

Community Local Law Proposed Amendments



Frequently Asked Questions – Community Local Law Review

Why is the Community Local Law being updated?

A recent review of Wellington Shire Council's Community Local Law 2021 has highlighted some required amendments to the document. We are updating the law to make sure it reflects current legislation, best practice, and what all of our community expects.

Are fines going up?

Fines are not going up; the proposed amendment includes that penalties will be reduced to balance out the rise in penalty unit value. This will help keep fines fair and in line with state penalties. Of the 48 fines reviewed, 17 will be reduced, and none will increase.

Why are some fines being reduced?

The value of a penalty unit has almost doubled since 2021, the proposed amendment looks to balance the penalty units, reducing some fines, to keep them fair and reasonable against the number of units.

Why is the clause about accessing toilets being removed?

The current local law restricts access based on gender, which contradicts legislation (*Equal Opportunity Act 2010*). Removing it ensures we meet legal obligations and respect the rights of everyone, including transgender and gender-diverse people.

Is the toilet access change optional?

This change is required because the current clause conflicts with the *Equal Opportunity Act 2010*. Council cannot legally enforce the old rule.

What's changing about smoking?

We are proposing changes so that smoke-free areas also apply to vaping, not just tobacco smoking. This helps protect public health.

What's happening with cat ownership rules?

An error in the wording is being corrected. The law will clearly state that a maximum of two cats is allowed in certain residential areas.

Can the community give feedback?

You can have your say on the draft changes from **Monday 30 June** through Council's 'Your Wellington Your Say' platform or provide your submission to one of Council's Customer Service Centres in Sale or Yarram.

Are all the changes final?

Some changes Council is legally required to make (like toilet access). Others may be adjusted based on community feedback.

What happens next?

A Council workshop in August will allow Councillors to review the feedback. If there are no major changes, the updated law may be adopted as early as **2 September**.