

INTENT

The intent of this policy is to establish a clear and precise policy regarding ratepayers receiving Council Pension Concession Subsidy.

PURPOSE

In accordance with Section 1031-1035(a) a Local Government may grant a remission on a rate to Pensioners. Council recognises that special consideration must be given to the needs of those ratepayers in receipt of pension benefits and that this consideration should target those most in need in the community.

Provisions will apply in determining the eligibility of ratepayers for remissions on the General Rates levied. The Policy lays down the criteria upon which eligibility for concession is to be based and the administrative requirements with which applicants for concessions must comply.

PROVISIONS

Pensioners who are eligible must meet the following criteria:-

1. All applications for remission must be in writing on the prescribed form and contain a declaration as to the accuracy of the information contained therein.
2. If the property is in joint names, all applicants must produce the required information. Eligible Pensioners who are co-owners of an eligible property in conjunction with persons, who are not eligible pensioners, shall be entitled to pro-rata concession based on share of the property.
3. Proof of pension must be produced at time of application.
4. The property in respect of which the rates are levied must be the principle place of residence of the pensioner and the pensioner must actually reside on the property (i.e. a life tenant cannot reside in a nursing home and claim the subsidy, as may occur with ordinary home ownership);
5. The applicant/s must be the holder/s of a current Centrelink Queensland Pensioner Concession Card or a Veterans' Affairs Gold Card or Veterans' Affairs Pensioner Concession Card. The cards that do not qualify for a remission are Seniors Cards, Health Care Cards, Health Benefits Cards and Repatriation Health Cards for specific conditions.
6. Where a pensioner, for reasons of ill health or infirmity (e.g. poor health, feeble in body or health, physically weak, especially through age) resides some or all of the time in alternative accommodation such as a nursing home or similar type of accommodation (where personal care is available on site and provided as required) or with family or friends, the residence may be regarded as the 'principal place of residence' if it is not occupied on a paid tenancy basis during the absence of the approved pensioner owner/s';
7. Life Tenant/s under a Will with responsibilities to pay all rates and charges must produce a certified copy of the Will stating the applicant is a life tenant and responsible for paying of rates.
8. Once an application for remission is approved it shall remain in force from year to year with further renewal whilst the person remains owner/occupier of the property in question.
9. Where an applicant's circumstances alter it is incumbent upon the applicant to notify the Council. Council will conduct periodic audits to verify current entitlements.
10. In order to receive a concession, in the first rating period commencing 1st July in any year, Council must receive applications no later than 30th June. To receive concession in the second rating period commencing 1st January in any year Council must receive the application no later than 31st December.
11. Where Council receives an application after the commencement of a rating period, no concession shall apply until commencement of the next succeeding rating period. For ratepayers who are new eligible pensioners the concession may be considered.
12. Where a pensioner is receiving concession in respect of a property owned by that person and the person dies. Council concession will cease at the end of the rating period. When the property title is transferred under a will to a beneficiary who qualifies for Council concessions, that person will be granted concessions retrospectively from the end of the rating period after the date of death.