



Animal Management Fees and Charges Policy

Document Number:
A4929132

1.1 Policy Author: Health, Security and Regulatory Services Department

1.2 Objectives: This policy aims to ensure that Council's Animal Management fees and charges framework is a user-pays, cost-recovery system which is more equitable for the community, promotes responsible animal ownership and to ensure appropriate levels of service are being met by Council. (Note: Dog Registration is covered by a separate policy due to a differing policy intent)

1.3 Regulatory Authorities:

- *Local Government Act (2009)*
- *Animal Management (Cats and Dogs) Act 2008*
- *Biosecurity Act 2014 & Biosecurity Regulation 2016*
- Ipswich City Council Local Law 6: Animal Management
- Ipswich City Council Subordinate Local Law 6: Animal Management

1.4 Scope: The core matters addressed by this policy are the methodology and categories for calculation of Council's Animal Management permits, impounding and general fees and charges (not including dog registration, which is addressed in a separate policy).

~~This policy commences on 1 July 2018.~~

1.5 Policy Statement:

a. A user-pays, full cost recovery fees and charges calculation methodology

In accordance with a range of state legislation and local laws, Council administers various Animal Management permits, impounding and general fees and charges which are designed to ensure the community comply with the law, and that the environment, public health, safety and amenity is protected.

Moving to a system of user pays shifts the expenditure to those who use the service and away from those who do not.

However, there are certain Animal Management fees and charges that sit outside the full cost recovery methodology. These fees relate to the impounding of cats, small livestock (sheep, goats, swine and similar livestock) and birds/poultry. These fees have previously been implemented at a higher rate (closer to full cost recovery) and council experience identified that the animal's owners were not

releasing the animals from the pound due to 'high fees' leaving the animals to be disposed of by council (rehoming/auction/destruction all incurring further costs for council). The fees were reviewed and lowered and council is now experiencing a higher release rate for these animals. These fees are at a lower rate than cost recovery.

Council uses the following methodology for calculation of fees and charges for the Animal Management Services provided by the Health, Security and Regulatory Services Department:

- i) The relevant officer level (administrative, technical or professional) and time required for Council to provide a particular service is determined by the Manager (Animal Management).
- ii) The Chief Operating Officer (Health, Security and Regulatory Services) undertakes an annual review of the hourly rate to be charged for the coming financial year for each class of officer (administrative, technical and professional in ascending order of cost to Council). The hourly rate is based on actual cost to Council, including wages and all relevant overheads and additional expenses.
- iii) The total fee or charge for a given service is calculated by multiplying the number of hours required multiplied by the applicable hourly rate.

Services which have a relatively equal time requirement from one instance to the next (e.g. a standard animal management permit application), a fixed amount is charged.

Services which may have highly variable time requirements, the fee is calculated based on the actual time taken. *An example of this is the impounding of roaming large livestock, which may take as little as one hour, or may take considerably longer, depending on the complexity of the matter.*

b. Fees and Categories

General Regulatory Fees

The following general regulatory fees may apply to all Animal Management Services (in the Health, Security and Regulatory Services area of Council's Schedule of Fees and Charges):

- i) An Inspection Fee is payable in addition to any licence/permit/registration fee in certain circumstances, including:
 - where Council needs to inspect a premises to ensure compliance with relevant legislation/licence/permit/registration and the inspection fee has not already been paid as part of the licence/permit/registration fee;
 - where inspections are undertaken as a result of public complaint and the complaint is subsequently justified;

- where a previous inspection has identified non-compliance and a follow-up inspection is required to ensure compliance has been achieved.

~~ii) A Replacement Licence or Permit Fee is applicable when a business or premises requires a replacement of their licence or permit which has been damaged, destroyed, lost or stolen.~~

~~iii)ii)~~ Any amendment which requires assessment by a Council officer is a chargeable service. Amendments are charged at an hourly rate (minimum charge one hour), up to a maximum of the relevant fee for a new licence/permit.

~~iv)iii)~~ If the amendment requires a full reassessment of the licence/permit, the process for a new application or assessment is to be followed and relevant fees are payable.

~~v)iv)~~ Where relevant legislation requires or allows for a Transfer of Licence or Permit, a fee for this service is payable.

~~vi)v)~~ Should a customer request an inspection of a premises and the supply of a written report of that inspection, Council will charge an inspection report fee for this service.

~~vii) A late payment fee that covers administrative costs, including officer time to follow up unpaid accounts, will be charged where payment is not received before the due date.~~

In addition to the above General Regulatory Fees, the following fee and charge categories apply to Council's Animal Management services:

~~viii)vi)~~ Animal Management Permits

~~ix)vii)~~ Impounding & Release Fees and Charges

~~x)viii)~~ Destruction of Animals Fees and Charges

~~xi)ix)~~ General Animal Management Fees

~~xii)x)~~ Refunds

c. Animal Management Permits

The permit fee is calculated utilising a full-cost recovery system on the basis of Ipswich City Council agreed service levels. High risk and moderate risk animal management activities require more time to approve and audit than low risk animal management activities.

Applications for animal management permits fit into two categories: **Standard and Non-Standard.**

Standard applications (low risk activities with no initial inspection)

These activities require no initial inspection and require the applicant to complete a form agreeing to standard conditions set out in (*codes to be developed*). These Permits can be granted upon application over the counter. (If the applicant cannot agree to the standard conditions of the permit without an inspection and/or desktop assessment from a technical officer taking place they must apply for a Non Standard Permit –see next section)

Non-Standard applications (moderate and major risk activities, and those low risk activities where the applicant cannot abide by the conditions set out in the Standard application process)

These activities may require an initial inspection in the approval process or a desktop assessment from a technical officer.

Application fee includes the first year's permit fee.

Permits are required to be renewed annually and may involve inspections by technical officers (as deemed by agreed service levels).

Animal Management permit types and risk categories:

Risk Rating	Permit Type	Application type
LOW	ANIMAL PERMIT , which includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Poultry (chickens, ducks, geese, peacocks etc) — Pigeons — Birds (other than poultry, pigeons or more than 25 peacocks, guinea fowl, eclectus parrots or birds from the cockatoo family) — Horses — Animals Pigs (Non-Standard only) — Animals (eg. cattle, sheep etc, excluding horses and pigs) 	Standard or Non-Standard
MOD	COMMERCIAL STABLE LICENCE	Non-Standard only
MAJOR	COMMERCIAL KENNEL LICENCE	Non-Standard only
MOD	DOMESTIC CAT PERMIT (to keep 3 or 4 desexed cats on land less than 2000m2)	Non-Standard only
MOD	PET SHOP LICENCE	Non-Standard only
MOD	FIVE PLUS CAT PERMIT (to keep 5 or more desexed cats)	Non-Standard only
MOD	FIVE PLUS DOG PERMIT (to keep 5 or more dogs) (Dog registration fees are additional)	Non-Standard only
MAJOR	COMMERCIAL CATTERY LICENCE (selling, boarding and breeding)	Non-Standard only
LOW	DOMESTIC DOG PERMIT (to keep 3 or 4 dogs on land less than 2000m2) (Dog registration fees are additional)	Non-Standard only
MAJOR	GUARD DOG PERMIT (per property) (Dog registration fees are additional)	Non-Standard only
MAJOR	RESTRICTED/PROHIBITED DOG PERMIT - RENEWALS ONLY (Restricted dogs are determined by State Government legislation ie Dogo Argentino, Fila Brasileiro, Japanese Tosa and American Pitbull Terrier. Dog registration fees are additional. This permit fee only applies to those owners who owned the dogs prior to 1 June 2002.)	Non-Standard only

d. Seizing, Impounding & Release Fees and Charges

Impounding and Release fees and charges will be calculated using the methodology referred to in 1.5 (a) with exception to Other Livestock, Poultry and Birds, and Dogs – Impoundment First Release (see below for more detail).

Fees will be calculated based on the timing of the impounding/release with regards to Pound operating times and provision of the following possible services (but not limited to):

- Seizure of animal creating a nuisance (e.g. roaming) via complaint or on-the-road sighting
- Travel time and possible usage of council vehicles and trucks
- Provision of sustenance to animals
- Cleaning of enclosures
- Veterinarian consultation
- Administration of any medication required e.g. flea or worm control
- Communication and research (contacting owners/verifying owners via registration/microchip etc.)
- Creation of notices and reports and other various administration tasks (e.g. updating databases and records)
- Use of council equipment and consumables

The Pound operating hours are determined by the Chief Operating Officer (Health, Security and Regulatory Services).

Other Livestock, Poultry and Birds

The fees relating to sheep, goats, swine or similar livestock, poultry and birds will be calculated to provide a reduced fee (refer to 1.5 (a)) as part of an incentive for owners to release their animals.

Dogs – Impoundment First Release

Where a dog that is currently registered is impounded and the dog is displaying a current Ipswich City Council registration tag or has implanted a functioning, up to date microchip and has no history of non-compliance OR the dog is under three months of age and has not been previously impounded, it will be returned to the dog owner at no charge.

Where the dog owner is not at home the dog will be taken to the *Ipswich City Council Pound and Animal Management Centre* and held for the owner. Where the dog is held for more than one day the first day fees will not apply to the release fee where the dog has been taken to the pound.

Multiple Impoundment – Dog/Cat

Where a second or subsequent dogs/cats are impounded during the same incident and collected at the same time, the second or subsequent release fee be charged at 50% of the ordinary applicable fee, and no sustenance be charged to the second or subsequent dog/cat.

Desexing Financial Incentive

Release fees and charges for cats and dogs will be calculated to provide an incentive for owners to desex their cat or dog on release if their pet is entire upon impoundment.

e. General Animal Management Fees

Hire of Traps (for cats and dogs)

Traps are available from council for hire for a period of seven days at no charge. A late fee will be charged (per day) after the seventh day should the trap not be returned to provide an incentive for the traps to be returned quickly. Where a trap has not been returned after 30 or more days, an additional fee will be charged to collect the trap.

Dangerous and Menacing Dog Signs

Owners of Regulated Dogs must sign their property appropriately (as per the *Animal Management (Cats and Dogs) Act 2008*) advising of a regulated dog(s) on the property. Council will provide these signs free of charge. The signs will be issued with the Regulated Dog Declaration. The signs must be returned to Council in the event that a Declaration is overturned on review, or the Regulated Dog is deceased or removed from the Local Government Area.

Compliant Dangerous and Menacing Dog Incentive

Owners of regulated dogs will be eligible for a lower fee for subsequent years where full compliance is evident and there are nil reported breaches of Regulated Dog conditions.

Regulated Dog Tags

Owners of regulated dogs (dangerous and menacing dogs) must ensure the regulated dog wears a regulated dog tag as prescribed by Schedule 1 of the *Animal Management (Cats and Dogs) Act 2008* and the *Animal Management (Cats and Dogs) Regulation 2009*

Microchipping - Impoundment

Council may require microchipping as part of the impound and release process.

Microchipping – Community Engagement

Council may offer a microchipping service as part of community events to increase microchipping rates across the Ipswich local government area.

f. Refunds

Where a customer requests a refund, the following applies: If Council has not yet incurred the costs associated with providing a particular service, it will provide a refund minus an administration fee. Satisfactory proof is required to support the request for refund. Satisfactory proof includes a statutory declaration or other form of documentary evidence.

g. Extenuating Circumstances

The Chief Operating Officer - Health Security and Regulatory Services Department may choose to waive the applicable regulatory fee (e.g. application and permit renewal fees) where there are extenuating circumstances. Satisfactory proof is required to support the request for waiver. Satisfactory proof includes a statutory declaration or other form of documentary evidence.

Date of Council Resolution: ~~23 April 2018~~

Committee Reference and Date: ~~City Management, Finance and Community Engagement Committee No. 2018(04) of 17 April 2018~~

No. of resolution: ~~16~~

Date to be reviewed: ~~23 April 2020~~