

	<b>COUNCIL POLICY</b>	
	Pensioner Concession Council Policy	
	Policy Number	CP029
	Directorate	Organisational Services
	Owner	Ken Diehm, Chief Executive Officer
	Last Approved	26/06/2024
	Review Due	26/06/2025

## 1. PURPOSE

The objective of this policy is to establish guidelines for the granting of concessions to pensioners, in accordance with the *Local Government Regulation 2012* section 120 (1) (a).

## 2. SCOPE

This policy applies to those ratepayers who are pensioners and who are eligible for the State Government pensioner concession. The concession will apply to pensioners who are in receipt of a pension from the Commonwealth Government, and who comply with the guidelines established by the Queensland Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services for the State Government Rate Subsidy Scheme.

## 3. HEAD OF POWER

*Local Government Act 2009*  
*Local Government Regulation 2012*

## 4. POLICY STATEMENT

### 4.1. Principles

Council intends to apply the following principles to the granting of concessions for rates and charges:

- equity - ensuring the fair and consistent application of lawful granting of concessions, without bias, taking account of all relevant considerations;
- transparency - openness in the processes involved;
- simplicity – making processes which are simple and cost effective to administer;
- consistency - by treating ratepayers with similar circumstances in the same manner;
- fiscal responsibility – ensuring Council meets its budgetary responsibilities;
- clarity - by providing meaningful information to enable ratepayers to clearly understand their responsibilities;
- flexibility - responding where possible to unforeseen changes in the local economy and providing a wide range of payment options;
- sustainability - revenue decisions support the financial strategies for the delivery of infrastructure and services identified in Council’s long term plan and corporate plan; and

- compassion - having regard to individual’s circumstances, particularly if experiencing hardship.

The pensioner concession will only apply to freehold land owned and occupied by the pensioner or freehold land occupied by the pensioner under a life tenancy.

Concessions will be granted in accordance with the following table:

Pension Rate	Single pensioner	Married or De Facto pensioner
Maximum level of concession per property	\$200 per annum	\$200 per annum

The maximum level of concession will apply only if all owners of the property are eligible to receive concession in accordance with this policy.

If all owners of the property are not eligible to receive concession in accordance with this policy then the amount of concession that will apply will be a percentage of the maximum concession that is equal to the percentage of eligible owners.

#### 4.2. Philosophy

Council recognises that certain classes of pensioners are restricted by a fixed income and should be afforded a concession in respect of rates and charges. The purpose of the concession is to support pensioners’ ability to reside in the Fraser Coast and provide some cost of living relief.

#### 4.3. Conditions of Pension Concession on Rates

1. An application must be made to Council in writing on the Fraser Coast Regional Council’s “Application for Pensioner Concession on Rates” Form together with sufficient evidence to Council’s satisfaction to prove conditions 2 to 8 below.
2. The applicant must be in receipt of a pension from the Commonwealth Government.
3. The applicant must be the holder of a current:
  - Queensland Pensioner Concession Card (issued by [Centrelink](#) or [Department of Veterans' Affairs](#))
  - Department of Veterans' Affairs Health Card for all conditions ([Gold Card](#))
4. The applicant must be the owner/s, either solely or jointly, of the property for which they are applying for a concession or have a life tenancy in relation to the property. For life tenancy, applicants are required to provide to Council a copy of a valid Will as evidence.
5. The applicant must comply with the guidelines established by the Queensland Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services for the State Government Rate Subsidy Scheme.
6. Property owned jointly, excluding married and de facto couples, will be subject to a pro-rata calculation of the concession based on the ratio of eligible pension concession owners to ineligible owners.
7. The property must be the applicant’s principal place of residence.

8. The address recorded with Centrelink **must be the same** as the address for which pension concession are being claimed.

Upon Council receiving a complying application with proof of eligibility as required by this policy, the entitlement to the concession will commence from either:

- the card start date shown on the applicant’s Pensioner Concession Card;
- the date the property becomes the applicant’s principal place of residence; or
- the start of the current rating period;

whichever is the later.

Council will verify pensioner eligibility with Centrelink / Department of Veterans Affairs annually.

Pensioners who receive a concession under this policy are required to advise Council if any of the below circumstances change:

1. are no longer eligible for the pension with Centrelink or Department of Veterans Affairs;
2. their pension number changes; or
3. the property is no longer their principal place of residence

Upon Council receiving advice that the ratepayer is no longer eligible to receive the concession, the concession will be removed from the start of the next rating period.

## 5. ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS

Application for Pensioner Concession on Rates – DOCS #3589028

## 6. REVIEW

This Policy will be reviewed when related legislation/documents are amended or replaced, other circumstances as determined from time to time by Council or at intervals of no more than one year.

### Version Control

Version Number	Key Changes	Approval Authority	Approval Date	Document Number
1-3	Draft Policy and reviews			3584752
4	New Policy – Budget 2018/19	Council	25/07/2018	3584752
5	Amendment - Budget 2019/20	Council	26/06/2019	3584752
6	Amendment - Budget 2020/21	Council	24/06/2020	3584752
7	Amendment - Budget 2021/22	Council	23/06/2021	3584752
8	Duplicate Amendment			3584752
9	Amendment - Budget 2022/23	Council	15/06/2022	3584752
10	Amendment – Ordinary Meeting No 6/23	Council	28/06/2023	3584752
11	Amendment – Ordinary Meeting No 6/24	Council	26/06/2024	3584752