

SER-005-002

Strathcona County
Municipal Policy Handbook

Family & Community Services User Fees & Charges

Date Approved by Council: 04/14/87

Resolution No: 481/87

Lead Role: Chief Commissioner

Replaces: 60-65-002

Last Review Date: 08/24/11

Next Review Date: 08/2014

Administrative Responsibility: Family & Community Services

Policy Statement

As Family & Community Services provides a range of services which benefit all residents of the County either directly or indirectly, both the community through allocation of municipal and provincial tax revenue and the client through user fees and charges, should share in the cost of provision of services.

Guidelines

Criteria

1.0 User Fees and Charges will be assessed on social services where:

- a) Services are not entirely funded by other levels of government and/or the agreement does not preclude the assessment of user fees and charges.
- b) The assessment of user fees or charges will not be a significant deterrent to residents needs to access the service.
- c) Users of the service generally expect to contribute toward the cost of such services based on their willingness to pay.

2.0 User Fees will not be assessed on social services where:

- a) The services are entirely funded by other levels of government and/or the agreement specifically excludes the assessment of a user fee or charge.
- b) The majority of users of services are those least able to pay (i.e., unemployed, frail elderly, on government assistance, single parents).
- c) The assessment of user fees or charges may be a significant deterrent for accessing needed services.
- d) The costs of administering the collection of user fees or charges and monitoring usage of the service will exceed the revenue generated from a user fee or charge.

3.0 Fee Levels

- a) Fees will be assessed according to a range. A minimum fee or charge is based on at least recovering the total cost of administering the collection of the user fee or charge for the service. A maximum fee is based on total recovery of all administrative costs including overhead.
- b) User fees and charges will be assessed on a competitive basis for these or similar services by other local agencies--the Province, or the private sector.
- c) User fees for nonresidents will be assessed at the full cost for the service unless there is an over-riding policy on a particular service.

Procedures

- a) All existing services and fees for service will be reviewed by the Department Head, Finance Coordinator, and appropriate program coordinator within three months of policy implementation date to ensure consistency with policy.
- b) New programs and services provided to the public will be assessed according to identified criteria by the Department prior to submission to County Council.
- c) All fees and charges will be reviewed on an annual basis and submitted to Council as part of the budget review process.