



Leased Management of Council Owned Housing - Council Policy

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Policy Owner	Facilities Manager
Link to Corporate Plan	Strategic Theme 2: Enriched Communities
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Related Legislation	<i>Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation Act 2008</i> <i>Queensland Government Benchmark for Affordable Housing Rents</i>
Related Documents	Western Downs Regional Council Local Laws

Policy Version	Approval Date	Adopted/Approved
1	16/01/2013	Ordinary Meeting of Council
2	17/08/2016	Ordinary Meeting of Council

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1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to coordinate the tenancy and property management of Western Downs Regional Council owned housing utilised as employee housing, caretaker housing and non-employee housing (this policy does not apply to community housing, Council owned community housing, or crisis housing).

1.1 Categories of Housing

The following categories have been created to define the purposes of Council owned housing -

1.1.2 *Employee Housing*

Housing that is owned by Council and has been set aside to accommodate employees in an effort to attract and retain staff with the necessary skills and/or qualifications to carry out a particular role.

1.1.3 *Caretaker Housing*

Housing that is located on or near a particular facility that accommodates a caretaker or similar who undertake a particular role associated with that facility; e.g. saleyards, swimming pools, showgrounds, water treatment plants.

1.1.4 *Non- Employee Housing*

Housing that has been set aside to attract and retain professionals in rural/remote communities that provide an essential service

1.2 Allocation of Housing

In order to ensure housing is allocated in a fair and un-biased fashion, the following guidelines have been established for each category of housing -

1.2.1 *Employee Housing*

Should an employee housing premises become available for rent, internal applications from existing Council employees shall be called to fill the vacancy. A three (3) person panel with membership as appointed by the Chief Executive Officer shall review applications and recommend a successful applicant.

This final decision shall be made by the Chief Executive Officer.

1.2.2 *Caretaker Housing*

A Caretaker Housing premises can only be allocated to an employee or contracted person who will undertake a particular role associated with that facility. The allocation of Caretaker Housing will be carried out in conjunction with the appointment of the employee or contracted person to that role. Where caretaker housing is no longer required to service a caretaker role the premises may be allocated to other employees.

The decision to allocate caretaker housing shall be made by the Chief Executive Officer.

1.2.3 *Non-Employee Housing*

The relevant State Government department will take out a lease on Council's property and will therefore determine who tenants non-employee housing set aside for the provision of essential professional services in rural/remote areas (e.g. doctor's residence).

This decision is to be ratified by the Chief Executive Officer.



2. TENANCY ARRANGEMENTS

2.1 All tenant/s residing in Council owned or leased property must comply with provisions of the *Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation Act 2008*.

2.1.2 It is the responsibility of both the tenant/s and the lessor that all legislative requirements are met when entering into an agreement to rent a Council property.

2.2 Ending Tenancy Agreements

2.2.1 Council may choose to end a Tenancy Agreement for any of the reasons as set out in *Section 277* of the *Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation Act 2008*.

2.2.2 Furthermore, Council reserves the right to end a Tenancy Agreement should the tenant cease employment with Council at any stage of that Tenancy Agreement. The tenant will be required to vacate the premises within two (2) weeks following the date they cease being an employee of Council.

2.3 Tenancy Agreement Periods

2.3.1 Council Owned Housing, Caretaker Housing, and Non-Employee Housing

In order to provide a more consistent approach, all tenant/s may be offered either a 6 month or 12 month option to extend their current Tenancy Agreement at the anniversary of the renewal of their current agreement.

2.4 Calculation of Rental Rates

The rate of rent to be charged for Employee Housing will be based on the benchmark for affordable housing rents being 30% of total gross household weekly income or market value rent, whichever is the lesser amount.

The amount of rent, if any, to be charged for Caretaker Housing or Non-Employee Housing set aside for the essential professional services in rural/remote areas will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis.

At the discretion of the Chief Executive Officer, the independently determined market value rental rate may be reduced to a more realistic amount if the weekly amount is deemed too excessive due to external influences such housing availability.

2.5 Rental Bonds

All new tenants must pay a rental bond as financial protection over the property. The bond amount is to be the equivalent of four (4) weeks rent and is payable to the Residential Tenancies Authority on the commencement of a tenancy.

2.6 Payment of Rent

Rent is payable by the tenant two weeks in advance by one of the following methods -

- Deduction from wage/salary of employee (preferred method)
- Direct debit
- CASH/EFT at any Western Downs Regional Council Customer Service Centre