



ACT Council of Parents & Citizens Associations

The parent voice on public education

Financial Hardship Policy: Member Fee Reduction or Waiver

Purpose:

This policy provides a framework for offering financial relief to P&C Associations experiencing financial hardship by reducing or waiving membership fees. The objective is to ensure that all member P&Cs can maintain their membership and access the full range of support provided by Council, regardless of financial difficulties.

Scope:

This policy applies to all P&C Associations affiliated with Council, including new, re-establishing, and existing members.

Policy Principles:

- **Fairness and Equity:** All P&C Associations will be considered equally, based on transparent and clear criteria.
- **Consistency:** A standardised process will be followed for all requests to ensure consistency in decision-making.
- **Confidentiality:** Financial information provided by the P&C will be handled with confidentiality and respect.

Support Provided:

1. **Newly Established P&Cs:**
Newly formed P&Cs will receive \$500 from Council and assistance to access seed funding of \$1200 from the Education Directorate, which will cover the first year's insurance and membership fees.
2. **Re-establishing P&Cs:**
P&Cs that are re-establishing after a period of inactivity will have their membership fees waived for one year.
3. **Hardship Support for Existing P&Cs:**
P&Cs experiencing financial hardship may apply for a reduction or waiver of membership fees for up to one year, with an option to reapply annually.

Criteria for Hardship Consideration:

To ensure fair and informed decisions, P&Cs applying for a reduction or waiver must provide the following:

1. Financial Information:

- Latest bank statements.
- Most recent financial report or budget.
- Details of any outstanding debts or liabilities.

- Expected income and expenses for the current financial year and the next financial year.
- 2. Explanation of Hardship:**
A brief statement explaining the financial challenges currently facing the P&C and how these impact their ability to pay membership fees.
 - 3. Support Sought:**
The specific type of relief requested (full waiver, partial reduction, or deferred payment).
 - 4. Plan for Future Financial Sustainability:**
An outline of how the P&C intends to manage its finances and ensure sustainability for the following year. This may include planned fundraising activities, securing external funding or grants, or improved financial management strategies.
 - 5. Other Relevant Information:**
Any additional information that may support the application, such as recent changes in funding, unforeseen expenses, or community needs.

Application Process:

1. P&Cs experiencing hardship must submit a completed [application form](#), including the required financial documentation.
2. Applications will be reviewed by a designated subcommittee within Council, which will make recommendations based on the information provided.
3. Decisions will be communicated to the applying P&C after Council's next executive meeting (week 2 & 7 of every term).

Decision-Making Criteria:

When assessing applications, the subcommittee will consider:

- The P&C's available financial resources.
- Outstanding financial obligations.
- Any exceptional or unforeseen circumstances impacting the P&C.
- The P&C's efforts to raise funds or manage finances.

Duration of Support:

- Financial support is typically granted for one membership year.
- P&Cs may reapply annually if their hardship persists, with updated financial documentation.
- If P&C Council becomes concerned about a P&C's solvency they will provide a referral to a registered insolvency practitioner.

Review and Amendment of Policy:

Adopted November 2024. This policy will be reviewed every two years to ensure it remains relevant and fair.

We are the peak body for parent associations, representing over 60,000 parents in ACT public schools.

Authorised by Veronica Elliott for the ACT Council of Parents & Citizens Associations.

We acknowledge the traditional custodians of the lands where we live, work and learn, and pay our respects to elders past, present, and future.

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