

Fees and Charges 2024/2025

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Q: Why are the Fees and Charges being reviewed and consulted on?

A: Council's Fees and Charges are reviewed annually to ensure they reflect the cost of services being provided and an appropriate balance is maintained in funding activities through a balance of rates and Fees and Charges.

Q: How does ICC set the Fees and Charges?

A: Council takes into account principles of transparency, efficiency and fairness to set its Fees and Charges. These are outlined in Council's [Revenue and Financing Policy](#).

Council's activities are evaluated for their costs and benefits to the community, including principles of transparency and accountability. Fees and Charges are a preferred funding option for services where they are practicable. They reflect that a choice has been made to utilise community resources.

When possible to do so, user charges are the preferred option for services where there is a benefit to the individual: Council will set a charge for the user to cover the full cost of the service, or a marginal cost. In some circumstances, a market rate can be used when Council believes the charge set too high will reduce use and therefore diminish the value of the facility to the community, and impose a greater cost on ratepayers. In these cases, Council uses its judgement to set the fees at a level it believes is at an acceptable market level.

Q: What are the main changes to Fees and Charges compared to last year?

A: Most Fees and Charges have increased with inflation, which Council calculates using the BERL Local Government cost index which for 2024/2025 means an increase of between 5 - 6%. Some cost increase adjustments vary from this where costs for a particular service have increased higher than inflation, efficiencies have been made which mean the service can be delivered at a lower cost or where a review has determined costs are not being appropriately recovered or an increase would significantly impact demand for a service which has public good.

Q: What changes are proposed to Fees and Charges for consents and other planning and building services?

A: A number of new fees are proposed. These include a Territorial Authority Notice – Residential and Commercial. These are introduced to enable the costs of the service to be appropriately covered by the user.

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The Code of Compliance review and sign off is also introduced for the same reason.

The electronic consent system fee is being introduced in order to pass on the increased costs of the supplier of this system to the end user.

In addition to the new fees, there are a number of other proposed changes to fees.

Some fees including the deposits introduced in the previous financial year are proposed to be reduced. Through the first year, the implementation has shown that a lower level of deposit is appropriate to more accurately reflect costs. This does not impact the total fee for the service and as a result is not forecast to impact revenue.

A number of increases are proposed including the hourly rates for a number of services, in order to bring these into line with actual costs and professional fee levels. The impact on revenue will depend on size of projects and is not possible to forecast at this time.

Q. Why are rental fees for our elderly persons housing increasing?

- A. Council provides a number of housing units for older and other vulnerable people. The rents of these units are set at a level to recover the costs of providing the units, including maintenance and replacement costs to ensure the quality of the units. As part of this process, Council is seeking feedback from the tenants on the proposed increase which will result in overall increases of between \$5 and \$13 a week.

The rental fees for the units are set in bands based on the number of rooms. It is important to note that there is variation within the bands. The rental costs for one bedroom units increased by 6.6% to reflect the new units built at Stirrat Street. Other rental costs have been increased by inflation.

Q: Why are the Splash Palace fees increasing?

- A. The Splash Palace fee increases are lower than in many other areas of Council at 2.76%. They are increasing to better cover costs but we know that the entry fees are already on a par with many other areas pools in New Zealand. We know cost is a barrier to entry for some people so let us know your feedback on what this would mean to you.

Q. Why are the sewerage fees increasing?

- A. Fees for commercial users of sewerage services are increasing to achieve full recovery of cost of reticulation and treatment. This primarily impacts industrial users.

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Q. What changes are proposed to Fees and Charges for solid waste?

- A. Two additional bin fees (rubbish and recycling) will replace the previous combined fee. The new fees account for the cost of each new bin, its size, delivery, annual collection and disposal. These fees are administered via a targeted rate.

General waste per tonne fee increases are required to meet the costs of the Emissions Trading Scheme, waste levy, and other operational and administrative costs, and subsequently all other fees were increased by the same amount.

Q. What are the fees associated with the new glass collection services?

- A. We are proposing to introduce new glass recycling bins. More information is available in the Long-term Plan [Consultation Document](#).

Q. Why are the water fees increasing?

- A. We have reviewed the cost of providing water and increases are required to fully cover these costs. It is important to note that these fees are different to the residential water rates and primarily effect industrial and commercial users and clubs and other organisations.

Q: Why do some facilities charge a “Price by negotiation”?

- A: Price by negotiation is available on some commercial or group booking services available at venues including the Civic Theatre, Rugby Park and He Waka Tuia.

Q: Why are some Fees and Charges not changing in 2024/2025?

- A. Some fees are set by legislation – e.g. all Alcohol Licensing and Compliance fees, some Animal Services, Building Control and Resource Management fees. This means that while costs to provide the services may be increasing, we must meet any shortfall from other means e.g. from the general rates.

Others such as Passenger Transport, Libraries and Public Toilets have had either no increase or very minimal increase to maintain affordability of the services and/or costs are already covered by the fees.

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Q: Will my rates be reviewed as well?

A: Council rates are reviewed as part of the 2024-2034 Long-term Plan process. You can find out more in the [Consultation Document](#) and by visiting <https://icc.govt.nz/rates/> to check the forecast rates for your property.

Q: How are payments made for Fees and Charges?

A: Depending on the nature of the Fees and Charges, Council debt and fees for individuals can be paid:

- In person at the relevant facility or service, including Invercargill Public Libraries and Archive, Splash Palace, Bluff Services Centre or our public transport network or at **Te Hīnaki – Civic Building, 101 Esk Street, Invercargill**
- Using our online portal icconline.icc.govt.nz for licenses, infringements and animal registration and impoundments – please note that there is a credit card online merchant service fee of 1.70% of the payment amount (subject to change).
- By bank transfer to Invercargill City Council's bank account. Our details are BNZ bank, account number 02 0924 0019668 03

Excluding rates and water payments, other billing can be paid online.

Q: I have a question about a particular fee – Who can help me with this?

A: Please contact us at policy@icc.govt.nz

Q: How do I make a submission on the Fees and Charges?

A: Council is consulting on our 2024-2034 Long-Term Plan which includes the proposed Fees and Charges. Submissions are due by 5pm on 2 April 2024. The easiest way is to submit online at letstalk.icc.govt.nz

Alternatively, you can pick up a submission form and drop one off to Te Hīnaki – Civic Building in Esk Street, the Invercargill Public Library, the Bluff Service Centre and Murihiku Marae. You can also email the Strategy, Policy and Engagement Team at policy@icc.govt.nz

Post: Submission – 2024-2034 Long-term Plan
Invercargill City Council
Private Bag 90104
Invercargill 9840

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Q: Can I talk to the Mayor and Councillors about this proposal?

A. Hearings are currently set for 10, 11 and 12 April 2024. Please indicate whether you wish to be heard in your submission.