



# **COMMUNITY HOUSING FOR SENIORS**



**Mareeba**  
SHIRE COUNCIL

## OVERVIEW

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This information is based on the Mareeba Shire Council Community Housing for Seniors Policy. In partnership with the State Government, Mareeba Shire Council (Council) provides community housing to eligible persons. It currently manages 108 units and is responsible for their upkeep and selecting new tenants. The majority of the properties are one bedroom, although there are four two-bedroom properties available. There are certain one-bedroom properties which are not suitable for couples due to their small size.

Applicants must have a current application with the Department of Housing and Public Works. In addition, to be eligible for Council housing the applicants must satisfy either of the following:

- Aged 55 years or over receiving a Disability Support Pension or
- Receive the Age Pension/DVA Pension

For more information please refer to the Community Housing for Seniors Policy which is available on Council's website or call 1300 308 461 for a copy of the policy.

## CONTACT COUNCIL

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If you require further information you can:

- **Phone** Council on 1300 308 461 (including After Hours)
- **Email** [info@msc.qld.gov.au](mailto:info@msc.qld.gov.au)
- **Visit** our customer service centres in Kuranda or Mareeba

### **Mareeba Customer Service Centre**

65 Rankin Street  
MAREEBA QLD 4880

Opening hours:

Monday to Friday 8.30am - 4.30pm

Thursday 9.00am - 4.30pm

### **Kuranda Library & Customer Service Centre**

Kuranda Community Precinct  
18-22 Arara Street  
KURANDA QLD 4881

Opening hours:

Monday to Friday: 10.00am – 5.00pm

Saturday: 9.00am – 12.00pm

## GENERAL INFORMATION

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### KEYS

Tenants are provided with a set of two keys for each unit. All doors are keyed alike so that one key opens all entry doors and screen doors. Additional keys required for family members or friends will incur additional charges. These must be organised through Council because they are registered keys.

Any keys lost, misplaced or accidentally broken are to be replaced at the tenant's cost. If a key is stolen, then the unit will need to be rekeyed to prevent stolen keys being used to gain entry.

### LOCKED OUT

When tenants have locked themselves out of their home, it is the tenant's responsibility to organise access and all costs will be covered by the tenant. The options include:

- During office hours - tenants can go to Rankin Street Office to collect a key. The spare key is signed out to the tenant and returned by the tenant at their earliest convenience.
- After hours - contact the Council After Hours Call Centre on 1300 308 461 and they will arrange for a locksmith to attend. There will be a charge for this service.

Tenants are encouraged to leave a key with a trusted neighbour or a family member or friend if they are concerned that they may lock themselves out. Another option includes a key safe fixed to the property, preferably at the rear of the property.

### MAINTENANCE

Tenants are responsible for the maintenance of the yard and gardens and for keeping the property clean. Tenants eligible for assistance can contact My Aged Care regarding the cleaning of fans and ceilings as well as general cleaning.

All other maintenance is coordinated through the Council unless permission has been granted. Any maintenance carried out without Council approval may result in the tenant paying to return the property to its original condition (as per tenancy regulations under the Residential Tenancies Authority).

Repairs such as a faulty power point or a faulty hot water system, are prioritised. Requests such as new floor coverings are assessed on an annual basis. Annual maintenance inspections are also conducted to assist with planning maintenance such as painting and leaky gutters.

The property is to be left in the same condition it was first tenanted with fair wear and tear taken into consideration. Tenants who smoke inside will be required to pay for any paint damage that occurs from the smoke. It is recommended that tenants and their visitors smoke outside to avoid these costs.

For urgent requests such as burst pipes inside, fire, power failure or overflowing toilet, Council endeavours to respond within 1-24 hours of notification, depending on the severity of the situation.

Non-urgent requests or repairs e.g. leaking taps, Council endeavours to respond within 2-14 days of notification.

## **PEST CONTROL**

Council currently organises annual treatment for ants, spiders and cockroaches. Any additional treatments required during the tenancy for any other pests will be the responsibility of the tenant. Tenants with a pet dog or cat will be required to pay for a flea treatment at the end of the tenancy.

## **WATER USAGE**

Tenants are not required to pay water charges on the property. However, water restrictions that have been put in place must be complied with. Tenants are required to be sensible in their water usage.

If an irrigation system or sprinkler is used, it must be water efficient and operated appropriately to conserve water. When watering gardens and lawns by any means, you should:

- apply water at a rate so that it does not pond, pool or run off;
- not apply water when the soil is already adequately moist to sustain plant growth, whether because of rain or other watering;
- apply water in such a manner so that it does not fall on buildings or hard surfaces and run to waste;
- use a manual timer with a maximum timing capability of 30 minutes with an efficient sprinkler;
- not apply water in windy conditions where the distribution pattern of the irrigation or sprinkling systems will be affected;
- apply water only to gardens that are sufficiently mulched to reduce evaporation;
- water early in the morning or early evening/night to avoid evaporation.

## **ONGOING ELIGIBILITY**

Tenants must advise if there are changes to their circumstances e.g. their income source changes. Tenants must also advise if they acquire any property or other assets as this can affect eligibility. Council is required to check this annually to ensure the most appropriate people are housed.

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

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### WHO DO I CONTACT IN AN EMERGENCY?

Please contact 000 if there is an emergency. All other non-urgent police matters should be directed to Police Link on 131 444. Also contact Council to advise them of the situation.

### HOW ARE PROPERTIES ALLOCATED?

Council properties are allocated based on a register of need. When a property becomes vacant, it is offered to an applicant who is listed on the Department of Housing and Public Works Housing Register.

### HOW LONG IS THE LEASE FOR?

Council offers tenants a periodic lease meaning that there is no fixed-term agreement. The main reason that an agreement would be terminated by Council is if the tenant does not comply with the terms and conditions agreed to in RTA Form 18a General Tenancy Agreement.

Should the tenant wish to leave, two weeks' notice must be given in writing. If the Council wishes the tenant to leave, two months' notice will be provided. Tenants can lodge their intention by submitting a RTA Form 13 Notice of Intention to Leave.

### IS THERE A BOND ON THE PROPERTY?

Yes, there is a bond. The bond is equivalent to four weeks rent as per the legislation.

Eligible tenants can apply for a bond loan if they do not have sufficient funds for their bond. This is organised through the Department of Housing and Public Works.

Bond is required to be paid in full when the Residential Tenancy Agreement is signed unless the tenant has an approved bond loan.

Bonds can be increased when the rent increases.

### WHERE ARE THE COTTAGES AND UNITS LOCATED?

Council's Community Housing properties are mostly located close to shops and in quiet areas. They are often neighbouring other Community Housing units or cottages.

The properties are located in 4 towns - Mareeba (83), Kuranda (14), Dimbulah (6) and Mt Molloy (5).

### WHO PAYS FOR WHAT?

The tenant is responsible for:

- Keeping up to date with their rent payments (two weeks ahead);
- The costs associated with the maintenance of the garden and yard;
- Utilities such as electricity and telephone;

- Fixtures or modifications to the property (e.g. garden locker or air conditioner) with approval from Council;
- Repairs to personal appliances e.g. TV, fridge, microwave.

### HOW MUCH RENT IS CHARGED?

Rent will be charged in accordance with the Community Housing Rent Policy. The market rent is compared to 25% of the tenant's assessable income plus rent assistance. The rent charged is the lower of the two amounts.

Additional information can be found at the Department of Housing & Public Works website <http://www.hpw.qld.gov.au/housing/pages/default.aspx>

### WHEN IS THE RENT INCREASED?

The rent is recalculated each year using the Community Housing Rent Calculator which considers the household's income.

Two months' notice will be given prior to any increase in accordance with tenancy regulations. Eligibility for Commonwealth Rent Assistance depends on the pension type and amount of rent paid. Contact Centrelink or Department of Veteran Affairs (DVA) for more information about rent assistance.

Note: The combined income of a couple is considered regardless of the number of bedrooms.

### WHERE DO I FIND TENANCY INFORMATION?

Information about renting in Queensland can be found on the Residential Tenancies Authority (RTA) website at [www.rta.qld.gov.au](http://www.rta.qld.gov.au) or the RTA can be contacted on 1300 366 311.

## FEEDBACK

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Council appreciates feedback to enable services to improve and evolve to meet the changing needs of the community. Residents can provide feedback in writing to

Email: [info@msc.qld.gov.au](mailto:info@msc.qld.gov.au)

Post: Mareeba Shire Council  
Community Housing  
PO Box 154  
MAREEBA Q 4880