



CUMBERLAND
CITY COUNCIL

Emergency Relief Fund Guidelines

AUTHORISATION & VERSION CONTROL

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PURPOSE

The Emergency Relief Fund allows Council to provide financial assistance to fundraising appeals that respond to crisis or disaster, new community-led initiatives, or individual hardship requests that address an emerging or unexpected need where action is time critical.

DEFINITIONS

Term	Meaning
Emergency	<p>An emergency is a situation that poses an immediate and significant risk to the safety, well-being, or environment of individuals, a vulnerable person, or the community. This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Environmental impacts, such as natural disasters or accidents causing widespread damage.• Social impacts, including crises that disrupt the social fabric or community functioning, such as:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Sudden displacement or housing instability.○ Public health emergencies.○ Significant social unrest or conflict within the community.○ Urgent situations impacting access to essential services
Vulnerable Person	<p>A vulnerable person refers to individuals or groups who, due to their circumstances, face heightened risks during emergencies. This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• People from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) backgrounds who may experience language barriers or limited access to services.• New arrivals, including those on bridging visas, who may face legal or social limitations.• Individuals experiencing financial hardship, social isolation, or other factors that reduce their capacity to respond effectively to crises.• Those with health conditions, disabilities, or lack of family and community support.

SCOPE

The Emergency Relief Fund is one of two assistance programs provided by Council and governed by the *Community Grants and Donations Policy*. This is to ensure that Council complies with section 356 of the *Local Government Act 1993*:

- “(1) A council may, in accordance with a resolution of the council, contribute money or otherwise grant financial assistance to persons for the purpose of exercising its functions.*
- (2) A proposed recipient who acts for private gain is not ineligible to be granted financial assistance but must not receive any benefit under this section until at least 28 days’ public notice of the council’s proposal to pass the necessary resolution has been given.*
- (3) However, public notice is not required if:*
- (a) the financial assistance is part of a specific program, and*
 - (b) the program’s details have been included in the council’s draft operational plan for the year in which the financial assistance is proposed to be given, and*

- (c) *the program's proposed budget for that year does not exceed 5 per cent of the council's proposed income from the ordinary rates levied for that year, and*
- (d) *the program applies uniformly to all persons within the council's area or to a significant group of persons within the area."*

FUNDING AVAILABLE

The funding pool available through the Emergency Relief Fund is determined in line with Council's annual budget review. Requests will be considered according to demonstrated need, the proposed use of funds and available program funding.

ELIGIBILITY

The following applications are considered **ineligible** for funding under the Emergency Relief Fund:

- Failure to demonstrate a clear and urgent need for assistance, or if the request is for routine or ongoing operational expenses that do not reflect an emergency or hardship situation.
- Applications from individuals or organisations that are not located in the Cumberland LGA or cannot demonstrate that the beneficiaries are residents of the Cumberland LGA.
- Support for political events or programs.
- Are from any government organisation, agency, or school.
- Applications that are eligible for funding through another Council grant or program.
- Requests that duplicate Council's current programs or service offerings.
- Applications from organisations or individuals that have not met the reporting requirements or conditions of previous financial assistance provided by Council.
- Failure to demonstrate genuine hardship.
- Applications from an organisation or individual that has an outstanding debt to Council.

Councillors and Council staff (including their immediate families) are ineligible to apply for funds.

APPLICATION PROCESS

Applicants must register with Council's current grants management system (Smartygrants) and complete the Emergency Relief Fund online application form. Applicants may be required to provide evidence of incorporation, relevant insurance, and appropriate financial statements.

ASSESSMENT PROCESS

Applications will be assessed in accordance with the *Community Grants and Donations Policy* and the established criteria outlined in this guideline.

A recommendation will be reported to Council for consideration. The decision to approve funding will be by resolution of Council. Applicants will be advised in writing of the outcome of their application.

CONDITIONS OF FUNDING

Successful applicants will be required to enter into a Funding Agreement with Council and must complete acquittal through Council's grants management system (SmartyGrants) at the completion of the approved use of funds. Council encourages the provision of photos of the finished project and any

other information relevant to the funding provided by Council. Failure to complete an acquittal will impact eligibility for future funding requests from Council.

Applicants who are successful must also abide by the following conditions:

- Where the project is of an ongoing nature, Council will not be responsible for recurrent costs or ongoing maintenance.
- Council funding may be used in conjunction with funding from other sources (outside Council) provided that such funding is disclosed at the time of request to Council.
- Funding must be used for the purpose for which it is approved.
- Projects must acknowledge Cumberland City Council as the funding body in the activity. The use of the Council approved logo is required in any promotional activity or signage related to the funded project, and the applicant must acknowledge this assistance on media releases, invitations, posters, signs, digital channels such as websites, and any other suitable communications. Applicants give permission for Council to use their name, value of support offered and intended use of funds for any reporting or promotion purposes the General Manager deems appropriate.
- Should the project not proceed, all funds must be returned to Council.

COUNCIL'S REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

Council's Community Development Team will maintain appropriate records of all applications approved under this Fund. All Emergency Relief Fund expenditure will be reported to Council quarterly as part of Council's Operational Plan update and be listed in Council's Annual Report. A register will be maintained on Council's website of approved applications under the Emergency Relief Fund for the current and previous financial year.

RELATED LEGISLATION, DOCUMENTS AND COUNCIL POLICIES

- Section 356 of the *Local Government Act 1993*.
- Cumberland City Council Community Strategic Plan
- Community Grants and Donations Policy
- Community Grants Program Guidelines