



TENANT ABSENCE POLICY

SPO24

Responsible Manager:	Executive Manager Housing Services
Heads of power:	<i>Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation Act 2008 (Qld)</i> Social Housing Policy PO12
Authorised by:	Council
Authorised on:	20 February 2018
Implemented from:	February 2018
Last reviewed:	N/A
Review history:	N/A
To be reviewed on:	30 June 2020
Corporate Plan:	Environment

1. POLICY STATEMENT

- a) As a social housing provider under the *Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation Act 2008* (the Act), Torres Strait Island Regional Council (Council) is committed to:
 - i. providing a supportive tenancy management service to assist tenants to successfully sustain their tenancies; and
 - ii. ensuring compliance with the Act.
- b) As part of their agreement with Council and pursuant to the Act (ss10 and 184) the tenant may use the premises only as a place of residence or mainly as a place of residence. A tenant's absence for eight weeks at a time or for a total of eight weeks in a 12-month period does not need to be approved. Tenants are required to keep paying their rent during their absence.
- c) Council requires the tenant to advise in writing when they are going to be absent from their home for more than eight weeks and up to 12 months.
- d) The tenant must provide fair reasons for their extended absence, such as medical treatment, education, employment, cultural or family reasons. The tenant is responsible for payment of rent during the extended absence.
- e) The tenant can appoint a caretaker in tenant's absence. A caretaker is not automatically entitled to live in the house. Tenants must receive written approval from Council for a caretaker to live in the house.
- f) A "temporary" absence of longer than 12 months will not be approved unless for exceptional circumstances.
- g) If a tenant does not return at the end of an approved period of absence, Council will attempt to contact the tenant to discuss their intentions.
- h) If Council has still not heard from tenant, the house will be deemed abandoned and Council will commence the abandonment process – refer Abandoned Properties Policy SPO23.

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 Tenant Absence Procedure SPO24-PR1.

4. AUTHORISATION

This policy was duly authorised by Council as Torres Strait Island Regional Council Tenant Absence Policy on 20 February 2018 and shall hereby supersede any previous policies of the same intent.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Bruce Ranga', is positioned above a horizontal line.

Bruce Ranga
Chief Executive Officer

Date: 20 / 02 / 2018