

# Hunter Community Housing - Non-Rent Charges Policy

## Section 1 - Purpose

(1) This policy explains the types of charges outside of rent that may be charged to a Hunter Community Housing tenant.

## Section 2 - Scope

(2) This policy applies to all tenants living in a property managed by Hunter Community Housing.

## Section 3 - Principles

### Tenant Bonds

(3) A rental bond of an amount not exceeding four weeks of the market rent of the property, is charged to tenants where stated in their Residential Tenancy Agreement.

(4) A tenant may be eligible to apply for a bond loan with the Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ).

(5) Community Housing tenants that are not able to pay their bond upfront may be able to arrange a payment plan to pay their bond off. The maximum payment plan offered will be for a 12-month period. The bond will need to be paid in full prior to the end of the payment plan.

(6) Rental bonds paid to Hunter Community Housing in full by one payment, are lodged with NSW Fair Trading within 10 working days after it is paid.

(7) Rental bonds paid by instalments, where the total amount of the bond is paid within 3 months of the first instalment being paid, are lodged with NSW Fair Trading within 10 working days after the final instalment is paid.

(8) Rental bonds paid by instalments, where the total amount of the bond is not paid within 3 months, are lodged with NSW Fair Trading within 3 months of the first instalment being paid within that period.

### Water Usage

(9) Water usage is on-charged to tenants residing in separately metered properties, the residential property meets the water efficiency measures in the [Residential Tenancies Act 2010](#), and is stated in their Residential Tenancies Agreement.

(10) Tenants are charged based on actual water usage in accordance with the [Ministerial Guidelines for NSW Community Housing Water Charging Guidelines](#) made pursuant to Section 139 of the [Residential Tenancies Act 2010](#).

(11) Water usage charges must be paid within 21 days of the invoice being issued.

## **Tenant Damage**

(12) Tenants are not to intentionally or negligently cause or permit any damage to the residential premises.

(13) Tenants are liable for damages caused by a member of the household or by any person who is lawfully on the residential premises.

(14) A tenant who has disclosed domestic or family violence may not be responsible for damage incurred to the property caused by a domestic violence perpetrator during a domestic violence offence.

- a. Hunter Community Housing may request documentation. The documentation requested will vary dependant on the situation but may include a police report being provided.

(15) Payment for damages is due on invoice.

## **Utilities Charges**

(16) Utilities may be on-charged to tenants where it is stated in the tenancy agreement.

(17) Payment for utilities is due on invoice.

## **Miscellaneous Charges**

(18) Hunter Community Housing will charge tenants for any other charges incurred which relate to a tenancy.

(19) Types of charges that may be on-charged to a tenant include:

- a. bank fees for dishonoured cheques;
- b. council fines for unregistered swimming pools; and
- c. court costs.

(20) Payment for miscellaneous charges is due on invoice.

## **Advising tenants of charges**

(21) Hunter Community Housing will advise tenants in writing of any non-rent charges it places on their accounts.

# **Section 4 - Appeals and Internal Review**

(22) If a tenant disagrees with a decision made by Hunter Community Housing in relation to a Market Program tenancy application or tenancy, they should first discuss their concerns with a Hunter Community Housing staff member.

(23) If a tenant is still dissatisfied, they have the right to request an appeal.

(24) An appeal is a request to have a decision reviewed.

(25) The Hunter Community Housing – Complaints and Internal Review Policy outlines the process for appeals.

# **Section 5 - Document Review**

(26) This policy will be reviewed when there is a legislative change, organisational change, delegations change or at least every 3 years to ensure it continues to be current and effective.



## Status and Details

<b>Status</b>	Current
<b>Effective Date</b>	27th May 2024
<b>Review Date</b>	24th June 2025
<b>Approval Authority</b>	Head of Governance
<b>Approval Date</b>	24th June 2022
<b>Expiry Date</b>	To Be Advised
<b>Unit Head</b>	Jessica Bentley General Operations Manager - Housing
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