

## PENSIONER CONCESSION REBATES POLICY

### 1. INTRODUCTION

This Policy relating to pensioner concession rebates was introduced following consultation with and advice from the NSW Office of Local Government.

### 2. POLICY STATEMENT AND SCOPE

This policy specifies how Council will:-

- Provide eligible pensioners with the statutory pensioner concessions relating to rates and charges under the provisions of section 575 of the Local Government Act 1993.
- Provide assistance to eligible pensioners under sections 567, 577 and 582 of the Local Government Act 1993.

It outlines Council's policy in relation to the granting of pensioner concession rebates to eligible pensioners with respect to previous rating years.

#### Eligibility

The policy applies to pensioners who are ratepayers and who have a current Blue Pensioner Concession Card (PCC Card) issued by Centrelink/Veteran Affairs or who have a Gold Card embossed with either TPI, EDA or WW.

The property to which the rebate is applied must be:-

1. Solely or jointly owned by the pensioner with the Blue PCC Card or Gold Card (TPI, EDA, WW) ("applicant"); and
2. the applicant's sole or principal place of living; and
3. the applicant must be residing on the property; and
4. there must be a dwelling on the property where a rate or charge is levied on.

#### Amount Of Reductions

The total amount of reductions in a rating year will be:-

- (a) Reductions on ordinary rates and charges for domestic waste management services levied on any land for are not to exceed \$250.00;
- (b) Reductions on water supply special rates or charges so levied are not to exceed \$87.50; and
- (c) Reductions on sewerage special rates or charges so levied are not to exceed \$87.50.

These rebates will be limited to the current rating year and the rating period immediately preceding it.

#### Applications

- (a) Pensioners requesting a rebate are required to submit an application on the prescribed form available from Council.
- (b) The applicant must have a current Blue Pensioner Concession Card, or a Gold Card which has been embossed with either of the following: TPI, EDA or WW.

- (c) If an applicant has a War Widows gold card and does not have a current blue Pensioner Concession Card they will be required to complete a means test based on the current limits and allowances as supplied by the Commonwealth.
- (d) The application must be signed by the eligible pensioner or a person with power of attorney for the eligible pensioner. A copy of the Power of Attorney should be provided with the application.
- (e) Production of these cards together and verification with Centrelink/Veteran's Affairs is sufficient evidence to calculate the amount of the Rates and Charges reduction allowed under the Local Government Act 1993.

### **Application Assessment**

- (a) Applications will be assessed by Council's Rates & Revenue Co-ordinator against the criteria outlined in this document.
- (b) Each application will be checked and verified with Centrelink to ensure eligibility prior to the pension rebate being applied to the rate account.
- (c) If a ratepayer has applied for the current year and prior year rebate and the customer call centre has not advised the amount of the rebate to the applicant, a letter will be sent to the ratepayer advising them of the amount granted.

## **3. RESPONSIBILITIES AND AUTHORITIES**

The Rates & Revenue Coordinator is responsible and accountable for the implementation and communication of this Policy.

The following Council officers are responsible for the adherence, monitoring compliance and ensuring this policy is reviewed and updated to meet external compliance:

- Rates & Revenue Co-ordinator;
- Financial Operations Manager; and
- Chief Financial Officer.

## **4. REFERENCES**

Making Council Policy

Local Government Act 1993 (NSW), as amended, (Sections 567, 577 & 582)

Local Government Regulations 2005 (NSW)

Council Rating and Revenue Raising Manual Department of Local Government (2007)

In determining eligibility Council has referred to Division 1, Part 8 of Chapter 15 of the Local Government Act 1993 which provides for concessions for eligible pensioners; and to the Local Government (General) regulations 2005 and the Act dictionary which defines an eligible pensioner.

## **5. DEFINITIONS**

**General Manager** - A 1<sup>st</sup> tier management position and titled as such

**Director** - A 2<sup>nd</sup> tier management position and titled as such

**Group Manager** - A 3<sup>rd</sup> tier management position and titled as such

**Council officer** - A member of Council staff

**"Pensioner Concession Card (PCC Card)"** - Entitlement card that has been issued by either Centrelink or the Department of Veteran Affairs.

**"TPI"** - Gold Card embossed with TPI meaning Totally & Permanently Incapacitated

**"EDA"** - Gold Card embossed with EDA meaning Extreme Disability Allowance

**"WW"** - Gold Card embossed with WW meaning a War Widow

## **6. PROCESS OWNER**

Chief Financial Officer

## **7. AMENDMENTS**

Changes that have been made in reference to the last version (ORD 15/07/2015) include:

- Transfer of content to a new template.
- Changes to Staff titles.
- Review of policy wording to meet 'plain english' requirements, where appropriate.