



# Community Housing Rent Policy

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<b>Classification:</b>	Policy
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<b>Review Date:</b>	19/11 /2025
<b>Responsible Officer:</b>	Director Corporate, Governance and Risk
<b>Version (Revision Number):</b>	1.0

## 1. Statement of Intent

This document sets out Paroo Shire Council's policy of how Community Housing providers assess, calculate and review the rent payable, when a tenancy begins, when a household's circumstances change during a tenancy and at scheduled reviews.

## 2. Commencement and Review of Policy

This Policy will commence from 19/11/2024.

This Policy will be reviewed annually from the commencement date or earlier if deemed necessary through changes to legislation or business practice. Changes to the Community Housing Rent Policy must be submitted to Council for amendment and adoption by resolution.

## 3. Application of Policy

### 3.1. Policy Statement

Paroo Shire Council being the funded provider must have regard to the *Housing Act 2003*, and the *Housing Regulation 2015*, and administer the policy in a way that has sufficient regard to the availability of safe, secure, appropriate and affordable housing in a community.

This Policy prescribes how funded providers assess, calculate and review the rent payable, when a tenancy begins, when a household's circumstances change during a tenancy and at scheduled reviews. The policy is in line with the Community Housing Rent Policy (CHRP).

This policy ensures that council must ensure tenants are charged an affordable rent when residing in community housing and crisis accommodation. Tenants will pay the income-based rent or market rent for the property, whichever is lower.

Rent must be sensitive to the tenant and household's circumstances and not cause financial hardship, considering the cost of living and ability to pay.

Tenants residing in a property managed by Council under the *Housing Act 2003* will have their rent assessed at

- 25 per cent of the household's assessable income plus 100 per cent of Commonwealth Rent Assistance (CRA) entitlement.
- 28 per cent of the household's assessable income plus 100 per cent of CRA entitlement when the property or accommodation is furnished.



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- up to 30 per cent of gross household income plus 100 per cent of CRA entitlement for approved affordable housing delivered as social housing. This housing must be approved by the Chief Executive under the *Housing Act 2003*.

When implementing this policy, council must make decisions fairly and transparently, that are compatible with human rights, as described in the *Human Rights Act 2019*.

The rationale for the council's decision about the calculation of rent payable must be documented and provided to the tenant if requested.

When a council collects and accesses personal information, Council must do so in accordance with the information privacy principles, as described in the *Information Privacy Act 2009*.

## 3.2. Objectives

The objectives are that rent is:

- affordable for tenants
- transparently explained to tenants
- assessed in a way that is fair and equitable and consistent with public housing rents
- set in a way that reduces financial disincentives for tenants to earn additional income

## 3.3. Responsibility

In addition to meeting the outcomes of this policy, the *Housing Regulation 2015* requires council being the funded provider to keep a rent policy compliant with a funding agreement and this policy, which:

States the criteria and procedures relating to rent paid by a tenant, including:

- Setting the amount of rent; and
- Calculating rent payments; and
- Collecting rent; and
- Managing rent arrears; and

Provides for-

- explaining rent calculations to the tenant and dealing with their queries about rent; and
- giving the tenant a choice of ways to pay rent; and
- preventing the tenant from getting into serious arrears of rent; and
- Comply with the funding agreement for the service.



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Council must operate within these requirements and relevant government legislation, regulations, directives, information standards and/or policies at the time of publication.

This policy document should be read in conjunction with the *Community Housing Rent Policy Guideline*.

## 4. Incomes

### 4.1 Assessable Income

All monies received with some regularity or frequency that are not one-off payments for specific purposes or events, must be treated as income and included during rent assessment to determine rent payable by tenants. Assessable incomes include pensions, benefits and allowances, wages and work allowances, and other types of incomes.

A list of assessable income to be included when undertaking rent assessments is detailed in the *Community Housing Rent Policy Guideline - Assessable and non-assessable income lists*.

### 4.2 Non-Assessable Income

Non-assessable incomes are broadly related to payments for bereavement, natural disasters, reimbursements and loans, some Government compensations, and payments for specific purposes or events.

A list of non-assessable income excluded from rent assessments is detailed in the *Community Housing Rent Policy Guideline - Assessable and non-assessable income lists*.

All details on how assessable and non-assessable rents are calculated, and how to administer rent are included in the *Community Housing Rent Policy Guideline*

## 5. Assessment Rules

This policy will apply to all new tenants in community housing properties and crisis accommodation following the effective date of the policy. Council will transition existing tenants to the new policy at the time of scheduled rent reviews or a notified change in circumstances. This can occur at regular intervals or when there are changes to household income or when household members join or vacate the property. This also applies to Crisis Accommodation Program (CAP).

Council while transitioning existing tenants to the new policy are compelled to ensure the calculation of rent payable is sensitive to the tenant and household's circumstances and not cause financial hardship, considering the cost of living and ability to pay.

*Note:* Any scheduled rent review should not occur less than every 6 months. Notification of change in circumstances, however any rent increases and notification to tenants must comply with the RTRAA.



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### 6. Legislation and Regulations

Paroo Shire Council GP-014 Community Housing Policy

Local Government Act 2009

Local Government Regulation 2012 (as amended)

Housing Act 2003

Housing Regulation 2015

Human Rights Act 2019

Public Records Act 2002


Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation Act 2008

Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation Regulation 2009

Information Privacy Act 2009

Note: Link to the Community Housing Rent Calculator

<http://www.hpw.qld.gov.au/>

<b>Endorsed</b>		<b>Date: 19/11/2024</b>
<b>Name:</b>	Neil Polglase	
<b>Title:</b>	Chief Executive Officer, Paroo Shire Council	
<b>Signature:</b>		

### Version Control

Date	Version	Meeting Resolution	Amendments / Comments
11/11/2024	1	(RES.M24/326)	