

# COVID-19: Councils back communities in time of crisis



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Councils across Western Australia are taking up the challenge to further support their local communities as we all confront the COVID-19 pandemic.

Those that are able are putting a clamp on rates, reducing charges for services and expediting approvals to assist local businesses and sustain local economies.

Some Local Governments have the capacity to act immediately and are reassigning reserves to support local business activity and capital works programs. Others that start from a smaller revenue base are finding other means and many are implementing new initiatives to support their communities at grassroots.

The State Government has supported the sector and WALGA in redressing legislative and regulatory requirements that threaten to hinder the response to the pandemic.

Last week WALGA negotiated a new online platform to assist Councils engage with their local businesses for local contracts, to help keep expenditure within local economies.

However, it needs to be understood by the community that not all Local Governments are able to implement the same range of measures or to the same extent.

WALGA has urged the State Government to freeze all increases

on fees, charges and levies that are passed onto Local Governments, so that Councils are in the strongest position to place a freeze on rates.

In addition to freezing rates and charges, many Councils have resolved or are considering implementing packages that include six-month's rent relief for small businesses in Council properties, grants to community groups, buy local campaigns and coordinated advice to local businesses.

Communities throughout Western Australia have always trusted their Local Government to respond with their communities' best interests in mind during emergency situations. This is what Local Government has been doing for many decades and our response to COVID-19 will be no different.

For further information on local initiatives, please check your Local Government website or visit the Community page at [www.walga.asn.au](http://www.walga.asn.au) for a link to each Council.

Every community member has a responsibility to make a difference in this current situation, please make a commitment to observe the health and safety guidelines and directions of the Department of Health and WA Police.

During these difficult times it is important to know that all tiers of Government are working together. I am confident that we all share a strong commitment to provide assistance and support to ensure viable and vibrant communities continue after the COVID-19 pandemic.



WALGA

Councils in the  
*Community.*

COVID-19