

Australian Capital Territory

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Australian Capital Territory

Confiscation of Criminal Assets (Unexplained Wealth) Amendment Act 2020

An Act to amend the [Confiscation of Criminal Assets Act 2003](http://www.legislation.act.gov.au/a/2003-8" \o "A2003-8)

The Legislative Assembly for the Australian Capital Territory enacts as follows:

1 Name of Act

This Act is the *Confiscation of Criminal Assets (Unexplained Wealth) Amendment Act 2020*.

2 Commencement

This Act commences on a day fixed by the Minister by written notice.

Note 1 The naming and commencement provisions automatically commence on the notification day (see [Legislation Act](http://www.legislation.act.gov.au/a/2001-14), s 75 (1)).

Note 2 A single day or time may be fixed, or different days or times may be fixed, for the commencement of different provisions (see [Legislation Act](http://www.legislation.act.gov.au/a/2001-14), s 77 (1)).

Note 3 If a provision has not commenced within 6 months beginning on the notification day, it automatically commences on the first day after that period (see [Legislation Act](http://www.legislation.act.gov.au/a/2001-14), s 79).

3 Legislation amended

This Act amends the [Confiscation of Criminal Assets Act 2003](http://www.legislation.act.gov.au/a/2003-8).

4 Purposes of Act  
New section 3 (da)

insert

(da) to deprive a person of any unexplained wealth derived from serious criminal activity;

5 General overview  
Section 9, note 1

substitute

Note 1 Restraining orders

A court may make an order (a restraining order) preventing the disposal or other dealing with property. A restraining order may also be made to secure a property for payment of an amount that is the value of the person’s unexplained wealth (see note 3A) or the payment of a penalty order (see note 4).

Property may be restrained even though it is not the offender’s property.

6 Section 9, new note

insert

Note 3A Unexplained wealth orders

A court may, if the court is not satisfied that all or part of a person’s wealth is not derived from serious criminal activity, make an order (an unexplained wealth order) ordering the payment to the Territory of an amount assessed by the court as the value of the person’s unexplained wealth.

7 New sections 11A to 11C

insert

11A Meaning of total wealth

(1) In this Act:

total wealth, of a person to whom a proceeding for an unexplained wealth order relates, is the sum of all of the values of the person’s wealth.

(2) In deciding the values of a person’s wealth—

(a) the value of property expended, consumed, disposed of, or for any other reason no longer available is the greater of—

(i) the value of the property at the time it was acquired; and

(ii) the value of the property immediately before expended, consumed, disposed of, or becoming unavailable; and

(b) the value of any other property is the greater of—

(i) the value of the property at the time it was acquired; and

(ii) the value of the property on the day that the application for the unexplained wealth order was made.

11B Meaning of wealth

In this Act:

wealth, of a person—

(a) means property that is or at any time was—

(i) owned by the person; or

(ii) under the effective control of the person; or

(iii) expended, consumed or disposed of by the person; and

Examples—property disposed of by the person

1 property sold or traded

2 property transferred as a gift

3 money spent

(b) includes property owned, effectively controlled, expended, consumed or disposed of by the person before the commencement of this section and whether in or outside the ACT.

11C Meaning of serious criminal activity

(1) In this Act:

serious criminal activity means conduct by any person which, at the time of the conduct, was a serious offence.

(2) To remove any doubt, conduct is serious criminal activity—

(a) whether or not charges for a serious offence have been laid against a person for the conduct; or

(b) if charges for a serious offence have been laid against a person— whether or not the person—

(i) has been tried for the offence; or

(ii) has been acquitted, found guilty or convicted of the offences; or

(iii) has had a conviction for the offences quashed.

8 Meaning of offence and of particular kinds of offences  
Section 13 (2), definition of serious offence

substitute

serious offence—

(a) generally—means any of the following:

(i) an offence punishable by imprisonment for 5 years or longer;

(ii) an offence against the [Work Health and Safety Act 2011](http://www.legislation.act.gov.au/a/2011-35), section 31 (1);

(iii) any other offence prescribed by regulation; and

(b) for an unexplained wealth provision—includes a schedule offence and any Commonwealth or State offence that corresponds to a schedule offence.

Note State includes the Northern Territory (see [Legislation Act](http://www.legislation.act.gov.au/a/2001-14), dict, pt 1).

9 New section 13 (4)

insert

(4) In this section:

schedule offence—see the [Crimes (Sentencing) Act 2005](http://www.legislation.act.gov.au/a/2005-58), section 61B.

10 Meaning of effective control of property  
Section 14 (3) (b), except notes

substitute

(b) the person disposed of the property without sufficient consideration to someone else—

(i) if the property is the subject of an application for an unexplained wealth restraining order or an unexplained wealth order—at any time; or

(ii) if the property is associated with any other confiscation proceeding—within 6 years before or after the commission of the offence to which the application relates.

11 Meaning of restraining order  
Section 19

omit

or section 31 (Restraining orders over other property—making)

substitute

, section 31 (Restraining orders over other property—making) or section 32A (Unexplained wealth restraining orders—making)

12 New section 21A

insert

21A Meaning of unexplained wealth restraining order

In this Act:

unexplained wealth restraining order means a restraining order made under section 32A.

13 Restraining orders—purposes  
Section 22, note

substitute

(e) to satisfy an unexplained wealth order.

Note Pt 5 deals with forfeiture, pt 7 deals with penalty orders and pt 7A deals with unexplained wealth orders.

14 Restraining orders over other property—application  
Section 26 (6) (d)

substitute

(d) this section does not apply to an application for—

(i) a restraining order over unclaimed tainted property; or

(ii) an unexplained wealth restraining order.

15 New section 26A

insert

26A Unexplained wealth restraining orders—application

(1) The DPP may apply to a relevant court for an unexplained wealth restraining order over any of the following:

(a) stated property of a person;

(b) stated property of a person and all other property of the person (including property acquired after the making of the order);

(c) all property of a person (including property acquired after the making of the order);

(d) all property of a person (including property acquired after the making of the order) other than stated property.

(2) The application must state the following:

(a) that the application is for an unexplained wealth restraining order;

(b) the person in relation to whom the order is sought;

(c) any other person whose property the application relates to;

(d) the property sought to be restrained (including whether it is the property of that person or someone else).

(3) The application must be supported by an affidavit under section 29A.

16 Restraining orders—time for making certain applications  
New section 27 (1) (c)

insert

(c) an unexplained wealth restraining order.

17 New section 29A

insert

29A Unexplained wealth restraining order—affidavit supporting application

(1) An affidavit by a police officer supporting an application under section 26A for an unexplained wealth restraining order must state that the police officer suspects that—

(a) a person’s total wealth exceeds the value of the person’s wealth that was lawfully acquired; and

(b) the whole or any part of the person’s wealth was derived from serious criminal activity.

Note Derived includes realised (see s 12).

(2) Subsection (1) (b) does not require the police officer to specify in the affidavit a particular offence for serious criminal activity, and it is sufficient if the police officer suspects and the affidavit describes the nature of the activity in general terms.

(3) The affidavit must state, for the property mentioned in the application, or for each stated part of the property—

(a) that the officer suspects that the property is either the property of the person in relation to whom the order is sought or the property of someone else; and

(b) for property that the officer suspects is the property of someone else—

(i) that the officer suspects that the property is tainted property; or

(ii) that the officer suspects that the property is subject to the effective control of the person in relation to whom the order is sought.

(4) The affidavit must state that the police officer believes that the property sought to be restrained may be required to satisfy an unexplained wealth order.

(5) The affidavit must state the grounds for each belief or suspicion of the police officer stated in the affidavit.

18 New section 32A

insert

32A Unexplained wealth restraining order—making

(1) This section applies if an application is made under section 26A to a relevant court for an unexplained wealth restraining order.

(2) The relevant court must make an unexplained wealth restraining order over the property to which the application relates if, having regard to the police officer’s affidavit supporting the application and any other evidence before the court, the court is satisfied there are reasonable grounds for the officer’s suspicions stated in the affidavit.

(3) The restraining order may direct the public trustee and guardian to take control of the restrained property.

19 Payment of living and business expenses from restrained property  
Section 37 (1), new note

insert

Note 2 For the meaning of dependant, see dict.

20 Section 37 (2)

substitute

(2) However, the court must not allow expenses to be met out of restrained property unless—

(a) the person satisfies the court that—

(i) the expenses are reasonable; and

(ii) the expenses are necessary to avoid undue hardship to the person or the person’s dependants; and

(iii) the expenses cannot be met out of property of the person not subject to a restraining order; and

(b) the court is satisfied that any property to be released from restraint for the expenses does not have evidentiary value in any criminal proceeding; and

(c) if the restrained property includes tainted property—the court is satisfied that—

(i) the tainted property is not required to meet the expenses; or

(ii) if the tainted property is required to meet the expenses—it is just and equitable for the tainted property to meet the expenses.

(2A) When deciding whether expenses are reasonable, or necessary to avoid undue hardship, the court must take into account that—

(a) a person should be able to—

(i) satisfy the person’s essential physical and psychological needs; and

(ii) have a minimum standard of living that is neither meagre nor luxurious; and

(iii) participate in the life of the person’s community; and

(iv) have nutritious food, access to transport or personal transportation, appropriate clothing for the place where the person lives, furniture and essential appliances; and

(v) have equipment to participate in ordinary leisure activities; and

(b) the purpose of allowing living and business expenses is not to avoid every hardship but only undue hardship to the person or the person’s dependants.

(2B) When determining undue hardship, the court must as far as practicable having regard to the minimum standard of living mentioned in subsection (2A) (a) (ii), not take into account hardship arising from the loss of a previous standard of living to the extent that the previous standard of living was likely to have been the result of the commission of an offence, a material advantage derived from an offence or unexplained wealth.

(2C) For subsection (2) (b), the court must assume the property does not have evidentiary value unless the contrary is proved.

21 Section 37 (3) (a)

omit

subsection (2) (a) or (b)

substitute

subsection (2) (a) (i) or (ii)

22 Section 37 (5)

omit

23 Payment of certain legal expenses from restrained property  
Section 38 (2) (c) (iv)

substitute

(iv) any property to be released from restraint for the expenses does not have evidentiary value in any criminal proceeding; and

24 New section 38 (2) (d)

insert

(d) if the restrained property includes tainted property—the court is satisfied that—

(i) the tainted property is not required to meet the legal expenses; or

(ii) if the tainted property is required to meet the expenses—it is just and equitable for the tainted property to meet the expenses.

25 New section 38 (2A)

insert

(2A) For subsection (2) (c) (iv), the court must assume the property does not have evidentiary value unless the contrary is proved.

26 New section 48A

insert

48A When unexplained wealth restraining order ends

(1) An unexplained wealth restraining order ends if—

(a) no application for an unexplained wealth order has been made in relation to the person to whom the restraining order relates within 6 weeks after the restraining order was made; or

(b) an unexplained wealth order was applied for, the court refused to make the order and 1 of the following applies:

(i) the time for an appeal against the refusal has ended without an appeal being lodged;

(ii) an appeal against the refusal has lapsed;

(iii) an appeal against the refusal has been dismissed and finally disposed of.

(2) An unexplained wealth restraining order also ends if—

(a) an application for an unexplained wealth order was made within 6 weeks after the restraining order was made; and

(b) the court made the unexplained wealth order; and

(c) either—

(i) the unexplained wealth order has been complied with; or

(ii) an appeal against the unexplained wealth order has been upheld and finally disposed of.

27 New part 7A

insert

Part 7A Unexplained wealth orders

Division 7A.1 General

98A Meaning of unexplained wealth order

In this Act:

unexplained wealth order means an order under this part for the payment by a person of an amount assessed by a court, in accordance with section 98E, as the value of the person’s unexplained wealth.

Division 7A.2 Making unexplained wealth orders

98B Unexplained wealth orders—application

The DPP may apply to a relevant court for an unexplained wealth order in relation to a person.

98C Unexplained wealth order—affidavit supporting application

(1) If an unexplained wealth restraining order has not been made in relation to a person the subject of an application under section 98B, an affidavit by a police officer supporting the application for an unexplained wealth order against the person must state that the police officer suspects that—

(a) a person’s total wealth exceeds the value of the person’s wealth that was lawfully acquired; and

(b) the whole or any part of the person’s wealth was derived from serious criminal activity.

Note Derived includes realised (see s 12).

(2) Subsection (1) (b) does not require the police officer to specify in the affidavit a particular offence for serious criminal activity, and it is sufficient if the police officer suspects and the affidavit describes the nature of the activity in general terms.

(3) The affidavit must state, for the property mentioned in the application, or for each stated part of the property—

(a) that the officer suspects that the property is either the property of the person in relation to whom the order is sought or the property of someone else; and

(b) for property that the officer suspects is the property of someone else—

(i) that the officer suspects that the property is tainted property; or

(ii) that the officer suspects that the property is subject to the effective control of the person in relation to whom the order is sought.

(4) The affidavit must state the grounds for each belief or suspicion of the police officer stated in the affidavit.

98D Unexplained wealth orders—making

(1) On application under section 98B, the relevant court must make an unexplained wealth order against a person if the court is not satisfied that the whole or any part of the person’s wealth was not derived from serious criminal activity.

(2) However, the court may refuse to make an unexplained wealth order or may reduce the amount that would otherwise be payable as assessed, if the court, having regard to the purposes of this Act, thinks it is in the public interest to do so.

(3) A decision of the court to refuse to make an unexplained wealth order or to reduce an amount that would otherwise be payable as assessed is not in the public interest if based only on 1 or more of the following:

(a) a specific serious offence has not been particularised or proved to be associated with the person’s unexplained wealth;

(b) the person or the person’s dependants will not have the same standard of living as a result of the order or reduction.

(4) For subsection (1), wealth may be derived before the commencement of this section.

(5) In making an unexplained wealth order, the relevant court must not order the person to pay the Territory an amount that is more than the person’s unexplained wealth assessed under section 98E.

Note Derived includes realised (see s 12).

98E Unexplained wealth orders—assessment of unexplained wealth

(1) This section applies for the purpose of making an assessment of the unexplained wealth of a person against whom an unexplained wealth order is made.

(2) The unexplained wealth, of a person, is the amount that in the opinion of a relevant court is—

(a) the difference between—

(i) the person’s total wealth; and

(ii) the sum of the values of the property that the court is satisfied, on the balance of probabilities, was not derived from serious criminal activity; and

(b) less an amount equal to whichever of the following applies to the person:

(i) the value of any property the person forfeited under a forfeiture order;

Note A registered interstate forfeiture order is taken to be a forfeiture order under this Act (see s 139).

(ii) the sum of any amounts payable by the person under a penalty order or an interstate penalty order.

(3) In a proceeding against a person for an unexplained wealth order, the burden of proof is on the person to prove that—

(a) the person’s wealth was not derived from serious criminal activity; and

(b) an order mentioned in subsection (2) (b) applies to the person.

(4) When working out the value of property for this section, the value is—

(a) for wealth that has been consumed or otherwise disposed of—the greater of—

(i) the value at the time the wealth was acquired; and

(ii) the value immediately before the wealth was consumed or disposed of; or

(b) in any other case—the greater of—

(i) the value at the time the wealth was acquired; and

(ii) the value at the time the application for the unexplained wealth order was made.

(5) In assessing the unexplained wealth of a person, the relevant court is not required to consider any wealth of which the DPP has not provided evidence.

98F Unexplained wealth orders—hardship relief

(1) A relevant court making an unexplained wealth order in relation to a person may make another order directing the Territory, once the unexplained wealth order is fully satisfied, to pay an amount (a relief amount) decided by the court to a dependant of the person if the court is satisfied that—

(a) the unexplained wealth order would cause undue hardship to the dependant; and

(b) the amount would relieve the hardship; and

(c) if the dependant is at least 18 years old—the dependant had no knowledge of the person’s conduct that is the subject of the unexplained wealth order.

(2) When deciding the relief amount, the court—

(a) must only allow an amount to assist the dependant to avoid undue hardship for a period in which the dependant could not reasonably be expected to meet the dependant’s reasonable living expenses; and

(b) must as far as practicable, having regard to the minimum standard of living mentioned in section 37 (2A) (a) (ii), when determining undue hardship not take into account hardship arising from the loss of a previous standard of living of the dependant to the extent that the previous standard of living was likely to have been the result of unexplained wealth.

(3) An amount decided by the court must not be more than the value of the person’s unexplained wealth.

(4) An order under this section may relate to more than 1 of the person’s dependants.

Note  For the meaning of dependant, see dict.

Division 7A.3 Satisfaction of unexplained wealth order

98G Creation of unexplained wealth charge over restrained property

(1) This section applies if, in relation to a person—

(a) a restraining order is made; and

(b) an unexplained wealth order is made.

(2) On the making of the later of the orders, all of the restrained property is automatically charged to secure the payment to the Territory of the amount of the unexplained wealth order.

Note 1 An interstate unexplained wealth order is taken to be an unexplained wealth order under this Act (see s 139).

Note 2 If an unexplained wealth order is over restrained property that may be recorded in a statutory property register, details of the restraining order may be recorded in the register under s 50.

(3) If the restraining order is varied after the unexplained wealth order is made to add more property, the additional property is also automatically charged to secure payment to the Territory of the amount of the unexplained wealth order.

(4) A charge on property created by this section (an unexplained wealth charge)—

(a) is subject to every encumbrance on the property that came into existence before the charge and that would have priority over the charge if this subsection had not been enacted; and

(b) has priority over all other encumbrances; and

(c) is a statutory interest of a kind to which the [Personal Property Securities Act 2009](https://www.legislation.gov.au/Series/C2009A00130) (Cwlth), section 73 (2) applies; and

(d) is not affected by any change in the ownership of the property unless the change in ownership ends the unexplained wealth charge under section 98H (c) or (d).

98H When unexplained wealth charge over property ends

An unexplained wealth charge over property ends when the earliest of the following events happens:

(a) the unexplained wealth order for which the charge was created ends;

Note For when an unexplained wealth order ends, see s 98L.

(b) the restraining order over the property ends;

Note For when restraining orders end, see s 48A.

(c) the property is sold, or otherwise disposed of, with the consent of—

(i) the relevant court that made the unexplained wealth order; or

(ii) if a trustee (including the public trustee and guardian) controls the property—the trustee;

(d) the property is sold to a purchaser who—

(i) buys the property honestly and for sufficient consideration; and

(ii) at the time of the purchase, has no notice of the charge.

98I Unexplained wealth orders—enforceable as judgment debt

The amount ordered to be paid by a relevant court under an unexplained wealth order is a judgment debt owing to the Territory.

Note Any restrained property is automatically charged with the amount of the unexplained wealth order, and may be sold to satisfy the order (see s 98G).

98J Power to satisfy unexplained wealth order

(1) An unexplained wealth order authorises the public trustee and guardian to satisfy the order out of any property restrained for the order (including any property that becomes restrained after the order is made).

Note 1 An amount received by the public trustee and guardian to satisfy the unexplained wealth order must be paid into the confiscated assets trust fund (see s 131).

Note 2 An interstate unexplained wealth order is taken to be an unexplained wealth order under this Act (see s 139).

(2) To satisfy the unexplained wealth order, the public trustee and guardian may sell or otherwise dispose of restrained property that is not money in any way the public trustee and guardian considers appropriate.

Note The money realised by the public trustee and guardian from the disposal of property must be paid into the confiscated assets trust fund (see s 131 and dict, def fully satisfied, par (b)).

(3) However, the public trustee and guardian must not sell or otherwise dispose of restrained property to satisfy the order until all confiscation proceedings, including forfeiture proceedings, in relation to the property have been finalised.

Note 1 For the meaning of confiscation proceedings, see s 236.

Note 2 For when confiscation and criminal proceedings are finalised, see s 18.

(4) The unexplained wealth order also authorises the public trustee and guardian or anyone else named in the order (an authorised agent) to sign any instrument necessary or convenient for the disposal of restrained property.

(5) An instrument signed by an authorised agent has the same effect as if it were signed by the person who owned the property before it was disposed of.

98K Public trustee and guardian to repay any amount surplus to satisfying unexplained wealth order

If the amounts paid into the trust fund to satisfy an unexplained wealth order are more than is required to fully satisfy the order, the public trustee and guardian must pay the surplus amount to the person against whom the order was made.

Division 7A.4 End of unexplained wealth order

98L When unexplained wealth order ends

An unexplained wealth order ends if—

(a) the order is reversed or set aside on appeal; or

(b) the order is fully satisfied.

Note For the meaning of fully satisfied, see dict.

28 Payments into trust fund  
New section 131 (1) (da)

insert

(da) amounts received, or amounts raised from the sale of property, to satisfy unexplained wealth orders, including any income earned from those amounts;

29 Interstate restraining and forfeiture orders etc—registration  
New section 137 (1) (d)

insert

(d) an interstate unexplained wealth order expressly applies to property in the ACT.

30 Interstate restraining and forfeiture orders etc—interim registration  
Section 138 (1)

omit

, interstate automatic forfeiture decision or interstate forfeiture order or

substitute

, interstate automatic forfeiture decision, interstate forfeiture order, interstate unexplained wealth order or

31 Interstate restraining and forfeiture orders etc—effect of registration  
New section 139 (4A)

insert

(4A) For this Act, a registered interstate unexplained wealth order is taken to be an unexplained wealth order under this Act.

32 Interstate restraining and forfeiture orders etc—ending of registration  
Section 140

omit

, automatic forfeiture decision or forfeiture order

substitute

, automatic forfeiture decision, forfeiture order or unexplained wealth order

33 Interstate restraining and forfeiture orders etc—cancellation of registration  
Section 141 (1)

omit

, interstate automatic forfeiture decision or interstate forfeiture order

substitute

, interstate automatic forfeiture decision, interstate forfeiture order or interstate unexplained wealth order

34 Section 141 (2)

omit

, interstate automatic forfeiture decision or interstate forfeiture order

substitute

, interstate automatic forfeiture decision, interstate forfeiture order or interstate unexplained wealth order

35 Meaning of confiscation proceeding  
New section 236 (1) (ha)

insert

(ha) an unexplained wealth order;

36 New section 258A

insert

258A Review of unexplained wealth provisions

(1) The Minister must—

(a) review the operation and effectiveness of the unexplained wealth provisions of this Act and any other territory law relating to the provisions, as soon as practicable after the end of 1 year after this section commences; and

(b) present a report of the review to the Legislative Assembly before the end of the section’s 2nd year of operation.

(2) This section expires 3 years after the day it commences.

Note For the meaning of unexplained wealth provision, see dict.

37 Dictionary, new definition of dependant

insert

dependant, of a person, means—

(a) the person’s domestic partner; or

(b) the person’s child, or a member of the person’s household, who depends on the person for support.

38 Dictionary, definition of fully satisfied

substitute

fully satisfied—a forfeiture order, penalty order, unexplained wealth order or an automatic forfeiture of property, is fully satisfied when—

(a) for an automatic forfeiture of property or a forfeiture order—the property that is the subject of the automatic forfeiture or order has vested in law in the Territory and the public trustee and guardian has taken control of the property; and

(b) for a penalty order or unexplained wealth order—the amount of the order has been paid to, or recovered by, the Territory or realised by the public trustee and guardian from the disposal of property.

39 Dictionary, new definition of interstate unexplained wealth order

insert

interstate unexplained wealth order means a corresponding law order prescribed by regulation for this definition.

40 Dictionary, new definition of serious criminal activity

insert

serious criminal activity—see section 11C.

41 Dictionary, new definition of total wealth

insert

total wealth, of a person to whom a proceeding for an unexplained wealth order relates—see section 11A.

42 Dictionary, new definitions

insert

unexplained wealth charge—see section 98G (4).

unexplained wealth order—see section 98A.

unexplained wealth provision means the following:

(a) section 32A;

(b) section 98D;

(c) a provision of this Act to the extent that it relates to a provision mentioned in paragraph (a) or (b).

Examples—par (c)

 section 3 (da)

 section 26A

 section 98E

unexplained wealth restraining order—see section 21A.

43 Dictionary, new definition of wealth

insert

wealth, of a person—see section 11B.

Endnotes

1 Presentation speech

Presentation speech made in the Legislative Assembly on 20 February 2020.

2 Notification

Notified under the [Legislation Act](http://www.legislation.act.gov.au/a/2001-14) on 29 July 2020.

3 Republications of amended laws

For the latest republication of amended laws, see [www.legislation.act.gov.au](http://www.legislation.act.gov.au/).

I certify that the above is a true copy of the Confiscation of Criminal Assets (Unexplained Wealth) Amendment Bill 2020, which was passed by the Legislative Assembly on 23 July 2020.

Clerk of the Legislative Assembly

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