

BARCOO SHIRE COUNCIL POLICY

HOUSING POLICY

Policy Number: BSC-014	Version: 4
Classification: Administrative	Section: Corporate Services - Community
Date Adopted by Council: 21 August 2024	Resolution Number: 2024.08.012
Responsible Officer: Manager Community Services	Due for Review: 21 August 2026
Last Reviewed: 27 October 2017	<p>Review Note</p> <p>This policy is reviewed when any of the following occur:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The related information is amended or replaced. 2. Other circumstances as determined from time to time by the Chief Executive Officer. <p>Notwithstanding the above, this policy is to be reviewed at intervals of no more than two years.</p>
Legislation: <i>Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation Act 2008</i>	

1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to:

- (a) **primarily support the recruitment and retention of staff to meet organisational needs.**
- (b) support the accommodation of council contractors and the general public where there is sufficient housing stock over and above the needs of council staff.
- (c) provide guidelines for the tenancy management of council owned housing to ensure consistency of use and future provision.

The *Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation Act 2008* particularly relates to this policy. To remove any doubt, nothing in this policy or its implementation can conflict with this Act.

It is not the intention of this policy to address all potential scenarios of tenancy management defined and controlled by the Act, the likes of:

- Pet management
- Bonds
- Rent payment/rent arrears
- Property damage
- Property maintenance
- Entry/inspection provisions
- Tenancy agreement breach provisions
- Vacancy procedures

This policy aligns with and supports the Barcoo Shire Council People Strategy 2023 – 2028.

2. Policy Application

This policy applies to all employees, contractors and the general public seeking or occupying rental accommodation in council owned housing.

3. Policy Statement

- (a) Support the recruitment and retention of staff with required skills and qualifications to locations dictated by service delivery and organisational needs.
- (b) Where practical, support the provision of housing where there is a recognised shortfall of private rental accommodation.

- (c) Provide a standard of accommodation that is commensurate with local community standards.

4. Policy Standards

4.1 Eligibility and Allocation Priorities

Subject to availability, houses will be allocated to eligible tenants in the following priority order:

- (a) Critical staff (difficult to recruit positions and contracted fixed-term senior positions)
- (b) Permanent staff
- (c) Permanent part-time staff
- (d) Casual staff
- (e) Council contractors
- (f) General public

All potential tenants of council owned housing must complete the Housing Application Form.

Council owned properties may be kept vacant for a period to ensure suitable accommodation is available to meet the future needs of council (Reserved Housing) and is generally associated with a specific vacant position of council. The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) may allow other employees to occupy the dwelling under a restricted term of tenancy basis.

4.2 Ongoing Eligibility

Should an employee of council, resign from their position, abandon their employment or their employment with council is terminated, the property will be vacated within four weeks in accordance with the *Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation Act 2008*.

If this employee of council wishes to remain a tenant at the property or another council owned property after they are no longer an employee, their potential tenancy will be considered in accordance with sections 4.1 and 4.3 of this policy.

4.3 Term of Tenancy Agreement

To provide a balance of flexibility for council and security of tenure for the tenant, the following terms of tenancies will be implemented:

Tenant Type	Maximum Initial Term of Tenancy Agreement	Maximum Subsequent Terms of Tenancy Agreements
General public	6 months	12 months
Council contractors	6 months	12 months
Casual staff	6 months	12 months
Permanent part-time staff	12 months	18 months
Permanent staff	12 months	18 months
Critical staff	12 months	18 months

At the end of the relevant tenancy term for the property, the eligibility and allocation priorities should be applied to the Housing Application Register (waiting list) and the current tenant. It should be noted that under these circumstances, there is no guarantee that any housing will be available for the existing tenant where they are a council contractor or a member of the general public.

Under extenuating circumstances, the CEO may alter these tenancy terms if in accordance with the *Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation Act 2008*.

4.4 Rental Rates

Weekly rental rates for staff will be set with the express intent of strategically attracting and retaining staff on the following basis:

Tenant Type	Rental Rates
General public	Set by Council in its annual adopted Fees and Charges for each type of property*
Council contractors	As per 'General public' tenant type
Casual staff	50% 'General public' tenant type
Permanent part-time staff	50% 'General public' tenant type
Permanent staff	50% 'General public' tenant type
Critical staff	50% 'General public' tenant type or as negotiated as part of the employee's contract of employment

* Relevant council staff to provide comparative rental information to Council for like surrounding local governments for consideration prior to setting fees and charges.

For council employees who are tenants or potential tenants of Council owned housing who own (directly or indirectly) a private dwelling within 30 km of their primary place of work, rental rates will not be discounted and charged at the 'general public rate'.

Some council owned properties will have furniture and various chattels supplied as part of the property tenancy. This fee will also be set by Council in their annual adopted Fees and Charges.

4.5 Tenancy Management Procedure

This policy will be operationalised through the requirements of *Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation Act 2008* and the Residential Tenancies Authority's General Tenancy Agreement (including special conditions).

5 Related Documents

- Housing Application Form
- Housing Application Register
- Barcoo Shire Council People Strategy 2023 - 2028
- *Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation Act 2008*
- Residential Tenancies Authority's General Tenancy Agreement

Version Control

Version Number	Description of Change	Section	Date Adopted	Resolution Number
1.				
2.				