

Water Charging

Purpose

This policy explains how Bridge Housing calculates and applies water charges.

Scope

This policy is for all Bridge Housing (we, our us) social housing tenants. There are a small number of exceptions including those living in crisis or transitional accommodation and those not eligible to be charged for water usage in accordance with the Residential Tenancies Act (2010).

Policy Overview

Our water charging policy has been developed to align with the [NSW Community Housing Water Charging Guidelines](#) and to ensure that tenants are charged for water usage in a fair and transparent way.

Guiding Principles

Our Tenant and Community Engagement Strategy, [Building Bridges](#) sets out how we engage our tenants and support people to get involved. It outlines how tenants can have a say in how we deliver our services and participate in social activities in their neighbourhoods and communities. Some of the ways tenants can get involved include joining a local Tenant Advisory Group meeting, attending a Time To Talk session, starting a community garden or applying for a [Big Idea Grant](#).

Water Charging Method

We apply a weekly water usage charge based on a flat rate per household size. That means the amount a tenant is charged changes based on the number of people living in the property.

Please note the water charging rates may be reviewed and adjusted annually to align with changes in the consumer price index.

The table below sets out the water usage rates including the maximum payable.

Household Size	Water Charge per Week
1 Person	\$5.00
2 People	\$7.00
3 People	\$9.00
4 People (MAX)	\$10.50

Advising tenants of water charges

We will advise tenants of the water charging rates at the start of their tenancy. After this, tenants will be advised of any change to the rate as part of the bi-annual Rent Review or when there is a change in approved household members. Tenants must advise of any changes to their household in line with our [Changes to a Household Policy](#).

Payment of Water Charges

Tenants can pay their water charge in multiple ways, just like rent payments.

The charge accrues weekly, and can be paid through Centrepay, EFTPOS terminals or bank transfer. We recommend tenants pay their water charges fortnightly with their rent.

Annual Review of Water Charges

Our water charging policy commits to a minimum review of tenant charges annually to ensure charges are equal to or less than actual water usage for the properties.

Water accounts will be reviewed in accordance with [NSW Community Housing Water Charging Guidelines](#).

In the case of any overpayment, a refund will be issued to the tenant as either credit on their rent or non-rent account.

Tenants Moving Properties or Ending Their Tenancy

If a tenant is transferring to another property or ending their tenancy, we will charge for water usage up to the end of the Residential Tenancy Agreement.

Water and the Environment

We are committed to managing water use wisely in our homes. Water usage will be monitored on a regular basis to avoid waste and excess use. Our commitment includes responding promptly to repair requests to fix leaking taps and pipes.

We encourage our tenants to be mindful of water usage and report any leaks to our repairs team.

In addition, our tenants are required to comply with any water restrictions put into place by the local water authority.

What if I am having trouble paying my water charges?

If you are concerned about your rent or water charges or are struggling to make payments, please call us on **02 8324 0800** and speak to your Housing Manager.

We can talk to you about repayment plans and/or recommend specialist support. We partner with financial support services who can provide you with support and assist you to better manage your money.

Appeals and Complaints

Tenants can appeal decisions relating to water charging in community housing but cannot appeal the decision to charge for water usage based on a flat rate charge.

Appeals and complaints about water charges can be lodged over the phone, mail, in person or via online form on our website www.bridgehousing.org.au

If you have any queries about water charges or would like to appeal a charge made to your account, the first step is to contact your Housing Manager on **02 8324 0800**.

If a tenant is not satisfied with a service we have provided or does not agree with a decision we have made, they can ask for a formal review. Our [Compliments, Complaints and Appeals Policy](#) outlines the many ways for tenants to make an appeal. This policy, and a helpful information brochure, is available from our office or they can be downloaded from our website www.bridgehousing.org.au.

If a tenant is unhappy with the outcome of the appeal, they can lodge a second level appeal with the Housing Appeals Committee. The Housing Appeals Committee is an independent agency that reviews certain decisions made by staff of Community Housing organisations and Housing NSW. For information on the Housing Appeals Committee call 1800 629 794 or go to www.hac.nsw.gov.au.

Related Documents and Resources

Type	Title
Legislation	NSW Residential Tenancies Act 2010
Guidelines	NSW Community Housing Water Charging Guidelines
Policy	Changes to a Household Policy
Policy	Compliments, Complaints and Appeals Policy

English

If you need help to understand this letter please contact the Telephone Interpreters Service on 131450 and ask them to contact on 8324 0800 for you at no cost. You can also come to the Bridge Housing office and ask for assistance in your language.

Simplified Chinese

如果您理解这封信有困难，请拨打电话传译服务 131450 要求电话传译服务替您拨打 Bridge Housing，电话 8324 0800。这项服务是免费的。您也可以到 Bridge Housing 的办公室来。要求用您的语言来协助您。

Spanish

Si necesita ayuda para entender esta carta, por favor comuníquese con el Servicio Telefónico de Intérpretes al 131450 y solicite que lo contacten sin cargo con Bridge Housing al 8324 0800. También puede dirigirse a las oficinas de Bridge Housing y solicitar asistencia en su idioma.

Russian

Если для понимания содержания этого письма Вам необходима помощь, свяжитесь, пожалуйста, с Телефонной переводческой службой по номеру 131450 и попросите соединить Вас с Bridge Housing по номеру 8324 0800. За соединение платить не нужно. Кроме того, Вы можете лично посетить офис Bridge Housing и попросить об услугах переводчика.

Greek

Εάν χρειάζεστε βοήθεια για να κατανοήσετε την παρούσα επιστολή, παρακαλώ επικοινωνήστε με την Υπηρεσία Τηλεφωνικών Διερμηνέων στο 131450 και ζητήστε τους να επικοινωνήσουν με το 8324 0800 για εσάς χωρίς καμία χρέωση. Μπορείτε επίσης να επισκεφθείτε το γραφείο Bridge Housing και να ζητήσετε βοήθεια στη γλώσσα σας.

Vietnamese

Nếu cần người giúp để hiểu thư này xin quý vị liên hệ với Dịch Vụ Thông Ngôn Điện Thoại số 131450 và nhờ họ liên lạc với Bridge Housing qua số 8324 0800 cho quý vị một cách miễn phí. Quý vị cũng có thể đến Văn Phòng của Bridge Housing và xin giúp đỡ bằng ngôn-ngữ của quý-vị.

Arabic

إذا احتجت إلى مُساعدة في فهم هذه الرسالة رجاء الاتصال مع خدمة الترجمة الهاتفية على رقم 131450 واطلب منهم أن يتصلوا لك بمكتب على رقم 8324 0800 بدون تكلفة عليك. ويمكنك أيضا الحضور إلى مكتب Bridge Housing وطلب المساعدة بلغتك.