WA as a result of the lack of surviving individual records and the passage of time. It is not possible to identify an exact amount previously withheld and consequently an Ex gratia payment of up to \$2000 has been agreed as an appropriate reparation payment.

The Government needs to balance the claims of those affected and its reparation payment against the contemporary needs of Aboriginal Western Australians.

The State Government invests heavily in measures intended to improve life outcomes for Aboriginal people. These investments are, to a large degree, based on a recognition that the disadvantage experienced by many Aboriginal people is a result of discriminatory legislation and policy that existed in the period 1905 to 1972.

WHAT HAS HAPPENED IN OTHER STATES?

Western Australia is the third of all the states and territories to announce a reparation or payment scheme in response to the Stolen Wages issue. New South Wales initiated a repayment scheme and Queensland offered Ex gratia payments similar to the WA program.

I'M CONFUSED ABOUT WHETHER OR NOT I AM ELIGIBLE FOR THIS PAYMENT.

You should apply for this Ex gratia payment by completing a statutory declaration and providing supporting information if you are an Aboriginal person born prior to 1958 who potentially experienced direct Government control over your income during your residency at Native Welfare settlements in Western Australia.

I NEED MORE INFORMATION.

Further information on the process and eligibility is available at www.dia.wa.gov.au or by calling 1800 441 570.