



TUITION FEE DISCOUNTS FOR HOLDERS OF MEANS-TESTED HEALTH CARE & PENSIONER CONCESSION CARDS

Catholic schools in the Diocese of Cairns provide a discount on tuition fees for holders of means-tested Health Care and Pensioner Concession Cards. Additional categories have been fast tracked in response to the economic impacts of the coronavirus COVID-19 response.

The discount applies to tuition fees and not to school levies and charges.

The cards must be current and list, as dependents, the students for whom the discount is sought.

Two categories of cards are eligible for the discount:

Health Care Cards

Only cards with the following codes are means-tested or subject to an income and assets test are eligible for the reduced tuition fee rate:

- FA (Family Allowance)
- PP/PPP (Parenting Payment) (partnered)
- JSP/JS (Job Seeker Payment) includes old codes NSA/NA/SA (New Start & Sick Allowance)
- PA (Partner Allowance)
- SL/SpB (Special Benefit)
- WA/WDA (Widow Allowance)
- LI/LIC (Low Income)
- Austudy
- FH (Farm Household Allowance)
- CP/CAR/CD (Carer Payment/Allowance)
- MO (Mobility Allowance)

Card must be in the name of the fee payer.

Card in the name of the student will not be accepted.



Pensioner Concession Cards

Only cards with the following codes are means-tested or subject to an income and assets test are eligible for the reduced tuition fee rate:

- PPS (Parenting Payment Single)
- PP/PPP (Parenting Payment) (partnered)
- JSP/JS (Job Seeker Payment) includes old codes SA Sick Allowance
- PA (Partner Allowance)
- SL/SpB (Special Benefit)
- WA/WDA (Widow Allowance)
- CP/CAR/CD (Carer Payment/Allowance)
- AGE
- DSP



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How much is the discount?

A discount of 70% on tuition fees ordinarily applies to holders of eligible cards. However, due to the economic impacts of the Coronavirus COVID-19 response, the automatic discount on tuition fees will increase from 70% to 100% as a temporary measure until further notice.

Additional concession categories

In response to the economic impacts of COVID-19, a range of additional fee concessions have been fast tracked to commence from the start of Term 2, 2020 and can be applied retrospectively to Term 2 Fees at any point.

Two new concession card categories eligible for the 100% discount are the Job Seeker Payment (JSP/JS) and the Farm Household allowance (FH). For those yet to receive their cards, schools will accept as proof the digital version of the card from the MyGov app or a printed confirmation page from Centrelink.

In addition, all Carer, Disability and Mobility card holders are now eligible regardless of their relationship status.

How to apply

Parents and carers can apply for the concession by completing the Health Care Card Tuition Fee Discount Scheme Form and providing a copy of their concession card. Electronic forms with attached photo or scanned copy of the card will be accepted via email. Alternatively the application can be submitted directly to the school office.

The fee discount will then be applied to tuition fees on future term invoices. For families with children at more than one Cairns Catholic school this process must be repeated for each school.

The discount arrangement will expire on the expiry date of the card.

Parents and carers receiving a discount have a duty to inform the school of any renewal or change in eligibility for the card.

What if a family is still not able to pay the discounted tuition fee and school levies?

Families in significant financial hardship are asked to make an appointment with the school Principal who will assess whether the family's financial circumstances meet the criteria for additional support. The process looks at family income, the number of dependents and the family's cost of housing (rental or mortgage). Under the current circumstances a simplified approval process will be taken. A phone call or email is sufficient engagement and concessions can be approved verbally or via email. This process requires full disclosure and is treated with sensitivity and confidentiality.

What if a family without a means-tested concession card is having difficulty in paying fees?

Families without a means tested Health Care or Pensioner Concession Card who are experiencing genuine financial hardship in paying fees should speak with their school Principal or Parish Priest to apply for special consideration.

The same process as above will apply in determining an appropriate fee concession arrangement. No child will be denied enrolment due to financial difficulty.

Further information

Please contact the school office.