

New rules for vehicles left in public

Why are the new laws necessary?

The number of vehicles, including trailers, on our roads and in our neighbourhoods is increasing as they provide us with independence, freedom, flexibility, enjoyment, and many other benefits. However, if not managed properly, they can result in a safety risk or obstruction to road users or pedestrians and become an amenity issue impacting on the environment and enjoyment of our public spaces by all.

The NSW Government has introduced new laws – the *Public Spaces (Unattended Property) Act 2021* and regulations – that put accountability firmly on those responsible to do the right thing and remove their property quickly from public land.





How does it work?

Councils and other public land authorities may notify the owner that their vehicle is causing a safety risk or an obstruction or has been left unattended in one place for too long, including boat trailers, other trailers and caravans.

Once notified, the owner must respond and move the vehicle within the following risk-based timeframes:

- **immediately** if causing an obstruction or safety risk
- **3 days** if unregistered, or registered but unable to be legally driven (e.g. due to damage), and left unattended in one place for more than **15 days**
- **15 days** if registered and left unattended in one place for more than **28 days**.

If these timeframes are not met, the council or public land authority may:

- move the vehicle causing a safety risk or an obstruction to a safer place in the same general area, or
- take possession of the vehicle and move the vehicle to a place of storage, and
- issue a fine.

Fines of **\$660** will apply for leaving a vehicle unattended. Higher court-imposed penalties may apply.

Have an issue with an unattended or unregistered vehicle?

Contact your local council or the public land authority.

Authorities have strong powers to hold those responsible for property left unattended in public accountable, to remove their property from public land within risk-based timeframes.

Responsible ownership

Under the new Act, the onus is on individuals to better manage their own vehicles, supporting the Government's commitment to keep public spaces safe and accessible for the community. This means owners must:

- take responsibility for their vehicles, including trailers,
- always follow NSW road safety and other relevant laws, and
- always park vehicles safely and in permitted locations.

Where to get more information

Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure
Office of Local Government

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