



Fact Sheet 13: Sleeping in your car

It is not illegal for you to sleep in your car, even for long periods of time.

Police may speak to you to work out whether you need some support from a service (for example, a service to help you obtain emergency housing), and help you to obtain that support.

There are only limited circumstances in which police may ask you to move your car.

Camping or keeping caravans is not allowed in certain areas in the ACT.

1. Not illegal to sleep in your car

It is not illegal for you to sleep or live in your car. If you are not causing a disturbance and are legally parked on a public road then the police are NOT required to move you on.

When can you be asked to move on? If, by sleeping in your car, you are reasonably causing someone to fear for their safety, the police may ask you to move on. For example, if you are parked near a home, and the person inside the home reasonably fears for their safety, then police may request you to find an alternate location, but they do not have to.

2. Camping and caravans

In the ACT it is illegal to 'camp' or keep a caravan in the following areas:

- A lake area at night. The maximum fine for doing so is **\$4,800**.
- On unleased territory land (public places and roads in the ACT) without a permit. The maximum fine for doing so is **\$3200**.

3. What would the Police do to help?

If you have to sleep or live in your car, you are experiencing a serious housing problem, Police may see if you need support from one or more services.

4. Where can I seek help?

- Call OneLink on 1800 176 468. This service manages all emergency accommodation in Canberra. The call is free from a landline.
- Call Street Law on 6218 7900 or drop in (21 Barry Drive, Turner). We are a free legal service for people who are experiencing or at risk of homelessness. We can refer you to the right support service.