

Pre-2016 Pensioner Arrears Concession Policy

Local Government Act 2009

1. Policy Statement

Townsville City Council (Council) will provide rates concession detailed in this policy to assist the current owners of identified properties that have significant rate arrears following a Council policy decision prior to 2016.

2. Principles

Under section 120(1)(a) and (c) of the *Local Government Regulation 2012*, Council has the ability to provide concessions for rates and charges to land occupied by a pensioner if the payment of rates or charges will cause hardship.

Council recognised that granting of concession has the potential to adversely impact upon the Council's services and burden other ratepayers.

Prior to 2016, Council did not actively enforce recovery of rates and charges on debts accrued on properties owned by pensioners. Council's approach at that time allowed arrears to accrue with Council not undertaking any formal debt recovery and engaging in limited communication with the ratepayers.

On 1 July 2016, Council changed its policy and decided that thereafter the special approach to the (non-) collection of debts from pensioners would be discontinued. Pensioners are now subject to the same formal debt recovery actions as all other ratepayers.

The properties upon which large rates debts had accrued under the previous arrangement were exempted from the new approach otherwise the properties would have been immediately subject to potential sale proceedings to recover the arrears.

Council accepts that applying Council's standard collection policies to those debts will cause significant financial hardship to the current owners of the listed properties.

This policy seeks to address the significant rate arrears of the remaining affected by the pre-2016 policy and support those pensioners to continue to occupy their homes.

3. Scope

This policy applies to the granting of concession to the following properties for the rating period ended 30 June 2025, provided the property remains a Category 1 - Residential Principal Place of Residence.

Property Numbers				
36930	184950	331526	516893	537087
58250	190300	353884	517808	263020
58320	204230	360028	518243	
66460	220550	360519	518603	
84370	227160	360934	520019	
108480	237190	510602	523164	
144320	256520	510796	525755	
160720	257900	512475	531200	
170150	260510	513478	533268	
171710	266830	515106	533488	
172320	270400	515133	534474	
184220	276940	515853	534649	

4. Responsibility

General Manager Commercial and Financial Services is responsible for ensuring this policy is understood and followed by all workers involved in administering this policy.

5. Definitions

Any term used in this policy that is defined in the *Local Government Act 2009* and *Local Government Regulation 2012* has that definition.

Workers - includes employees, contractors, volunteers and all others who perform work on behalf of Council.

6. Policy

Council will provide rates and charges concessions to listed properties as follows:

- a rebate of all interest charges accruing on overdue rates and charges from 1 July 2025 to 30 June 2026. (The effect will be that interest will not be charged for the rates and charges debts on the property for that period.)
- a concession of up to \$800 as detailed in the Pensioner Rates Concession (pre-01 July 2025) Policy, to the owners of those properties who prior to 30 June 2025 establish that they meet all criteria to qualify for that concession. Council will not commence sale proceedings for the property even though there are overdue rates and charges on each property that otherwise would result in sale proceedings occurring.

7. Legal Parameters

Local Government Act 2009

Local Government Regulation 2012

8. Associated Documents

Pensioner Rates Concession Policy

Rates and Charges Debtor Management Policy

Revenue Policy