

Fee Waivers, Concessions and Debt Write-Off Policy

Responsible Directorate:	<i>Corporate Strategy and Performance</i>
Responsible Service Unit:	<i>Finance</i>
Contact Person:	<i>Manager Finance</i>
Date of Approval:	<i>12 December 2023</i>
Council Resolution No:	<i>CE01-12/23</i>

1. POLICY STATEMENT

The City of Wanneroo (City) provides fee waivers, concessions and debt write-offs to support community groups, organisations and individuals who are in financial hardship. .

2. OBJECTIVE AND PURPOSE

The objective of this policy is to provide a framework for the consideration of requests for fee waivers, concessions and debt write-offs that:

- provides a fair and equitable assessment and approval process; and
- is consistent, transparent and financially responsible.

3. KEY DEFINITIONS

<i>DEFINITIONS: Any definitions listed in the following table apply to this document only.</i>	
Concession	A preferential rate in relation to any amount of money which would ordinarily be owed to the City .
Fees and Charges	Fees and charges set by Council for goods or services being offered and the associated costs
Charitable Purpose	As defined under the Facility Hire and Use Policy, any event, program or activity which has a charitable purpose for the benefit of City residents (includes licensed collections under the Charitable Collections Act). This excludes fundraising for the purposes of income generation for individual groups.
Statutory Fees and Charges	Fees and Charges set under a Statutory Act administered by the City.
Waiver	A waiver of any amount of money which would ordinarily be owed to the City (a debt has not been incurred).

Write-Off

Write-off of any amount of money that is owed to the City (the debt has been incurred).

4. SCOPE

The policy applies to all fees and charges adopted through the City's annual budget process, as detailed in the City's Fees and Charges Schedule, and any concessions authorised and granted throughout the financial year.

This policy does not apply to statutory fees and charges, penalties and rates and service charges levied by the City.

5. IMPLICATIONS

This policy must be read and applied in conjunction with the City's endorsed Fees and Charges Schedule and other relevant policies and legislation.

This policy results in a financial cost to the City. The Administration identifies the actual cost involved in successful requests and individual amounts in excess of \$5,001 are reported to the Audit and Risk Committee.

The policy considers and adheres to the Local Government Act 1995 (the Act) and associated Regulations.

6. IMPLEMENTATION

Section 6.12 of the Act provides that the City may waive or grant concessions in relation to any amount of money, or write off any amount of money, which is owed to the City.

All waivers, concessions or write off of any amount of money owed to the City should be approved in line with the City delegated authority 1.1.23.

Fee waivers, concessions or write-offs may be provided by the City to individual residents or community groups and organisations who are in financial hardship that live or operate within the City of Wanneroo to deliver community outcomes, or provide assistance to an individual or group with limited capacity to pay.

The City will assess and make determinations on requests in accordance with the following principles:

- User's capacity to pay;
- Compliance with statutory requirements;
- Fairness and equity;
- Inability to recover the debt or bankruptcy;
- Debt recovery cost exceeds the recoverable amount;
- Legislative or regulatory obligations;

The City has determined eligibility criteria, as outlined in **Schedule 1**, where consideration for a fee waiver, concession or write-off may be considered.

7. AUTHORITIES AND ACCOUNTABILITIES

The CEO is delegated by Council to authorise Fee Waivers, Concessions and Debt Write-off as per the Delegated Authority Register 1.1.23.

The CEO has sub-delegated the exercise of Council delegated power to the following officers subject to conditions as stated with in 1.1.23 of the Delegated Authority Register.

- Director Corporate Strategy & Performance
- Director Community & Place
- Director Assets
- Director Planning & Sustainability
- Chief Financial Officer

8. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The policy will be administered by the Finance service unit..

Under the provisions of the Act, authority to approve fee and charge variations rests with Council or its delegates, depending on the value of each request. To ensure transparent decision making, all requests for fee waivers, concessions or write-offs should be reviewed by the City against the principles and criteria detailed within this policy and reported to Audit and Risk Committee depending on the threshold.

9. DISPUTE RESOLUTION (if applicable)

All disputes in regard to this policy will be reviewed by an alternate delegate.

10. EVALUATION AND REVIEW

The Policy will be reviewed every three years.

11. RELATED DOCUMENTS

- Strategic Budget Policy
- Accounting Policy
- Consolidated Delegated Authority Register (Section 1.1.23 Defer, Grant Discounts, Waive or Write Off Debts)
- Facility Hire and Use Policy

12. REFERENCES

Local Government Act 1995

13. RESPONSIBILITY FOR IMPLEMENTATION

Chief Finance Officer

REVISION HISTORY

Version	Next Review	Record No.
May 2020	May 2025	19/328015*
December 2023	December 2026	

SCHEDULE 1**Fee Waiver, Concession and Debt Write-Off Eligibility Criteria**

The City may consider requests to provide a fee waiver, concession, or debt write-off in accordance with the following criteria:

Financial Hardship

Where there is evidence that payment of the fee or charge will impose unreasonable financial hardship on the applicant given their particular circumstances. For example:

- A change to employment status, such as job loss or reduced work hours (not due to poor performance).
- Unemployment.
- Business failure.
- A significant life event, such as a relationship breakdown or death in the family.
- Trauma or tragedy.
- Illness or disability.
- An emergency event or natural disaster.

In determining eligibility financial hardship, the City requires the applicant to provide reasonable proof which may include details of assets, income and living expenses, and other such information required to make a valid assessment i.e. written request with supporting evidence.

The following conditions apply to requests for fee waivers, concessions or debt write-offs:

1. Applicants should live, own property or be delivering an activity/service within the City of Wanneroo district.
2. Applications must not directly or indirectly contravene with other Council policies.
3. Applications must not create an actual or perceived conflict of interest or potential reputational risk for the City.
4. Applications must not interfere with the City's compliance with and exercise of its legislative obligations.
5. Special consideration may be given to not for profit group/organisation if it can be clearly demonstrated that the organisation has a charitable or community service orientated purpose directly serving the community of the City.