

Rent Policy

1. PURPOSE

Council is strongly committed to ensuring that the local government principles are reflected in the Rent Policy.

As a registered provider under the *Housing Act 2003*, Council shall implement a rent policy and procedures complying with the *Housing Regulation 2003*, and its Assistance Agreement with the Department of Housing and Public Works that will:

- (a) Explain rent calculations to tenants;
- (b) Deal with tenant queries or concerns about rent;
- (c) Give tenants a choice of rent payment methods;
- (d) Prevent serious rent arrears;
- (e) Implement the rent policy consistently and fairly; and
- (f) Keep record of rent calculations for each tenancy agreement.

2. SCOPE

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

3. LINK TO CORPORATE PLAN 2025-2030

TSIRC [Corporate Plan 2025-2030](#)

Outcome 1: Strengthening Our Communities

1.1 Provide Suitable Public Housing

- Work with the State and Federal Governments and community to ensure that all Torres Strait Island communities have access to safe, secure and culturally appropriate housing.

Outcome 2: A Proactive and Responsible Council

3.1 Provide Good Governance and Leadership

- Ensure responsible financial management and sustainability.
- Ensure compliance with legislative requirements and regulations, uphold the Council's legal obligations, and make ethical decisions in the best interest of the community.

4. POLICY STATEMENT

Council's rent procedures state the criteria and processes relating to rent under tenancy agreements including:

- (a) Setting the amount of rent;
- (b) Calculating rent payments;
- (c) Collecting rent; and

(d) Managing rent arrears.

Council is committed to delivering an effective tenancy management process that ensures tenants are able to meet their obligations. Social housing will not be provided to applicants who cannot demonstrate independent income. This is to ensure that applicants are able to meet rent payments once they become tenants.

Rent for all Council properties will be calculated at 25% of the total assessable household income unless this amount exceeds the maximum rent payable, in which case the maximum rent will be charged.

The maximum rent payable is the market rent for the property. Market rent is based on the rent charged for social housing properties with the same number of bedrooms and similar access to services in other remote communities.

Market rent is set by the Department of Housing and Public Works in accordance with the terms of the Assistance Agreement.

Council will, in approved circumstances only, apply a discount to rent upon tenant's application.

Tenants are expected to be at least two weeks in advance in their rent.

Council will receipt rent payments to the tenant/s only as signatory of the General Tenancy Agreement (GTA).

Reimbursement of rent credit above two weeks rent advance will be transferred to tenant's past account if in arrears. Otherwise, to tenant's nominated bank account if no debt exists on Council's record.

5. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Nil.

6. DEFINITIONS

Refer to legislation definitions.

7. RELATED DOCUMENTS AND REFERENCES

- *Local Government Act 2009*
- *Local Government Regulation 2012 Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation Act 2008*
- *RTA Regulations 2024*
- *Department of Housing and Public Works' Community Housing Rent Policy for Indigenous Councils*
- *Social Housing Policy*

This policy works in conjunction with Council's Rent Procedure and Rent Arrears Management Procedure.

8. REVIEW

Policy type:	☒ Council ☐ Administrative
Directorate:	Community Services
Responsible Officer:	Manager, Housing
Authorised on:	21 July 2026
Next review date:	February 2028 (This policy will be reviewed every two years or as required by changes in legislation).
Review history:	2021, 2023, 2026
Version:	1