

INTENT

Part 10 of the *Local Government Regulation 2012*, empowers Council to grant a concession in certain circumstances.

POLICY STATEMENT

The intent of this policy is to set the principles which Council will use when applying rate concessions to eligible pensioners comprising:

- Pensioner Eligibility
- Receipt of an application in the prescribed form
- Ownership or Life Tenancy(*) of a property for which a remission is requested
- Residency of the property for which a remission is requested

An interpretation of provisions of legislation is reflected in sections 119 to 122 of the *Local Government Regulation 2012*

POLICY OBJECTIVES

Council's objective is to provide processes that will enable pensioners to apply for a concession on their rates to alleviate the burden of rates and charges levied on their principal place of residence.

POLICY PRINCIPLES

- 1.1 Under this policy pensioners are entitled to a rates concession, determined each year by Council during budget preparations.
- 1.2 Criteria for granting pensioner rate concessions is based on the conditions specified by the Queensland State Government Pensioner Rate Subsidy Scheme as follows:
 - a. The applicant/s shall be the holder of a Queensland 'Pensioner Concession Card' issued by Services Australia (Centrelink), or a Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA) Health Card (All Conditions within Australia) or DVA Health Card (Totally & Permanently Incapacitated) issued by the Department of Veterans' Affairs.
 - b. The applicant/s shall either be the sole owner/s of the property, or life tenants in terms of a valid will, or part owners of a property in which case they may receive a rates concession equal to the portion of ownership. The applicant/s must be responsible for the payment of all or part of the property rates for the aforementioned property. **Note: A life tenancy can only be created by a valid will and is effective only after the death of a property owner, or by a Supreme or Family Court order.*
 - c. The property for which the rate concession is being requested must be the applicant/pensioner's freehold principal place of residence. The concession can be applied to an income producing property, provided

the applicant satisfies all of the other eligibility criteria. Applicants who, due to ill health or incapacitation, are living in a nursing home or who are temporarily living with relatives or friends, may qualify for the rate concession, provided the property remains non-income producing.

- 1.3 Confirmation of eligibility is ascertained through application and registration. A pensioner needs to submit an application for concession:
 - a) When applying for the subsidy for the first time, or
 - b) When Council needs to re-establish eligibility (eg: after having qualifying concession card re-granted, or after changing the address of the principal place of residence).
- 1.4 Council will comply with the provisions of the State Government Rates Subsidy Rebate Scheme when applying the Council Pensioner Rate Concession Policy
- 1.5 Council will comply with the provisions of the Services Australia Confirmation eServices Policy when applying Council's Pensioner Rate Concession policy.
- 1.6 Pensioner rebates will not be granted prior to the current billing period.

REFERENCES/ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS

Local Government Regulation 2012

Queensland State Government Pensioner Rate Subsidy Scheme Revenue Policy

Revenue Statement

Services Australia

DOCUMENT CONTROLS

This policy will be reviewed biennially or in response to changes in law or best practice.

POLICY OWNER

Manager Revenue