



Parental leave policy of the Victorian Bar

The Victorian Bar Council has adopted a policy intended to assist those taking leave to care for children by reason of pregnancy or a child coming into their care and custody.

Practising counsel who is financial and will not be engaged in and available for work as a barrister more than 16 hours per week;

1. by reason of pregnancy; or
2. has the substantial full-time personal responsibility for the care of a child less than 12 months old or an adopted or foster child under school age immediately following the date on which the child comes into the care and custody of the barrister;

may receive

- a) chambers rental subsidy of 75% of the member's chambers rental (capped at \$1,300 per month) for a period up to six months;
- b) a rebate/discount off their Bar Subscription.

Chambers rental subsidy

The Bar Council will underwrite 75% of the chambers rental of qualifying members (capped at \$1,300 per month), for a period up to six months, subject to the following conditions:

1. the period of underwriting shall commence (in respect of pregnancy) not more than 6 months before the estimated birth of the child nor more than 6 months after the birth of the child, or (in respect of care) immediately following the date on which the child comes into the care and custody of the barrister;
2. for the period of the underwriting, the barrister shall pay to the manager of the chambers the total residual rental balance otherwise payable in respect of those chambers, after taking into account the subsidy receivable under this policy;
3. notwithstanding anything said above,
 - a) where the barrister has sub-let his or her chambers, the subsidy receivable will only apply to that part of the rental which is not the subject of any sub-leasing recoveries;

- b) where the barrister shares chambers with another person, the subsidy receivable will only apply to the proportionate share of the total rental for that chambers that that barrister would normally pay for his or her share (so, for example, if 2 persons share a room equally and 1 person seeks the subsidy, the subsidy will only be for 75% of 50% of the total rental for that room, with the cap of \$1,300 applying to 75% of that 50%).

In any case they consider appropriate the Treasurer and General Manager together may modify the conditions in (1) to (3) above.

Procedure

The procedure for grant of a rent subsidy is as follows:

1. Any requests for rental subsidy must be in writing to the Bar Council, through the General Manager, setting out that the barrister meets the qualifying conditions and the period for which the barrister seeks the underwriting.
2. The General Manager will consider the request in relation to the criteria approved by the Victorian Bar Council for the rent subsidy.
3. If the application is approved, the General Manager will:
 - (a) advise the applicant in writing of the approval;
 - (b) forward a copy of the approval letter to the manager of the chambers as authority for the Bar to be charged with the amount of the subsidy.
4. If the application is not approved, the General Manager will advise the applicant in writing.

Bar Subscription Rebate/Discount

For information and assistance, please contact Alison Rock, Manager, Compliance at the Bar Office, 9225 7111.

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