

# User Guide: Submitting Special Variation & Minimum Rates increase applications

This guide covers:

- basic information about preparing your application
- how to submit an application in the LG Portal, including uploading attachments
- how to manage requests for information (RFIs)
- troubleshooting and getting technical assistance

## 1.1 Submitting a Special variation (SV) or Minimum Rates increase (MR) application

### Notification letters

Unlike previous years, there is no longer a firm date for councils to formally notify IPART if they intend to apply for a special variation or minimum rate increase for 2024-25.

The Office of Local Government's *Guidelines for the preparation of an application for a special variation to general income* urge councils to inform IPART if they intend to apply for a special variation.<sup>a</sup>

We encourage all councils intending to apply to contact IPART to discuss their application as early as possible in the process.

### Applications for SV or MR

Please see our website for guidance on preparing your application, and to download the application forms. Councils should access these early in the process to understand the required information as the SV application form is quite extensive and community consultation should be started early.

Please note that there are separate application processes for an SV application and an MR application. The SV application requires at least 10 documents to be uploaded, so please allow adequate time to complete this through the LG Portal.

The application due date will be published on our website. It typically falls in February of the year the SV would begin.

The portal application process can be started anytime and saved as draft.

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<sup>a</sup> Office of Local Government, *Guidelines for the preparation of an application for a special variation to general income*, p 21.

Applications are due by 11:59pm on the application due date. Councils are encouraged to submit their applications as early as possible. We will generally not accept late applications unless the council has received an extension.

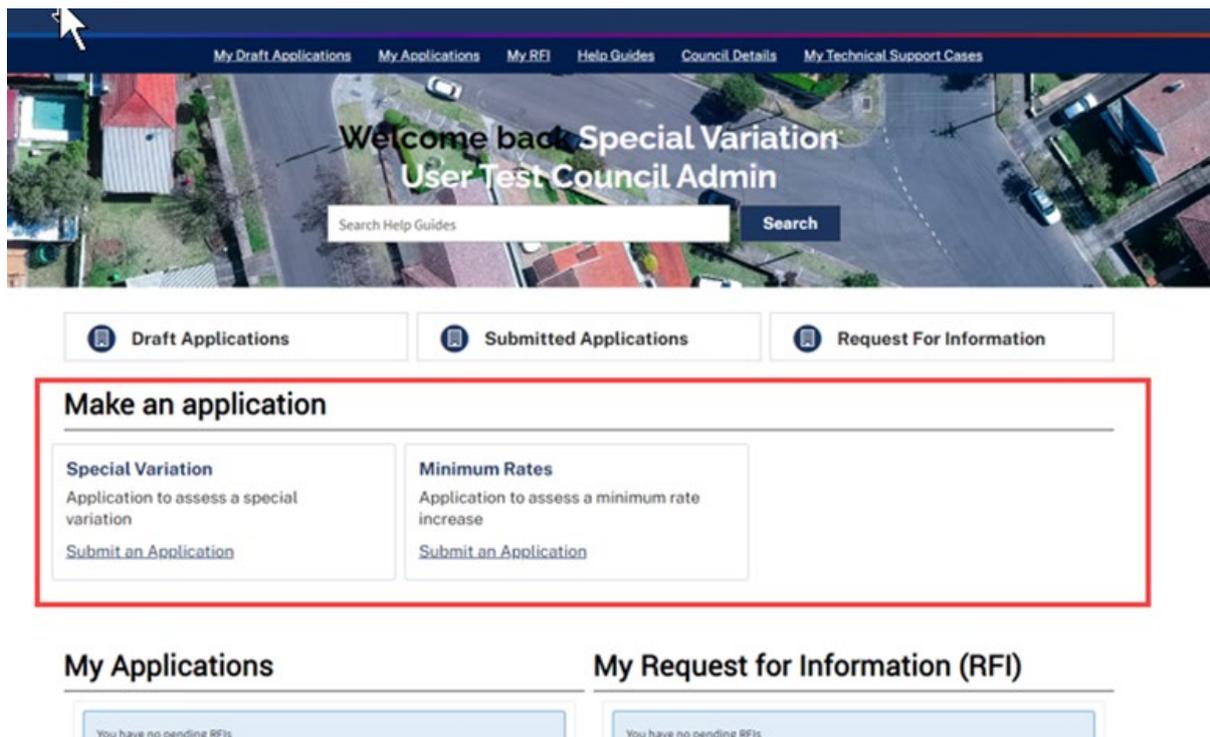
## 1.2 Application steps and tips

All applications can be saved as a draft and allow for attachments to be uploaded. We encourage councils to start their application early to ensure they are aware of all information requirements and there is no missing information.

### Starting an application

When you are logged in to the portal, use the tiles highlighted below to start your application.

If you require access to the portal, or do not see the correct tiles, please contact your 'Council Admin' in the first instance. (Once a Council is registered, the Council Admin can create as many additional users as required.)



### Completing required information

Some information will be pre-populated, please check this for any errors.

Follow the prompts to add any further required information.

## Saving drafts

Drafts can be saved. Other organisation users and IPART will be able to access saved drafts.

All drafts can be accessed under 'Draft Applications'. The separate link 'My Draft Applications' will only show a user any drafts they have prepared.

**To view, edit or cancel a draft** application, click on 'Draft Applications', and then the 'case number' of the application (see screenshot →).

This will take you to a new page where you can add information and save again or cancel the application.

Case Number	Case type
CS0018123	Contributions Plan
CS0018406	Special Variation
CS0018408	Notification Letter

## Uploading mandatory and additional attachments

The portal has 2 ways to upload attachments, for mandatory and additional attachments. Attachment size is limited to 150MB per document, and you may upload as many documents as you consider relevant.

### Mandatory attachments

The application portal has individual upload buttons for each of the mandatory attachments. Table 1 below sets out the mandatory attachments for each application type.

Table 1 Mandatory attachments

SV application	MR application
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Part A application form (MS Excel)</li> <li>Part B application form (MS Word)</li> <li>Community Strategic Plan extracts</li> <li>Delivery Program</li> <li>Long Term Financial Plan (LTFP)</li> <li>Community engagement materials (combined document)</li> <li>Community feedback (combined document)</li> <li>Hardship policy</li> <li>Resolution to apply for the special variation</li> <li>Certification</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Part A application form (MS Excel)</li> <li>Part B application form (MS Word)</li> <li>Delivery Program extract</li> <li>Hardship policy</li> <li>Consultation material</li> <li>Resolution to apply for the Minimum Rate increase</li> <li>Certification</li> </ul>

### Attaching additional supporting documents

To upload additional attachments, follow the steps shown in the diagram and explained below.

Additional Supporting Documents

Actions	Document Type	Document Title	Document Description	Confidentiality	Date Att
4	Other Attachment	test.docx		No	26-09-20

3  Proceed to Upload

Council Comments

[IPART's Local Government Publication Policy](#)

\* I have read and accept IPART's Local Government Publication Policy

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2 test.docx (11.7 KB) just now

1 Add attachments

Upload your documents to the form, then click the "Proceed to Upload" button to add a type or note to each one.

1. Scroll to the bottom of the page, click 'Add attachments'
2. After uploading your attachment, it should appear here. You can add multiple attachments at this stage. Note that large attachments may take up to 3 minutes to upload. When an upload is in progress, 3 dots will show near 'Your profile' in the top right of the page.
3. Click the 'Proceed to Upload' box. Your documents should appear in the table.
4. Click the edit (pencil) icon to edit the information in the table, including to mark the document as confidential.

### After submitting an application

After you submit the application, you should receive a confirmation email. The application should become visible under the 'My Applications' and 'Submitted Applications' links.

**To submit a revised document**, please reach out to IPART staff and we will issue you with an RFI.

**To withdraw an application**, please contact IPART staff before doing so. Withdrawing an application via the portal requires approval from IPART admin.

## 1.3 Requests for information (RFIs)

IPART may request additional information through an 'RFI' via the portal.

### Accessing the RFI

The user/s will receive an email when IPART sends an RFI via the portal.

In the portal, go to 'My RFIs' for user specific RFIs, or 'Request for Information' for all RFIs for the organisation for the function/s you have access to.

### Reviewing and responding

You will see a table as per the diagram below. To view and respond to the RFI, click on the 'Number'.

My RFIs					
Number ^	Case Number	State	Description of LG Request	Created	Updated
LGRFI0001490	CS0018072	Responded	Please submit test document	29-06-2023 14:19:49	29-06-2023 14:20:18

Note: 'Case number' is the number given to the application

This will take you to a new page. You must enter a response in the text box 'RFI response', and you may upload attachments (follow the same steps for 'additional attachments' above).

## 1.4 Troubleshooting and technical issues

We encourage councils to become familiar with the portal and start application processes early to avoid last minute troubleshooting.

- For **help navigating the portal**, see our user guide [Navigating the LG Portal and troubleshooting](#)
- For **urgent issues**, please contact IPART staff directly on (02) 9113 7730 or [localgovernment@ipart.nsw.gov.au](mailto:localgovernment@ipart.nsw.gov.au)
- For **non-urgent issues** please raise a technical support case using the following steps:
  1. At the top of your screen, select 'My Technical Support Cases'
  2. Select 'New' to start a new case

