

Role of local government

Each of the six Australian states and the Northern Territory is divided into many local government areas. Local governments are also known as local councils.

The local council's role is to provide services and **facilities** for the local community and to plan for the needs of their community. They also make plans to keep their community safe. They work with the local community to make the best decisions for everyone in the community. Local councils are set up by the government in their state and territory. The state and territory governments set out in their laws the responsibilities of the local councils and how they are to operate.



A map of Australian local government areas

Did you know?

The Australian Capital Territory does not have a separate local government. A department of the territory government does the job of the local government.



What does council do?

Because each community is different, each local council is different. The needs of a community in a remote **rural** area are different from the needs of a community in a major city. Therefore the services provided by local councils differ from state to state and council to council. However, there are some things that all councils have in common. All councils look after their local area, plan for the future of their area and create an environment that is safe and healthy.

The services a council provides are affected by a number of different things. They include the council's income, the size and **location** of the council, the wishes and needs of the people in the local area, and the importance of continuing the services council already offers. They must also follow the rules of the state or territory government.



Councils work with community organisations such as Landcare.