



PRISONERS' LEGAL SERVICE INC

CHAINMAIL

INFORMATION BROADSHEET FOR PRISONERS OF QUEENSLAND
107th Edition October 2017

JUSTICE BEHIND BARS

PLS FINANCIAL COUNSELLING SERVICE

Financial counsellors are non-judgmental, qualified professionals who provide information, support and advocacy to people in financial difficulty. Based in community organisations, financial counselling services are free, independent and confidential. Financial counsellors have specific knowledge about the credit, bankruptcy and debt collection laws, concession frameworks and industry hardship practices. They are also trained in negotiation and counselling.

PLS is the only organisation in Australia that provides a dedicated financial counselling service to people affected by incarceration. This includes people in prison, people on parole, lifers, and family members of prisoners. There are financial counsellors around the country that visit prisons and assist prisoners, but we are the only dedicated service. We have one full-time accredited financial counsellor to service all of Queensland.

As we have access to visit the QLD prisons, the financial counsellor can do face to face appointments in the prisons and travel to regional prisons for annual visits. Otherwise, the service is provided by telephone link as well as in writing.

The financial counsellor can be contacted on our free prison advice line Tue – Thu from 9am – 1pm, or by fax, email, or in writing. The service also receives referrals from: friends and family; QCS Counsellors; Sisters Inside; various Community Organisations; Legal Aid Qld; and via the Financial Counselling Hotline Service.

Top 10 financial counselling enquiries

1. Credit and Debt Owed / Bank Accounts
2. SPER / Compensation Debt
3. Bankruptcy
4. Mortgage / Vehicle Repossession
5. ABN / Taxation Issues
6. Child Support Agency Debt
7. Credit and Debt Info / Credit File Reporting
8. Government Benefits and Centrelink Debt
9. Superannuation Enquiries
10. Post-Release Support

WRITE TO US: GPO BOX 257, BRISBANE QLD 4001

CALL US: FREE ARUNTA PHONE TUE, WED & THU FROM 9AM to 1PM

OR ask a support worker or a family member to contact us on your behalf

PLS Financial counsellor direct phone number: 07 3999 8340

Prisoners' Legal Service Inc.
Postal Address: GPO Box 257, Brisbane QLD 4001

Justice Behind Bars
Free Advice Line: Tues, Wed, Thurs from 9am to 1pm

This broadsheet is intended to provide legal information only and is no substitute for legal advice. If you wish to take any action arising from matters raised in this publication you should consult a lawyer immediately.



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NO BODY NO PAROLE LAWS

In August 2017, the Queensland Government introduced new laws that impact prisoners convicted of homicide offences where the victim's body or remains have not been located.

The new laws do not automatically stop a prisoner from getting parole because their victim's body or remains were not located.

However, the Parole Board must refuse to grant parole unless they are satisfied the prisoner has cooperated satisfactorily with the investigation of the offence to identify the victim's location.

A new process must be followed by the Parole Board when a prisoner convicted of a homicide offence submits an application for parole and the victim's body or remains have not been located. This process requires the following steps be taken:

- The Parole Board must write to the Police Commissioner asking if the prisoner has cooperated satisfactorily in the investigation of the offence to identify the victim's location;
- The Police Commissioner must provide a written report in response to the Parole Board's request within 28 days;
- The Parole Board must then consider the report from the Police Commissioner, the court transcript about the offence **and any information about the prisoner's capacity to give cooperation.**

Cooperation with the police investigation can happen either before or after being sentenced.

These laws will apply to everyone in prison convicted of a homicide offence where the victim's body or remains have not been located. It does not matter when the offence took place.

Any prisoner seeking advice about how these laws impact may them is encouraged to contact PLS.

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