



Youthlaw
Young People and fines Survey
Overview of results

296 responses to survey between ages of 10 and 25 years.

142 (48%) have not received any fines

- 130 attending secondary school
- 108 under 17 years

144/296 survey participants (49%) have received a fine in Victoria

- 63% female and 36% male
- 65% respondents parents born in Australia, 7.5% born in African countries
- Coming from mix of suburbs: 11% from inner city suburbs, 28% northern suburbs, 16.5% eastern suburbs, 12.5% southern and western suburbs and 19% from rural and regional areas
- 1/3 on Centrelink benefits, over half of these between ages of 18 and 21
- 23.5% under 18 years (just under ¼) with 2% under 15 years
- 67.3% between 19 and 24 years (just over 2/3)
- 9% were 25 years plus

Fine offences (option to tick multiple offences)

133 responded to this question with a total of 323 fines

1. Not having a valid ticket/ myki on public transportation (85)(26.3%)
2. Not having my concession card (52) (16%)
3. Feet on seat (42) (13%)
4. Parking/driving/speeding related (27) (8.4%)
5. Offensive language/ behaviour/ disturbing the peace (21) (6.5%)
6. Smoking in a prohibited place (21) (6.5%)
7. Drinking alcohol / having open alcohol on public transport (21) (6.5%)
8. Not wearing a bike helmet (17) (5.3%)
9. Shop theft (14) (4.3%)
10. Not obeying a direction to "move on" (13) (4%)
11. Drunk in public (10) (3%)
12. Loitering (10) (3%)
13. Riding a bike on platform (9)
14. Spray /marker can on/or near PT (6)
15. Begging (4)
16. Other (3)
17. Littering (2)
18. Busking (1)

Who issued fines

- 73.9% of people who received fine/s received them from PTAO,
- 44% Vic Pol,
- 14.2% PSO and

- 11.9 were not sure.

Warnings/cautions

58.9% (81/137) had not received a warning/caution for an offence.

For the 41% (56/137) who had received a warning it was predominantly for the 3 key offences:

1. for not having a valid ticket
2. not having a concession card
3. feet on seat.

Number s of fines and amounts

74.3% (136) had received 0-3 fines in the last year

¼ had received 4 or more fines in the last year, 12% with 4-7 fines and 12% with 10 fines or more

59.7% (134) had received fines equating to a maximum of \$500.

¼ have at least \$1000 worth of fines with 10.5% having fines over \$5000

Capacity to pay fine

46.4% (127) of young people could not pay the full fine

72/113 (64%) believed they would be more likely to pay if the fine was reduced

69.3% did not think it was reasonable to receive their most recent fine as they felt what they had done was an honest mistake (not having a concession card)

84/120 respondents said that having a fine added stress to their life, with nearly ¼ having a large debt they can't pay off .

Treatment by officers

Just over 50% of people who had received a fine had a negative interaction with police/PTAO/PSO, they believed they were treated either rudely (38.8%) (47) or aggressively (12.4% (14)).

While just under 50% of people who had received a fine had a positive interaction with police/PTAO/PSO. So they believed they were treated either professionally (30.6% (37) or respectfully (18.2% (22)).

Recommendations

1. Many young people cannot afford to pay the fines. Fines should be reduced to take into account a young person's capacity to pay.
2. Young people entitlement to a warning for a first offence should be formalised in Victoria Police manuals and Department of Transport guidelines.
3. Enforcement officers to receive training in working with young people to help promote consistent, respectful and fair treatment of all young people.