

Council recognises the pressure and uncertainty local businesses are experiencing right now. There is a whole of Government response to enabling local businesses to continue providing vital services to our communities and importantly helping them stay in business.

Our priority is making sure local businesses feel supported, are well informed and know where and how to get the best advice about funding and practical resources. Council's plan includes \$1.2 million in savings to local businesses, that offers the following:

Waiving of small business fees

Council is directly assisting small businesses struggling with financial uncertainty by waiving some of the fees and charges for approximately six months, effective from 25 March 2020:

- Environmental Health Inspection fees (no annual fees or first inspection fees) – (saving \$401,059)
- Fire Safety fees (no annual fees) (saving \$147,169)
- Outdoor Dining & Footpath Advertising fees (no fees) (saving \$695,084)

Flexible and pragmatic enforcement and compliance

We are adopting a flexible and pragmatic approach to enforcement and compliance action. This will enable business operations to adapt to the changing consumer demand.

We aim to limit enforcement action to matters that are only of an imminent public or environmental safety risk, ensuring there is no increase to public risk and community impacts and expectations are managed. A dedicated planner has been allocated to respond to all business planning and compliance queries. Council's plan includes:

Restaurants/ take away businesses

We are allowing restaurants not currently licenced that have development consents to undertake a take away service to provide this service to the community.

Relaxing parking time requirements to allow for increased take-away pickups in shopping areas.

Supermarkets and food/ beverage premises

We are not enforcing trading or delivery hours for food/beverage premises and grocery stores.

Outdoor dining lease areas

We are providing proactive support for businesses to help them extend their seating outside their dining areas to ensure they can comply with the required social distancing measures.

Environmental Health Inspections

We are waiving charges for Council's proactive routine inspection program that will continue fee-free.

Our Environmental Health Team will also continue to investigate urgent and critical matters relating to public health and environmental impact but they will not incur fees or charges outside of enforcement action.

Rates and Annual Charges Hardship Policy

We are applying the Rates and Annual Charges Hardship Policy to help impacted eligible small business ratepayers and/or other ratepayers suffering financial hardship. This can provide payment arrangements and waive associated interest charges to help relieve the burden.

Actively co-ordinate business chambers and local networks

We are supporting open and consistent communication and have committed to regular weekly meetings with our local Chambers of Commerce through digital platforms, this is in addition to using our existing channels to continue to work together in responding to this evolving situation.

Provide regular updates to our local businesses

We encourage businesses to contact their relevant Chambers of Commerce and subscribe to Council's Business Newsletter by contacting economy@northernbeaches.nsw.gov.au

Northern Beaches Chambers of Commerce

Manly Business Chamber manly.org.au

Warringah Chamber of Commerce warringahchamber.com.au

Mona Vale Chamber of Commerce monavalechamber.org

Newport Beach Chamber of Commerce newportbeach.org.au

Avalon Palm Beach Business Chamber avalonpalmbeachbusinesschamber.com.au

With a growing database of local businesses, we will continue sharing information on COVID-19 support programs, health information for employees and customers, as well as how to access financial support in the Federal and state economic stimulus packages.

Assist to build digital capability of businesses through social channels/webinars

With changes to the way we live and work that will flow onto the way we shop and spend, we will support local businesses to find new ways to connect with customers. Council's plan includes:

- Delivering social media and marketing workshops online
- Creating digital campaigns to promote shop local initiatives
- Establishing a series of webinars to assist businesses adapt to changing conditions.

Build on relationships with State Government Agencies

Council will continue working with NSW State Government agencies to provide advice and support to our local businesses, including:

- Realise Business
- Office of the Small Business Commissioner
- ServiceNSW "Easy to do Business"

With local economic conditions changing rapidly, Council will continue to look at new ways we can connect with our business community and continue to provide support, ensuring we can scale-up our response, where necessary.

Visit our dedicated "Supporting Local Businesses" section on Council's website for more details.

Government Business Stimulus Packages

Federal Government

The Federal Government's Economic Stimulus Package is focused on keeping Australians in jobs and helping small businesses, stay in business. On the Northern Beaches, 98% of our 32,000 registered businesses classified as small (employing less than 20 staff). The package offers a range of options, including:

- Encouraging local small businesses to retain an apprentice or trainee, with 50% subsidy of their wage for 9 months (January 2020 to September 2020)
- Instant asset write off up to value of \$150,000 to encourage businesses to spend on new assets
- A 50% accelerated depreciation deduction for businesses (with a turnover less than \$500 million) to stimulate investment
- Boost Cash Flow for Employers tax-free payments of up to \$25,000 to provide cash flow support to businesses with turnover of less than \$50 million.

For details visit business.gov.au

NSW Government

The State Government announced a stimulus package to support businesses, which included:

- \$1.6 billion in tax relief for small businesses to help save jobs as the state braces for the dire economic impact of the virus.
- \$450 million to waive payroll tax for the next three months for businesses with payrolls of up to \$10 million.
- \$80 million to waiver range of fees and charges for small businesses including bars, cafes, restaurants and tradespeople.

Realise Business

Realise Business is the NSW Government Business Connect provider for Northern, Eastern and Southern Sydney. The Realise team of advisors can provide general and specialist business advice in all areas of business. Their advisory team consists of specialists in the areas of business disruption, retail, marketing, digital, finance and hospitality just to name a few.

Realise is holding regular webinars and workshops, including an upcoming webinar on Small Business Interruption from COVID-19.