Rural City of Wangaratta

DRAFT Fee Subsidy Policy

1. Statement and Purpose

This Policy establishes Council's position in relation to requests to partially or fully waive various types of fees and charges. Its purpose is to manage these requests in a consistent, transparent and equitable manner that is aligned with Council's goals and priorities.

2. Scope

This Policy applies to all fees and charges set by Council.

2.1 Exclusions to the Policy

This Policy does not apply to:

- Circumstances where another Council Policy includes a fee waiver component or where there is no discretion for a fee to be reduced in line with legislation, for example:
    - Fines, infringements or penalties for which an existing appeals or subsidy process exists
    - Fees collected on behalf of State or Federal Government
    - Council rates and property charges incurred by property owners
    - Planning and development fees and charges
- Commercial transactions

3. Responsibilities

Position	Responsibility
Corporate Management Team (CMT)	• Approving all fee subsidies. • In exceptional circumstances, assessing and approving or declining the subsidising of statutory fees and charges in accordance with the relevant legislation.
Managers	• Ensuring staff are aware of this Policy. Developing processes and procedures within their business unit for handling requests to subsidise or waive fees and charges in line with this Policy.
Coordinators	• Administering fees and charges as contained in the Fees and Charges Schedule of the adopted Council budget. • Assessing and determining fee reductions relevant to their business unit and making recommendations to CMT for approval. • Ensuring that requests to reduce fees and charges, and the decisions made upon those requests, are appropriately documented in accordance with organisational requirements. • Recording on the request form and register if a Conflict of Interest exists and, if so, details of the conflict. • Once approved, advising Finance staff the details of the subsidies for recognition in the financial statements, and recording the details of any approved fee subsidies in a designated register. •

4. Policy Principles

Subsidies:

- Should be requested before the fee or charge is incurred or paid;
- Will be considered on a case-by-case basis;
- Should only be required infrequently;
- Should have a negligible impact on revenue forecasts in the adopted Council budget.

5. Eligibility

A subsidy may not be considered where the activity is a program, service, function or event that:

- is undertaken by a contractor engaged by, or conducting works on behalf of, Council;
- is contrary to, or inconsistent with, another Council Policy;
- is already supported by Council via a financial or in-kind contribution;
- is subject to an existing agreement or relationship where financial support is considered;
- is a primary or core service of State or Federal Governments;
- duplicates or competes with existing Council programs or activities; or
- is reasonably likely to result in a disproportionate increase in the number of requests from the benefiting organisation(s) or from similar organisations.

6. Amount of Subsidy

The subsidy granted maybe determined by reference to a proportion of the fee payable, or as an amount.

When considering requests, a reduction of the fee (as opposed to a waiver) is preferable to reduce the financial impact to Council and cover the administrative costs involved in processing the subsidy.

All fee subsidies are to be recorded on a fee subsidy register.

7. Application Process

Requests can only be considered upon receipt of a fully completed Subsidy Application Form, accompanied with supporting documentation.

Each request will be assessed fairly, equitably and transparently by the relevant business unit Manager or Coordinator, and a recommendation made for CMT to consider when determining the application. In assessing a request, consideration will be given to the justification and merits of the application.

8. Definitions

Term	Definition
Charity	An entity registered with the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC) as a charity.

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Community benefit	A demonstrated community need within the municipality which aligns with Council's strategic priorities.
Subsidy	The reduction of a fee or charge, either partially or in full.
Not for profit	As defined in section 126(1) of the *Local Government Act 2020*. An organisation that: a) operates exclusively for charitable, civil, sporting or other social purposes; and b) does not share or allocate the funds or profits of the body or organisation with the owners, shareholders or executives of the body or organisation. This is deemed to include, but is not limited to, sporting clubs, arts societies, and special interest groups.

9. References and related policies

- Council's Schedule of Fees and Charges

10. Review

This policy will be reviewed:

- every 3 years; or
- earlier if there are legislative changes, emerging risks, or significant organisational change.

Minor administrative updates may be approved by the Director. Material policy changes require Council approval.

Document Type	
Department	
Date of Approval	
Date for Review	
Responsible Officer	
Authorising Officer	
Version Reference Number	
SIM Reference Number	

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DRAFT Subsidy Application form

Applicant (Organisation name):	
Property:	
Details of person completing this form:	
Name:	
Position:	
Email address:	
Phone number:	

Request for the reduction of fees for:

- ☐ Lease/licence fee
- ☐ Other (please provide more information):

Reduction sought (please provide details of the total original amount and reduction in fees you are seeking):

Set out reasons why this request is being made:

If you are applying on behalf of an organisation, please describe the goals of your organisation and anticipated funding sources for the next 12 months:

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Additional information:

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I have attached the following additional information or supporting documents (or equivalent):

Required:

☐ Evidence of Organisation's incorporation/registration and governing documents (Constitution or Rules)
☐ Most recent Annual Report (including Financial Statement)
☐ Copy current bank statement for all accounts held by the Organisation

Optional:

☐ Certificate of Currency for required insurances (as outlined in your occupancy agreement)
☐ Other documents to support your application (please list):

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I certify that, to the best of my knowledge, the information provided in this application (including any attachments) is true and accurate and I have the authority to make this application.

Signature 1: ..... Date: .....

Name (print) ....

Signature 2: ..... Date: .....

Name (print): .....

Please complete and email to leasing@wangaratta.vic.gov.au.

The information gathered in the form is used by Council to process this request and to otherwise assist with the management of your occupancy agreement. To view Council's privacy policy, please visit www.wangaratta.vic.gov.au

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