



Shelley Hancock
Minister for Local Government

MEDIA RELEASE

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NSW GOVERNMENT SAFEGUARDS COUNCIL JOBS

The NSW Government today announced it would provide \$1,500 a fortnight in financial support to local government employees whose jobs have been impacted by the state's current COVID-19 outbreak.

The NSW Local Government Job Retention Allowance successfully protected significant metropolitan and regional local government job losses last year, and will continue to provide the necessary support for council workers across the state.

Minister for Local Government Shelley Hancock said the NSW Government is taking action to help councils minimise job losses and retain skilled staff as the COVID-19 lockdown and restrictions continue to impact local communities.

"The NSW Government is determined to support local government employees in keeping their jobs, and to ensure local councils retain skilled and experienced staff to serve their communities now and in the future," Mrs Hancock said.

"The Job Retention Allowance provides \$1,500 per fortnight per eligible employee for up to three months to help councils retain staff whose employment has been impacted by the COVID-19 outbreak.

"Commonwealth Government assistance is not available to local councils, therefore it is important the NSW Government steps in to provide this nation-leading support package.

"The Job Retention Allowance was introduced as part of the NSW Government's COVID-19 Local Government Economic Stimulus Package to assist councils to support staff stood down as a result of the 2020 lockdown.

"Fortunately, job losses were minimised thanks to the commendable efforts of the local government sector across NSW to retrain and redeploy affected staff, and I encourage all councils to again try and redeploy staff wherever possible.

"There is no doubt that we need to remain adaptable to the volatile environment in which we find ourselves because of the evolving COVID-19 outbreak in NSW and that's why we are once again putting in place the Job Retention Allowance to ensure financial support can be accessed by councils that need it most.

“Local councils across NSW are at the frontline assisting their communities respond to the challenges COVID-19 is presenting.

“The NSW Government recognises their commendable work, and will support local council employees so that they can continue to serve our communities.”

Any council that meets the eligibility criteria, as per last year’s program, can submit claims for the Job Retention Allowance.

Eligibility criteria include that the council:

- Can demonstrate financial distress through an actual or potential loss of at least 30 per cent in revenue (rates and annual charges, user fees and charges or other revenue) for the current or previous quarter in a council business unit or entity
- Is a party to the Splinter Award or equivalent agreement
- Has paid the eligible employee four weeks paid COVID-19 Special Leave under the Splinter Award or equivalent agreement, and
- Has entered into a funding agreement with the Office for Local Government.

The Job Retention Allowance criteria is in line with similar government relief programs including JobSaver.

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