

YOU CAN TALK TO A
LAWYER FOR FREE AT
TASMANIA LEGAL AID

To get free legal information call **1300 366 611** or use the Legal Talk chat from the bottom right-hand corner of our website. Legal Talk and our phone lines are available Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm.

A lawyer can help with:

- advice if you have been charged with an offence
- speaking to the Court on your behalf.

? What does the law say is “dishonest”?

Some of the most common types of dishonesty offences committed by young people are stealing by shoplifting, stealing motor-vehicles, stealing by finding and burglary.

? What is shoplifting?

Shoplifting is a form of stealing. Generally it is someone going into a store and taking things without permission. Shoplifting can be done in a number of ways, sometimes people take an item without paying for it at all, without paying the correct price for the item or by paying for only some of the items that they have taken.



? Do I have to leave the store with the item to be guilty?

You don't have to leave the store with the item for you to be guilty of stealing, it is enough that you were clearly planning on taking it but caught before you were able to. It is not a defence to say you decided not to because you were caught.



? What is motor-vehicle stealing?

If you take or use a car without the consent of the owner you are committing the offences of motor vehicle stealing. It doesn't matter that you are only intending to drive it around for a while and then return it.

? Does it matter that I'm not driving the stolen car?

You will still be guilty of motor-vehicle stealing even if you are only a passenger if you are aware that the car is stolen. This is because you are using the car by being driven around in it. If a friend offers to pick you up in a car that is stolen you should not accept as you may be found guilty of stealing the car.

? **Is it still stealing if I find something and keep it?**

Yes, if you find something and you believe you would be able to return it to its owner and you don't, you will be guilty of stealing.

It is important if you find something that you try to return it to the person who owns it or take it to the police station.

? **How can I avoid getting in trouble if I find something?**

If you find something like money or other goods you need to take them to the Police Station or you will be guilty of an offence.

? **If I take something to the Police Station will they keep it?**

If you take it to a Police Station and it is not claimed within 3 months you can ask for it to be returned to you. If the item you have found does not contain personal information (for example, a phone or wallet) and isn't illegal to have you can ask for it to be returned to you as the person who found it and it becomes your property.

? **What is burglary?**

Burglary is when you go into someone else's building or vehicle intending to commit a crime inside. This can be as simple as opening someone's car door and taking the small change from inside the car.

Burglary can also cover breaking into a building to do graffiti or break windows.

It is important that you don't go inside other people's properties and if you do that you don't damage that property