



## Part 3

### I am turning 18

#### Questions and Answers for

- young adults with a disability
- family members
- carers
- advocates



This guide is for information only

It is not legal advice

This guide is for people who live in NSW

You can check the laws in the state where you  
live for the correct information

This guide was made on Gadigal Land

We say thank you to the Traditional Owners of  
this land

Always was, always will be Aboriginal land

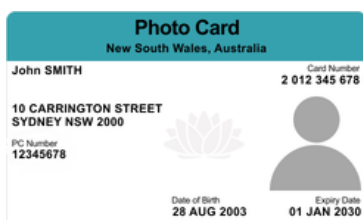
## 1. Identification documents (ID)



When you are an adult you often need to show who you are and how old you are

This is called **identification** or **ID**

### NSW Photo Card



A Photo Card is a card with your picture that shows who you are and how old you are

### How do I get a Photo Card?

You can apply when you are 16 or older

- You can print the form online

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

- You can go to a Service NSW office
- You can call them on **13 77 88** if you have questions



## What do I need to bring?



To show who you are you will need to have some ID like a

- birth certificate
- passport
- school photo card
- Medicare card

Sometimes you need a parent or carer to come with you to say who you are

## What do I need to do?

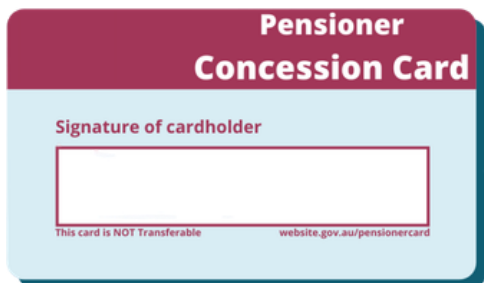
You need to fill in an application form  
A support person can help you  
You must sign the application form  
yourself



The Service NSW website has an Easy Read guide for applying for a Photo Card

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

## What does it cost?



The Photo Card is free if you get the Disability Support Pension (DSP)

You will need to show your Concession Card

## What else can I get at Service NSW?



You can get an Adult or Concession Opal Card to travel around NSW on public transport

You can only travel on a Child and Youth Opal Card until you are 15

## How do I get an Australian Passport?



You need a passport to travel to other countries

- You can start filling in the form online at [www.passports.gov.au](http://www.passports.gov.au)
- You can pick up a form at a Post Office
- You can fill in the form by yourself or with a support person
- You must sign the form
- You must go to a Post Office with the form and your ID



Types of ID are

- birth certificate
- driver's licence or photo card
- proof of address like a bill, bank statement, or Centrelink letter



## What if I cannot sign the form because of my disability

Sign here



- Leave the signature box blank
- Do not try to sign it if you cannot stay within the lines of the box
- The person supporting you with the application form can fill out a **Form B11 (General Declaration)** explaining the situation
- Have a letter from a doctor explaining why you cannot sign



**NCAT**  
 NSW Civil &  
 Administrative  
 Tribunal

If you have a Financial Manager from NSW Trustee and Guardian they can sign it for you

## 2.Voting

### Do I have to vote in government elections?



Yes if you are able

- In Australia everyone over 18 must vote
- If you do not vote you might have to pay a fine

### Do I need to register to vote?



Yes

You need to register to vote with the Australian Electoral Commission or AEC

You can register

- Online at [www.aec.gov.au/enrol](http://www.aec.gov.au/enrol)
- You can call them on 13 23 26
- You can visit an AEC office

Australian Electoral Commission

## Enrol to vote

Now that you are an Australian citizen, you have a right and a responsibility to enrol and vote in federal, state, territory, and local government elections.



Scan above or visit [aec.gov.au/enrol](http://aec.gov.au/enrol)

**Who must enrol and vote?**  
Voting in Australia is compulsory. You must enrol and vote if you:

- are 18 years of age or older
- are an Australian citizen, and
- have lived at your current address for at least a month.

If you are 16 or 17, you can enrol now so when you turn 18 you'll be ready to vote.

**What happens if I change my name or address?**  
You need to update your enrolment with your new details every time you move or change your name. You can change your details online at [aec.gov.au/enrol](http://aec.gov.au/enrol), call 13 23 26 or visit any AEC office.

**Now I am enrolled, how do I vote?**  
On election day, you should go to a polling place to vote. A polling official will check that your name is on the electoral roll and give you your ballot papers to fill in. If you can't make it on election day, check early voting options and eligibility on the AEC website.

More information on voting will be available at [aec.gov.au](http://aec.gov.au) at election time or you can call 13 23 26.

**Easy read guides**  
Easy read guides on how to enrol and vote are at [aec.gov.au/assistance](http://aec.gov.au/assistance)

**More information**  
For general enrolment and voting information in other languages call:

العربية	Arabic	1300 720 132
ދިވެހިބަސް	Dhivehi	1300 260 617
සිංහල	Sinhalese	1300 720 136
සිව්හව්ව	Creolian	1300 720 136
عربي	Dari	1300 260 618
فارسی	Farsi (Persian)	1300 260 619
Հայերեն	Georgian	1300 720 132
Italiano	Italian	1300 720 138
ភាសាខ្មែរ	Khmer	1300 720 134
ಕನ್ನಡ	Kannada	1300 720 140
मराठी	Marathi	1300 720 142
Հայերեն	Armenian	1300 720 143
ਪੰਜਾਬੀ	Punjabi	1300 720 145
සිව්හව්ව	Creolian	1300 720 146
Српски	Serbian	1300 720 147
සිව්හව්ව	Spanish	1300 720 148
தமிழ்	Tamil	1300 720 149
វិញ្ញាបនបត្រ	Vietnamese	1300 720 152
Other languages		1300 720 153

If you are deaf or have a hearing or speech impairment, contact us through the National Relay Service:

- TTY users phone 13 26 77 and ask for 13 23 26
- Speak and listen users phone 1300 555 727 and quote 13 23 26
- Internet relay users connect to the NRS then ask for 13 23 26.

[aec.gov.au](http://aec.gov.au) 13 23 26





You can sign up to vote when you are 17 so that you are ready to vote when you are 18

## What will I need?



To show who you are you will need ID like

- an Australian Driver's Licence
- an Australian Passport
- a Medicare Card

## What if I do not have any ID?



Someone who is already registered at the AEC like a family member or friend can sign your form to say who you are

## What if I need support to fill out the form?

A trusted person can help you fill out the form



The AEC has Easy Read guides to help

If a disability makes it hard to sign your name another person can sign the form for you



You will need a Medical Certificate from a doctor explaining why you cannot sign the form

## What if I find voting hard?



- You can have a friend or family member help you vote
- You can vote by post

You will need to fill out a postal vote form on the AEC website

## What if I cannot understand how to vote?



If your disability makes it too hard to understand

- you and your doctor can fill out an **AEC Objection Form**
- once the AEC says it is ok you do not have to vote

## 3. Signing contracts

Can I sign contracts to buy things and get services?



- A contract is like a promise
- When you sign a contract you are usually agreeing to pay money for something like a gym or a phone
- When you are 18 you are allowed to sign a contract yourself



Be careful about signing contracts

Always ask someone you trust for help

### What if I made a mistake?



If you signed something you did not understand tell someone you trust straight away

You may be able to cancel the contract and get your money back

Get legal advice if you think a contract is unfair



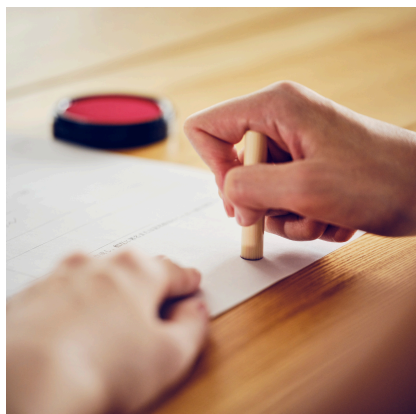
## What counts as a signature?



A signature is a sign or a mark that shows you agree

A signature can be a:

- Mark
- Name
- Stamp



The most important thing is that you wanted to sign and you agreed with what the document says

## What if I can't sign a document?



If you can't make a mark or sign your name there are ways to get help

Some forms let another person sign for you

For example

- DSP Application Form



If you have a Financial Manager from NSW Trustee and Guardian they can sign forms and contracts for you



## 4. Accessing Private and Personal Information

**Can I have access to my private information?**



You have a right to see information that organisations have about you

This can be things like

- medical records
- school reports
- notes from government departments



## How do I get my information from a government department?



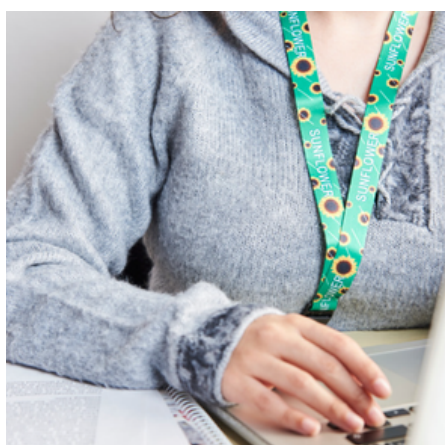
Asking for your own personal information from a NSW government department is usually free

You can call, email, or visit them



You will need to show your Photo Card or ID

You can ask someone you trust to help you write an email or talk to the department for you



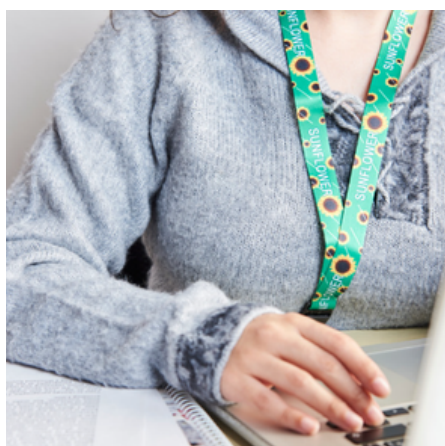
If you want the information sent to someone else's email address you must sign a Consent Form to say it is okay

## How do I get my information from a private business or company?



If you want information from a private company like

- a bank
- a private doctor
- a shop



You should contact the company and ask to speak to their Privacy Officer

It is a good idea to send an email so you have a record



Private companies are allowed to charge a small amount of money but might do it for free if you ask

If the information is hard to read or you need help understanding it you have rights

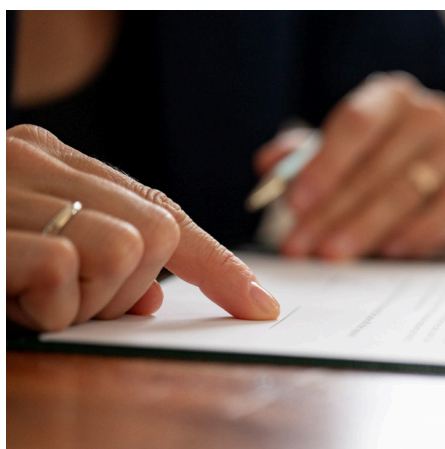


You can ask for

- an Easy Read version of the information

or

- ask if someone can sit with you and explain the notes



You can give permission for a trusted person to talk to them and get the information for you

### What if they say no?



If they refuse to give you your information they must tell you why in a letter

If you are unhappy with their answer you can call the **Information and Privacy Commission NSW** on **1800 472 679**

## 5. Keeping documents safe

Keep these papers together in a safe place if you have them



- birth certificate
- passport
- photo Card
- driver's licence
- letters from your doctor
- medical reports
- NDIS information
- proof of your name and address  
like
  - a letter from the government
  - a bill
- NCAT Court Orders

## 6. Helpful contacts



### Ability Rights Centre

A SERVICE OF IDRS



#### The **Ability Rights Centre** or **ARC**

- ARC gives free legal help to people with disability
- ARC can help you understand your rights

Call or email for help

02 9265 6350

[arc@idrs.org.au](mailto:arc@idrs.org.au)

You can ask someone you trust to help you



ARC is part of the **Intellectual Disability Rights Service** or **IDRS**



Please give your feedback