


<b>Rate Discount Policy</b>		 <b>Longreach Regional Council</b>
Policy Number:	8.1	
Policy Category:	Rating Matters	
Authorised by:	Res-2022-03-068	
Date approved:	24 March 2022	
Review Date:	24 March 2024	

## LEGISLATION

*Local Government Act 2009*

*Local Government Regulation 2012*

## PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to set the principles Council will use when considering circumstances where discount is requested for payment after the 'Discount Date'.

## OBJECTIVE

To interpret the legislative requirements reflected in section 130(10) of the *Local Government Regulation 2012*; wherein Council has discretionary power to allow discount where payment was not achieved due to circumstances beyond the control of the ratepayer.

## DEFINITIONS

**Council** - Longreach Regional Council.

**Discount Date** - Is the due date listed on each Council Rate Notice.

**Natural Disaster** - Is a serious disruption in a community, caused by the impact of an event, that requires significant coordinated response by the state and other entities to help the community recover from the disruption (as defined in the *Disaster Management Act 2003*).

**Ratepayer** - Is the titled owner of a property within the Longreach Region.

## POLICY STATEMENT

Where there is an occasion where payment by the due date is not achieved, Council will only consider allowing discount if it is satisfied a ratepayer has been prevented, by circumstances beyond their control, from paying rates in time to get the discount.

### Payment made after the Due Date

Discount will be allowed where the ratepayer has an exemplary payment history of rates and charges for the prior two financial years; if full payment of the overdue rates and charges is made within a period specified by Council; and if the ratepayer provides proof satisfactory to Council of any of the following:

- (a) the loss of records resulting from factors beyond the ratepayer's control such as flood, fire or other natural disaster;
- (b) illness involving hospitalisation and/or incapacitation of the ratepayer at or around the due date for payment; or

- (c) the death or major trauma (accident/life threatening illness/emergency operation) of the ratepayer and/or associated person (spouse/children/parents) at or around the due date for payment.

### **Late Payment Due to Delivery Difficulties**

Council will consider allowing discount where the non-receipt of a notice is substantiated as detailed below and where discount has not been allowed on a previous claim in similar circumstances in the last five (5) years. To substantiate the claim for discount due to non-receipt of the rates notice the following is required:

- (a) a written statement from the ratepayer detailing non receipt of the rates notice (if a notice is not returned to sender it is deemed to have been delivered/served); or
- (b) other evidence that an administrative error occurred at the Department of Natural Resources and Mines which resulted in the rates notice being incorrectly addressed by Council.

Discount may also be allowed, if substantiated by evidence, the return of the rate notice to Council although correctly addressed occurred through no fault or instigation of the ratepayer and beyond the ratepayer's reasonable control.

Discount will **NOT** be allowed if the circumstances above are:

- (a) the result of the failure of the ratepayer to ensure that Council was given correct notification of the postal address for service of notices prior to the issue of the rate notices.

### **Payment Errors**

Where there is an apparent accidental short payment of the rates resulting from a miscalculation of the net amount due, arising from the payment of a number of rate notices at one time (ie addition error) or the tendering of an incorrect amount for a single rate notice (ie transposition error) then discount will be allowed in the following manner:

- (a) where the amount of the error is 50 dollars or less – full discount will be allowed and the underpaid amount will be treated as 'Rate Arrears';
- (b) where the amount of the error exceeds 50 dollars – the ratepayer will be given 14 days to pay the shortfall, if the shortfall is paid by the extended due date, full discount will be allowed at that time.

Allowance of discount in these circumstances will **NOT** be allowed if a transposition error or addition error exceeds 20% of the total net rates payable on the single rate notice or the number of rate notice paid at one time.

### **Excluded Matters**

Discount will not be allowed if the reliance is made solely on any combination of the following factors which would normally be considered to be under the person's control:

- Lack of availability of finances;
- Absence from property, area, state or country;
- Recent sale or purchase of the property.

## Delegated Authority

The Chief Executive Officer has delegated authority under this policy to grant discount for any application, if it meets the conditions above.

Authorised by resolution as at 24 March 2022



Scott Mason  
Acting Chief Executive Officer