Rise in Wagga residents needing help with fines

A growing number of Wagga Wagga residents are completing Work and Development Orders (WDOs) to pay off overdue fines, with Legal Aid NSW calling on residents to get help early.

The new data shows that 255 WDOs were approved in Wagga Wagga in 2025-26, a 22 per cent increase compared to the previous year.

The WDO scheme allows people experiencing hardship to engage in support pathways like medical or mental health treatment, vocational or life skills courses, and financial counselling as a way of paying off debt from unpaid fines.

“WDOs provide participants with opportunities to develop skills, access support services and improve their circumstances,” said David Ranasinghe, Revenue NSW Executive Director Fines and Debt.

Legal Aid NSW is urging residents struggling with fine debt to contact them for help, with the region reporting almost $9.5 million in overdue fines as of September 2026.

“The earlier people seek help with debt, the better the outcome. Whether it be organising a payment plan, having a debt waived or organising a WDO, a lawyer can help you understand your options and prevent debt from snowballing,” said Sharlene Naismith, Acting Associate Director, Civil Law.

“Revenue NSW understands that people rarely fall behind on fines because they don’t care.

“More often, it’s because life has become overwhelming and we want to remind people that they are not alone and that support is available,” Mr Ranasinghe said.

“WDOs and interest free payment plans can help reduce the burden of debt.”

Anyone struggling with unpaid fines is encouraged to contact Legal Aid NSW on 1300 888 529

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