

# Water Consumption Charges Policy (QLD)

## 1. Purpose

The policy is designed to encourage water conservation and reduce water consumption. HOME in PLACE requires all tenants living in social and affordable housing programs to pay water consumption charges in accordance with Section 166 of the Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation Act 2008.

## 2. Scope

This policy applies to all tenants living in properties owned or managed by HOME in PLACE in Queensland. This policy does not apply to a HOME in PLACE Subsidiary Company or operations outside of Queensland.

## 3. Policy Statement

Generally, tenants of properties managed by HOME in PLACE are required to pay water consumption charges. This is determined by whether the property in which the tenant resides has a separate or a shared water meter and whether HOME in PLACE receives sufficient consumption information from the local water authority to determine the tenant's water consumption.

Tenants can only be charged for water consumption if:

- The property is individually metered.
- The property meets minimum water efficiency standards as set out in Section 22 of the [Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation Regulation 2009](#).
- The tenancy agreement states the tenant must pay for water consumption.

HOME in PLACE is responsible for:

- Meeting all other costs associated with water provision such as water connection charges, sewerage and other charges and provision of water in common areas.
- Actioning relevant water authority bills to ensure that costs are charged on to tenants within the legislated timeframe.

HOME in PLACE expects tenants to:

- Arrange for prompt payment of their water consumption charges.
- Pay their water account on or before the due date.
- Tell HOME in PLACE immediately if they are unable to make a payment. Where a tenant has difficulty paying their water consumption charge, HOME in PLACE will work with and support that tenant resolving their difficulty.
- Report water leaks promptly to reduce wastage and avoid excessive water consumption charges.
- Conserve water wherever possible.
- Be responsible for complying with any water restrictions put into place by the local water authority.

- Pay any penalties resulting from their breach of water restrictions. These penalties are imposed and collected by the local water authority, not HOME in PLACE.

## Water Efficiency

A property meets minimum water efficiency standards if the following conditions are met:

Water Efficient Device	Minimum Standard
Internal cold water taps and single mixer taps (excluding bathtub taps and taps for appliances)	A maximum flow rate of 9 litres per minute
Showerheads	A maximum flow rate of 9 litres per minute
Toilets	A dual flush function not exceeding 6.5 litres on full flush and 3.5 litres on half flush and a maximum average flush volume of 4 litres (based on the average of 1 full flush and 4 half flushes)

\*Residential Tenancies Authority 'Water Charging' fact sheet ([Fact-sheet-water-charging.pdf \(rta.qld.gov.au\)](https://www.rta.qld.gov.au/fact-sheet-water-charging.pdf))

At the start of the tenancy agreement, HOME in PLACE will inform a tenant of their obligation to pay water consumption charges. The presence of water efficient devices should be noted on the Entry Condition Report.

## Water Consumption Charges

HOME in PLACE charges tenants residing in homes that have a separate water meter for water based on their actual water consumption.

Actual water charges will start after HOME in PLACE processes the first water authority bill for the property where the tenant has lived in the property for the full period of that water consumption bill. HOME in PLACE will calculate the tenant's first actual water charge by subtracting the ingoing water meter reading on the Entry Condition Report from the water meter reading provided by the water authority at the end of the billing period.

HOME in PLACE will bill tenant water consumption charges within four (4) weeks of receiving the water authority bill from QLD Department of Housing.

## Evidence Requirements and Billing

HOME in PLACE will calculate actual water charges from the billing information supplied by the relevant water authority. HOME in PLACE will provide tenants with evidence of their water consumption to verify the amount being charged. This evidence will include:

- The dates of the billing period
- The water meter reading as recorded at the start and end of the billing period
- The consumption charge per kilolitre (kL)

Tenants will be billed directly by HOME in PLACE.

## Determining Water Consumption Charges for New Tenants and Tenants Who are Leaving their Property

### *Water consumption charges for new tenants*

HOME in PLACE will calculate a tenant's first actual water charge by subtracting the ingoing water meter reading on the Entry Condition Report from the water meter reading provided by the water authority at the end of the billing period.

### *Water consumption charges for tenants who are temporarily away from their property*

For actual water charge tenants, the water meter reading will reflect an absence from the property. That is, the bill relating to that period will be lower as no consumption will have occurred during that time. That lower consumption will be reflected in lower actual water charges for the next period. Therefore, for actual water charge tenants, there is no specific "exemption" during absences from their property.

### *Water consumption charges for tenants who are leaving their property*

Tenants who are leaving their current property, whether they are leaving HOME in PLACE managed properties or transferring to another HOME in PLACE property, are required to pay any actual water charges outstanding on their water consumption account at the end date of their tenancy.

To prevent disputes, the Residential Tenancies Authority strongly recommends that both parties ensure the water meter reading is recorded in both the entry and exit condition reports at the beginning and end of the tenancy.

## Payment of Water Consumption Charges

HOME in PLACE expects tenants to arrange for prompt payment of their water consumption charges. Tenants must notify HOME in PLACE immediately if they are unable to make payments. Where tenants have difficulty paying their water consumption charges, HOME in PLACE will work with and support that tenant towards resolving their difficulty.

Water consumption charges can be paid through automatic Centrepay deduction, or BPAY using details provided by HOME in PLACE.

## Further Information

### *Allowances*

HOME in PLACE may consider granting allowances to tenants in the following circumstances:

- The tenant or one of the household members is undergoing home base dialysis.
- The tenant or one of the household members has a medical condition or disability that necessitates the use of significantly more water than usual.
- The household consist of six or more people.
- Where leaking pipes and / or taps result in a significantly higher than usual water consumption charge and the tenant has taken all reasonable steps to notify HOME in PLACE in a timely manner.

Tenants will need to apply in writing with documented evidence in support of the application in order to be considered for a water consumption allowance.

There are no allowances for water consumption during absences from the property.

### *Appeals and review of decisions*

If a tenant is not satisfied with the service provided by HOME in PLACE or does not agree with a decision it has made, they should first talk to a Tenancy Relations Officer, if they are still dissatisfied, they can ask for a formal review. To do this the tenant must complete an FOR-001 Appeals Request Form. No formal review is available in respect to the amount of an actual water charge or decisions by the Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal (QCAT).

Tenants may request a formal review in the following ways:

- Via the Feedback form from the contact us page on HOME in PLACE website [here](#)
- Downloading and completing the appeals form found on our website [here](#)
- requesting a copy of the appeals form be sent out by contacting us on 1300 333 733 or visiting your local branch and requesting a copy.

## 4. Definitions and Acronyms Glossary

For clarification of any definitions or acronyms contained within this document, please click on the [Glossary](#) for information.

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