

POLICY STATEMENT

Certainty for Seniors

Senior Territorians add value to the whole community through their knowledge of the Northern Territory, their experience in building it, their continued experience in the workforce, contribution to our economy and the support provided to their families and the community as volunteers.

According to the 2016 census¹, the Northern Territory has the fastest growing population of seniors in the over 65 category.

Keeping seniors in the Territory with a quality lifestyle is a priority of the Country Liberal Party. We recognise that factors such as access to health services, cost of living, and family and friends are important drivers of retaining senior Territorians.

Benefits Certainty

We want to give seniors and concession holders certainty going forward.

We support the NT Concession Scheme and Seniors Recognition Scheme as an incentive for older people to remain in the Northern Territory, and to assist seniors, pensioners, carers and low income earners with the cost of living.

We will retain the NT Concession Scheme and improve the Seniors Recognition Scheme by ensuring that members in rural/remote areas have equal access to the Scheme by expanding the approved vendors to include white goods, veterinary fees, and home health and security upgrades.

Senior Friendly Communities

Keeping seniors in the Territory with a quality lifestyle is a priority of the Country Liberal Party. No matter where they live, senior Territorians should have access to opportunities for social interaction, opportunities for continued advancement in the workplace, exercise and recreation.

A Country Liberal Party Government will support opportunities for seniors to engage in sport and recreational activities, education, training and employment. We are committed to engaging with seniors through peak bodies such as COTA NT, National Seniors and the Association of Independent Retirees. We will continue to fund the Portrait of a Senior Territorian and Seniors Month grants.

¹ <https://www.abs.gov.au/>

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Bridging the Digital Divide

The recent experience of the COVID-19 pandemic has shown the world just how important our digital networks are.

Technology continues to be an incredible tool for helping people come together and stay connected, and recently many more government and non-government services are moving towards online platforms. While things like online banking or shopping may seem convenient to many, we must ensure that the digital community is inclusive.

According to the latest data from the Australian Digital Inclusion Index, a significant gap continues to exist in the ability of Australians over 65 to access technology.²

A Country Liberal Government will continue to ensure that information is available to seniors through a variety of information channels, and will work to reduce the digital gap by providing technology grants to community organisations with programs that will provide educational services to help seniors navigate digital technologies, and make technology hardware and services available and accessible to seniors.

Future Planning

Keeping retirees in the Territory with a quality lifestyle is a priority of the Country Liberal Party. No matter where they live, whether they are pensioners or self-funded retirees seniors should have access to secure and affordable retirement housing.

We want to ensure that Senior Territorians have equal access to affordable and appropriate housing. We recognise the unique aspects of living in the Northern Territory that can sometimes make staying here a challenge, and want to enable seniors to live in the region they choose.

A Country Liberal Government will work with the Commonwealth towards adjusting the Commonwealth Rental Assistance Scheme to reflect the high cost of rent in some regional areas in the Territory.

A Country Liberal Government will explore investment options for retirement facilities in regional areas and the feasibility of a secure dementia living facility.

² <https://digitalinclusionindex.org.au/the-index-report/report/>

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Health and Safety

Every senior Territorian deserves to feel safe and supported in their community. It is likely that between 2% and 14% of older Australians experience elder abuse per year³, and 35% of Australians aged 55-64 years and 43% of Australians aged over 65 years report having experienced age discrimination⁴.

A Country Liberal Government will develop a framework for reducing elder abuse and supporting victims. We will explore options for increased support to victims of elder abuse, including the demand for assistance leaving crisis situations, and the feasibility of dedicated elder abuse safe houses.

A Country Liberal Government will also consider personal alert rebates to supply seniors who want to live more independently peace of mind that help is at hand should it be required.

³ <https://aifs.gov.au/publications/elder-abuse/export>

⁴ <https://www.humanrights.gov.au/our-work/key-findings>