Galway City Council Housing Rents Scheme 2016

1. Effective Date:-
1.1 This scheme shall apply to dwellings let by Galway City Council and will be effective as and from the 14th March, 2016 and shall be reviewed annually or at such other interval as the City Council may decide.

2. Implementation:-
2.1 Rents will be calculated in the manner set out in this scheme as a proportion of the assessable income of the principal earner together with a contribution from any subsidiary earners in the household. Rents will be based on certified returns of income submitted by the tenant.

For the purposes of this scheme, the assessable income is defined as 2016 social welfare rates for those in receipt of a current social welfare claim. For persons in employment, the net accessible income will be based on the current gross income including benefit in kind, reduced by tax and PRSI, Pension related contributions and Universal social charge are not allowable deductions.

2.2 Rent assessed in respect of any new tenancies created after 14th March, 2016 or in respect of any change in the circumstances of existing tenants will be assessed in the manner set out in this scheme for as long as it is in operation.

3. Definition:-
3.1 Assessable income is income from the following sources, reduced only by pay related social insurance contributions, health levies, and any income tax (as outlined in 2.1 above):-

(a) Income from employment including self-employed.

(b) Income from social insurance and social assistance payments, allowances and training allowances.

Where the income details submitted are less than the minimum social welfare entitlement for a specific family composition, the rent will be assessed based on the 2016 social welfare entitlements.

3.2 Income of an employed person is, in general, the normal weekly rate of remuneration including benefit in kind, except that overtime, and occasional lump sum bonus payments are excluded. All other regular payments in the nature of pay are included.

3.3 In cases where split payments are in existence for Social Welfare Payments, the total of such payments shall be aggregated so as to give a single income for the purposes of this scheme.
3.4 The principal earner is the person (either the tenant or any other person normally resident in the household) who is in receipt of the highest assessable income within the household.

3.5 A subsidiary earner is a member of the household other than the principal earner who has an income.

4. Income Disregarded:-

4.1 Incomes from the following source is disregarded for the purpose of calculation of rents:-

(a) Children's allowances, orphans allowances or orphans pensions
(b) Scholarships
(c) Guardianship Allowances
(d) Allowances for domiciliary care of handicapped children under the Health Act, 1970
(e) Allowances received from any charitable organisations
(f) Lump sum compensation payments
(g) Infectious diseases maintenance allowance
(h) Supplementary Welfare Allowances but only where they are received to supplement other income e.g. Family Income Supplement
(i) Fuel Allowances
(j) 50% of income from Labour Activation Schemes
(k) 50% of income from Community Employment Programmes
(l) 50% of income from Back-to-work Allowance Scheme
(m) Blind Allowance
(n) Mobility Allowance
(o) Over 80 Allowance
(p) Living Alone Allowance

5. Calculation of Rent:-

5.1 The rents of dwellings let on weekly differential rents will be determined on the basis of assessable income, as outlined hereunder:-

20% of all assessable income of the principal earner
(in excess of €49.00)

5.2 An allowance shall be made for each dependent child, aged 16 years or under, or who, being under 21, is attending a full-time course of education and is wholly or mainly maintained by the principal earner.

The allowance amounts to a deduction of €5.00 from the weekly rent in respect of each dependent child

5.3 For each subsidiary earner in the household, 15% of assessable income will be added to the rent for each subsidiary earner.
5.4 An allowance of €5.00 to be given on assessable weekly income for any Principal Earner who is a recipient of Social or Supplementary Welfare Allowance as their only means of income.

5.5 Each Old Age Pensioner to be given an additional €8.50 allowance on their assessable weekly income.

6. Maximum Rents:-
6.1 The maximum rent in respect of all dwellings is €180.30 per week.

7. Minimum Rents:-
7.1 Where the rent determined under Section 5 above results in a weekly rent of less than €30.00 a minimum weekly rent of €30.00 shall apply.

7.2 In exceptional circumstances where payment of a rent calculated under Section 5 above, may, in the opinion of Galway City Council, give rise to undue hardship, the City Council may agree to accept a lesser amount for a specified period, and to defer payment of the balance until the end of the specified period. However, under no circumstances will an amount less than the minimum rent be accepted.

8. Fixed Rents:-
8.1 Where a fixed rent applies to a halting site dwelling, the rent will be €25.00 per week.

8.2 Tenants on fixed rents may change to differential rent if they so wish.

9. Additional Charges:-
9.1 Galway City Council reserve the right to apply extra charges to some dwellings/units to cover the cost of additional services provided to them e.g. heating charges, boiler servicing charges etc.

10. Miscellaneous:-
10.1 Where a tenant fails to provide the City Council with household income details a non-refundable penalty of €30.00 per week will be imposed for each week that the tenants fails to provide the requested information. This penalty will continue to apply to persons who failed to submit information required in previous years until such time as the information is received. The penalty will be added to the tenants rent account and will be collectable as arrears on the tenant’s account with possible imposition of the maximum rent.

10.2 The tenant is required to notify Galway City Council immediately of any change in income or in household composition or circumstances. For the purpose of this Rent Scheme rent adjustments in respect of any change in the circumstances of any tenant, registered occupant or income will generally be backdated to the first week of previous year only, excluding exceptional cases where significant change in circumstances were not previously notified to Galway City Council.
10.3 If the tenant does not declare any change in the household income then he/she is in breach of the terms of their Tenancy Agreement.

10.4 Where an additional adult joins a household it is necessary for that person to apply for Permission to Reside. **Pending a decision on the application, a non-refundable weekly charge of €30.00 will be placed on the Tenant's rent account.** Should the application be successful, the permission will be effective **from the date the decision is made and rent will be adjusted from that date.**

10.5 All rents calculated under this scheme shall be rounded up or down to the **nearest 10 cent.**

10.6 Rents for new tenants being appointed for the duration of this scheme will be based on assessable income (as outlined in 2.1 above) as at the week of appointment.

**Scheme Approved:**

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Thomas Connell,
Director of Services,
Housing & Social Inclusion,
Environment, Recreation & Amenity Directorate.

Dated: ______________________2015