

Community Services – Client Contribution Policy

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DOCUMENT TITLE: SJQ Community Services – Client Contribution Policy			

DOCUMENT APPROVALS			
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Version	Issue Date	Details of Changes	Author
1		Initial Issue	Jasmin Higlett

1. Purpose – what is the purpose of the policy?

This policy outlines St John Queensland's responsibilities for clients receiving Commonwealth Home Support Programme (CHSP) Services or subsidised Queensland Government Community Transport.

2. Scope – who does it apply to?

This policy applies to all Community Services employees and volunteers involved in providing services to clients receiving CHSP Services or subsidised Queensland Government Community Transport.

3. Policy Content

In line with the Commonwealth Home Support Programme (CHSP) Client Contribution Framework and the Queensland Government Community Transport Program, clients who can afford to contribute to the cost of services they receive should do so.

St John Queensland's client contribution structure is designed to support the financial sustainability of the organisation as a community services provider. Fees collected by St John Queensland will be utilised to enhance and expand the services provided by St John Queensland.

St John Queensland will collect fees from clients in line with the CHSP Client Contribution Framework and the Queensland Government Community Transport Program which is guided by the following principles:

- Consistency: All clients who can afford to contribute to the cost of their care should do so. Client contributions should not exceed the actual cost of service provision.
- Transparency: Policies should be in an accessible format and publicly available. Providers

should give a copy of and explain their policy to all new and existing clients.

- Hardship: Policies should include arrangements for clients who are unable to pay the requested contribution.
- Reporting: Providers should report the dollar amount collected from client contributions.
- Fairness: Policies should take into account the client's capacity to pay and should not exceed the actual cost to deliver the services. In administering this, providers need to take into account partnered clients, clients in receipt of compensation payments and bundling of services.
- Sustainability: Revenue from client contributions should be used to support ongoing service delivery and expand the services that providers are currently funded to deliver.

4. St John Queensland Client Contributions

St John Queensland will charge fees for transport and social support services. This fee will not exceed the cost of delivering the service and has been set in accordance with the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing and Queensland Government guidelines.

St John Queensland will advise clients at initial contact of the fees associated with transport and social support services. If a client advises they are unable to pay for the service, they will be supported to complete a financial hardship application and a fee reduction will be considered on a case-by-case basis for an agreed period of time and then reviewed.

St John Queensland will keep a record of all client contributions and report this to Government funding bodies as stated in the grant funding agreements.

Our prices may be subject to regular price increases. Prices are reviewed and may increase every year on 1st February and 1st August. Prices will be increased in line with the official Consumer Price Index, and in line with the National Guide to the CHSP Client Contribution Framework and the Independent Health and Aged Care Pricing Authority. This price increase is to support St John Queensland with any increased costs of service delivery.

5. Non-payment of client contributions

Clients will be sent reminders for unpaid invoices. If an account remains unpaid, after reminders have been sent for overdue accounts, and ability to pay is not an issue, St John Queensland may choose to withdraw services, either temporarily or permanently. This decision will be notified to the client immediately. If the client wishes to re-engage our services and St John Queensland agrees, the client will need to rectify their account and provide assurances that it will not become delinquent again. In some cases, it may be necessary for a client to prepay for their service.

6. Responsibilities

As a service provider, we agree to:

- tell people what their client contributions are before we start delivering services to them
- include the amount and how to pay on the person's care plan and service agreement
- monitor the client's contributions so they do not experience financial hardship
- collect contributions according to our business systems
- record contributions on the Government Data Exchange
- display our client contribution policy on our website

7. Review and Amendments

SJQ reserves the right to review and amend this policy at any time to ensure it remains aligned with organisational goals, values, and changing business needs. Employees will be notified of any changes to this policy.

8. Acknowledgement

Team members acknowledge and agree to adhere to the expectations outlined in this policy.

9. Non-compliance

Any breach of the obligations contained in this policy may result in disciplinary action being taken up to and including termination of employment in line with the SJQ Counselling and Disciplinary Procedure.

10. Related documents

St John Qld Related Documents