



RENT REVIEW POLICY

SPO22

Responsible Manager:	Executive Manager Housing Services
Heads of power:	<i>Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation Act 2008 (Qld)</i> Department of Housing and Public Works' <i>Community Housing Rent Policy for Indigenous Councils</i> Social Housing Policy PO12 Rent Policy SPO13
Authorised by:	Council
Authorised on:	November 2017
Implemented from:	November 2017
Last reviewed:	N/A
Review history:	N/A
To be reviewed on:	June 2019
Corporate Plan:	Environment

1. POLICY STATEMENT

- a) As a social housing provider under the *Housing Act 2003*, Torres Strait Island Regional Council (Council) shall conduct regular rent reviews or as determined by the Chief Executive Officer, in compliance with the *Housing Regulation 2003* and the Assistance Agreement with the Department of Housing and Public Works.
- b) Council will set out the review program across one whole calendar year, with all tenants having an annual rent review.
- c) Council will generally set the date of review on the anniversary of the start date of a tenancy.
- d) Tenants may request a re-assessment of their rent at any time because of a decrease of income or a change in household circumstances. Tenants must advise Council of the changes within 28 days of the changes occurring.
- e) Tenants must provide written evidence of any change in household circumstances, using Council forms – refer Rent Review Procedure SPO22-PR1.
- f) If the tenant provides the necessary evidence within 28 days of the document request, the rent is backdated to the date the change occurred.
- g) If the tenant provides the necessary evidence after the expiry of the 28 days period, the effective date of the reviewed rent (if deemed reviewable) shall be from the date the evidence is provided.
- h) Each rent assessment shall be electronically recorded, as an audit requirement.
- i) If the rent payable increases as the result of a rent review, two-month's written notice to tenants will be provided. Rent shall not be increased between rent reviews.
- j) Rent cannot be increased during a fixed term agreement unless it is stated in the tenancy agreement along with the amount.

Minimum rent

- a) Tenants are required to pay the full amount of rent assessed. The exception being when Council charges the tenant minimum rent or a reduced rent during the review when:
 - i. tenant is in severe economic difficulty;
 - ii. tenant is in a temporary absence due to incarceration, domestic violence, hospitalisation or rehabilitation.
- b) The minimum rent is based on 10% of the dependant rate of Youth Allowance and is payable for sole tenants only with no other household members.

- c) Minimum rent can only be used for existing tenants and should not be used to allocate public housing to applicants with no income.

Guaranteed rent period

- a) To encourage household members in receipt of a Centerlink income to enter the workforce and minimise associated costs, household members can apply for a *guaranteed rent period*.
- b) A guaranteed rent period is a guaranteed period of six months where rent will not increase due to a household member having an increase in their income due to commencing work.
- c) A guaranteed rent period is not an entitlement but a benefit; therefore household members should apply within 28 days of the household member commencing work.

2. SCOPE

This policy applies to all Council housing tenants, including employees, Councillors, contractors, agents and assigns of Council.

3. PROCEDURE

This policy is to be applied in conjunction with Rent Review Procedure SPO22-PR1.

4. AUTHORISATION

This policy was duly authorised by Council as Torres Strait Island Regional Council Rent Review Policy on 21 November 2017 and shall hereby supersede any previous policies of the same intent.



Bruce Ranga
Chief Executive Officer

Date: 21 / 11 / 2017