

COUNCIL POLICY



Policy name	Medical Professionals Accommodation Support
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Abstract
The policy establishes the method by which Medical Accommodation for medical professionals will be managed in order to support the provision of health services to the Gunnedah community.

Dates	Policy or amendment approved	01 Dec 2021
	Policy or amendment takes effect	14 Dec 2021
	Policy is due for review (up to 4 years)	01 Dec 2025
Endorsed by	General Manager	
Approved by	Gunnedah Shire Council, at its Extraordinary Meeting of Council held 1 December 2021 Resolution number: 1.12/21E	
Policy Custodian	Manager Public Facilities	
Relevant to	Council Staff Gunnedah Medical Practices Medical Practitioners Allied Health Professionals Other Health Professionals	
Superseded Policies	Medical Professionals Accommodation Support Policy adopted 20 December 2017.	
Related documents	Resulting Lease Agreements	
Related legislation	Tenancy Act 1993	

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1. Purpose

- 1.1 This policy provides guidance in the allocation of Medical Accommodation for medical professionals to support the provision and maintenance of health services to the Gunnedah community.
- 1.2 Its purpose is to:
 - (a) Provide clear direction in the allocation of Council owned Medical Accommodation;
 - (b) Provide clarity as to the order of precedence for the allocation of Lease Agreements;
 - (c) Provide clear guidelines on rental subsidy available to Health Professionals leasing external properties; and
 - (d) Detail the responsibilities of the entities.

2. Scope

- 2.1 This policy applies to Council employees, in particular those in the Public Facilities Department, as well as interested Medical Practices and Medical/Allied Health Professionals in the Gunnedah Shire.
- 2.2 It pertains to Council's furnished Medical Accommodation as well as the provision of Subsidised Rental Accommodation of a Medical Professional's choosing, to the value listed in this policy.

3. Definitions

Term	Definition
CPI	Consumer Price Index
Lease Agreement	A residential tenancy agreement is a legally binding contract made between a landlord and tenant.
Leaseholder	A leaseholder is a person who is allowed to use a property according to the terms of a lease.
Medical Professional	Doctors, medical students, registrars, locums, allied health professionals and nursing staff.
Medical Accommodation	Means the occupancy of furnished property owned by Gunnedah Shire Council in Gunnedah.

Subletting	The re-renting of property by an existing tenant to a new third party for a portion of the tenant's existing lease contract. The sublease agreement may also be called a sublet.
Subtenant	Person who leases property from a tenant.
Subsidised Rental Accommodation	Refers to external rental accommodation of the Medical Professional's choosing, either furnished or unfurnished, to which the Council will pay a subsidy.

4. Policy principles

- 4.1 Gunnedah Shire Council ("Council") recognises the importance of attracting and maintaining medical professionals to ensure quality of life and liveability within the Shire.
- 4.2 The offer of access to accommodation is a strategy Council hopes will encourage a wide range of health professionals to live and work within our Shire in order to help meet and satisfy the needs of our residents.
- 4.3 It is intended that through this policy, Council achieves a number of positive outcomes, including:
- (a) Transparent and fair procedures, making communication and lease or subsidy processes an effective, efficient and satisfactory experience for all parties;
 - (b) Responsible management and suitable maintenance of Council's assets;
 - (c) Ongoing access to a range of health care provisions for the community.

5. Policy statement

5.1 Accommodation Arrangements

- 5.1.1 Any subletting of Medical Accommodation will be managed by the Leaseholder of the respective properties.
- 5.1.2 Medical Professionals can lease an external property and apply to Council for a subsidy on supply of a current lease agreement and a written request.

5.2 Eligibility and nomination of tenants

- 5.2.1 Priority for leasing of Medical Accommodation will be given to Gunnedah's established Medical Practices, with any subtenants to be determined by the Leaseholders of the property.
- 5.2.2 All Medical Professionals based in the Gunnedah Shire will be eligible to apply for Temporary Medical Accommodation with any of the established practices.

- 5.2.3 To be eligible for a Council allocated Subsidy amount, Medical Professionals are required as a minimum to be a registered Registrar.

5.3 Term of tenancy or subsidy

- 5.3.1 A term of tenancy will be determined by negotiation between the parties.
- 5.3.2 A subsidy arrangement shall not exceed twelve (12) months.

5.4 Leasing of Medical Accommodation

- 5.4.1 Selection of Leaseholder will be at the discretion of Council and based on the priority group as indicated in item 5.2.1 above as well as additional factors such as order of application and proposed duration of tenure.
- 5.4.2 Any applicant selected for a Lease will need to enter into a Lease Agreement.
- 5.4.3 Preparation of lease documentation will be the responsibility of the Council. Preparation of any sublease documentation will be the responsibility of the Leaseholder.

5.5 Lease Fee and Subsidy Arrangement

- 5.5.1 The following Lease fees shall apply to Council owned Medical Accommodation from 1 July 2021:

\$2000 per annum GST inclusive (per dwelling)
- 5.5.2 Lease fees are to be adjusted by the CPI on 30 June each year.
- 5.5.3 The fee applicable to a Leaseholder shall be that set at the commencement of the lease, notwithstanding any changes to the lease rate by CPI adjustment during that time.
- 5.5.4 Council will reimburse Medical Professionals 25% of the market weekly rental value of properties owned by Gunnedah Shire Council for external properties leased through a Real Estate Agent. Market appraisals will be conducted annually on property to ascertain value. Current values as at time policy is endorsed being \$350 (unfurnished) and \$550 (furnished).
- 5.5.5 Total amount of available funds for Council provided Subsidy are per the allocated budget.
- 5.5.6 Unspent funds in the allocated Council Subsidy Budget are rolled over every financial year. The entire difference from spent funds are allocated from

General Fund Unrestricted Cash during the rollover process to ensure funds in the Council Subsidy Budget remain 100% at the beginning of each Financial Year

5.6 Electricity, gas, water and telephone for Medical Accommodation

- 5.6.1 Payment of costs associated with electricity and/or gas, and water shall be the responsibility of the Leaseholder as per the Lease Agreement.
- 5.6.2 Telephone/internet connection is by direct request to the service provider by the Leaseholder and all associated costs are to be paid by the Leaseholder.

5.7 Rates and insurance of Medical Accommodation

Council shall be responsible for the payment of rates and the cost of insurance of the building and furnishing contents provided, only for property owned by the Council.

5.8 Maintenance of Medical Accommodation

- 5.8.1 Maintenance of the interior and exterior of the building including maintenance of the internal fixtures and fittings shall be the responsibility of the Council.
- 5.8.2 Council shall also be responsible for maintenance of the exterior of the property including paving, gardens, fences and vegetated surfaces.
- 5.8.3 The Leaseholder is responsible for the following:
 - (a) Maintenance of all furnishings, appliances, whitegoods, kitchenware and linen; and
 - (b) Cleaning of the property during and at the end of the tenancy period.
- 5.8.4 Council is not responsible for any maintenance at externally leased properties.

5.9 Payment

- 5.9.1 Council's Finance Department will routinely issue invoices for Lease fees, electricity and water.
- 5.9.2 Invoices are payable within thirty (30) days of the date of issue. Interest charges will apply to outstanding payments.

5.9.3 In regards to externally leased properties, Medical Professionals can issue rental receipts from a real estate agent to Council in order to receive a subsidy.

5.9.4 Rental reimbursements can be paid weekly.

6. Accountability, roles and responsibilities

6.1 Authorisation – General Manager

The General Manager is responsible for implementation of Council's decision in relation this policy as well as for the setting of delegations for staff through official instrument.

6.2 Policy Custodian – Manager Public Facilities

Council's Manager Public Facilities is the officer accountable for managing policy compliance and initiating the policy review process. This officer will also have the responsibility for all aspects of policy implementation, unless appropriately delegated to another officer.

This includes:

- Ensuring the provision of accurate information and clear instructions to Council's Finance Department regarding invoices to be raised and subsidy reimbursements;
- Communication with and fielding all enquiries from medical professionals regarding this policy or its implementation;
- Establishing and maintaining Council's records in relation to this policy (including all lease documentation and a Register of Interest);
- Proposing amendments and managing the consultation process when this policy is due for review; and
- Ensuring the proper maintenance of the subject properties as per the terms of this policy and resulting tenancy leases.

7. Acknowledgements

The following acknowledgements are made recognising organisations or documents that have provided a basis, instructive comment or templates that have been used to develop this policy:

- (a) Lease fee is based on the average income of Council's furnished properties over the last three (3) years.
- (b) The subsidy arrangement is based on 25% of the market rent of Council's furnished properties at the time of entering into the agreement.
- (c) Consultation undertaken with organisations at the initial development of the policy in 2013; and

- (d) Policy will be placed on exhibition for twenty-eight (28) days for any submissions and comments from the community and medical providers.

8. Version control and change history

Date	Version	Approved by & resolution no.	Amendment
08 August 2012	Draft		
22 Nov 2012	Amended		
20 Feb 2013	Amended Draft		
17 Jul 2013	Final Draft	Council Resolution 13.10/13	
27 October 2017	Amended Policy		To expand eligibility for access and further clarify the selection process.
20 Dec 2017	Amended	Council Resolution 20.12/17	
18 Nov 2020	Amended Policy	Council Resolution 2.11/20	To include a subsidy arrangement for external accommodation sourced by medical professionals in the Gunnedah Shire. Place amended policy on exhibition for 28 days.
13 April 2021	Amended Policy	Council Resolution 2.11/20	To include a furnished pricing option in the subsidy arrangement for external accommodation sourced by medical professionals in the Gunnedah Shire. Place amended policy on exhibition for 28 days.
01 December 2021	Amended Policy	Council Resolution 1.12/21E	To include Clause 5.2.3 "To be eligible for a Council Allocated Subsidy amount, medical Professionals are required as a minimum to be a registrar or Higher."