



**Greg Smith SC MP**

Attorney General  
Minister for Justice

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## **MEDIA RELEASE**

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### **MAKING CRIMINALS PAY FOR COURT**

People found guilty of a summary offence in the NSW Local Court will be charged a levy to help pay for the cost of their court case, Attorney General Greg Smith SC announced today.

“The court costs levy will be made mandatory for most convictions before the Local Court,” Mr Smith said.

“At the moment, magistrates have a discretion to order a convicted offender to pay court costs, but currently court costs are applied inconsistently. Imposing a mandatory levy will lead to greater consistency.”

“I believe people convicted of criminal offences should make a contribution towards the cost of bringing them to justice.”

The government will today bring in legislation to make the levy mandatory, requiring offenders to pay \$83 per conviction. This cost covers a proportion of the total cost of running courts and the justice system.

It will apply to most people convicted of a criminal offence in the Local Court, but exempts those convicted in the Drug Court and Children’s Court, and offenders sentenced to prison, as prisoners have little opportunity to pay off such debts.

It will also apply to some people given a section 10 order, who are found guilty, but not convicted. It will not apply to section 10 orders where the court dismisses the charge, except where the offence is punishable by imprisonment.

“Any offender who says they can’t afford this levy, can apply to pay by instalments. Some may also apply to work off their debt through a Work and Development Order,” Mr Smith said.

“It’s a sound idea for offenders to be asked to contribute towards the cost of justice, but safeguards will protect vulnerable individuals.”

The levy will be reviewed after 12 months of operation.

**Media Contact: Geesche Jacobsen 0467 737 920**