



Welcome to Mackay!

The entire team at Mackay Regional Council welcomes you and your family to Mackay.

About Us

The Mackay Regional Council comprises the City of Mackay, North to Midge Point, South to St Lawrence and West to Clermont with an area encompassing in excess of 90,000 square kilometers. The region comprises beaches, islands, hinterlands, gorges, mountains and lowlands. The region as a whole is home to 143,000 friendly and welcoming people, and the relaxed tropical city of Mackay has a population in excess of 90,000. Mackay is a diverse community that welcomes newcomers from all parts of the world.

It is no wonder the region can offer such an abundant range of services and facilities. Our vibrant developing community can proudly boast being a City where people can pursue a wide range of interests and lifestyles in a secure environment.

Mackay region has economic diversity and a progressive community attitude towards development. The Mackay Region is the largest sugar cane producing area in Australia and the Port of Mackay has the largest bulk export sugar terminal in the world. The Bowen Basin to Mackay's West provides an enormous natural resource, producing 85% of Australia's coal.

The diversity of the region spreads beyond primary industries alone, a maturing tourism industry is a large economic driver. The region attracts a large number of domestic visitors each year.

Mackay region's weather is one of its top attractions. Summers consist of warm to hot tropical weather (December to March expect humidity), while the remainder of the year provides invariably blue skies, sunshine and cool nights. With the Great Barrier Reef, the Coral Sea and around 80 tropical islands on its doorstep, Mackay offers an unmatched location and lifestyle within one of the most exciting growth regions in Australia.

Mackay is an extremely pretty and liveable city; big enough to have everything you need and small enough to provide the lifestyle you desire.

As the saying goes; 'anything worth doing is best undertaken with sand between the toes...'

CHECKLIST

1. EMPLOYMENT

2. HOUSING

3. APPLY FOR A TAX FILE NUMBER

4. REGISTER WITH MEDICARE

5. OPEN A BANK ACCOUNT

6. LEARN ENGLISH

7. INVESTIGATE PRIVATE HEALTH

8. APPLY FOR A DRIVERS LICENCE

9. SCHOOL ENROLMENT

WORKING FOR MACKAY REGIONAL COUNCIL

Mackay Regional Council offers flexible working arrangements, self study assistance, health and well-being initiatives, generous superannuation, relocation assistance and short term rental assistance.

Leisure and Lifestyle

Performance @ Work – The program provides Council employees and their families access to various discounts at local retailers including:

- Woolworths
- Coles
- Mitre 10
- Big W
- Tandy
- BWS
- Woolworths
- Caltex
- Local restaurants
- Corporate rate gym membership

Culture and Values

Guiding principles are the 'core values' upon which Council decisions are made and actions are taken. Councillors and staff of Mackay Regional Council are committed to following principles as a guide to all decisions and actions.

Quality Services and Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Recognising that service to our community is our reason for being. ✓ Encouraging an innovative and professional customer services focus.
Integrity with Accountability and Responsibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Acting in an honest, impartial and trustworthy manner and engendering a confidence both within our community and our organisation that this is the case.
Customer Satisfaction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Respecting internal and external customers. ✓ Developing services and service levels that meet customer expectations. ✓ Monitoring service delivery.
Commitment to the Region	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Ensuring our actions serve the people of the Mackay region and their long-term interests.
Value	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Providing services and facilities that offer value for the community and are economically and ecologically sustainable.
Teamwork and Collaboration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Effective and efficient teamwork ensuring the principles of good governance are applied to achieve the best value outcomes for the community.
Participation and Community Engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Providing genuine opportunities for informed community involvement in decision-making in a framework of local democracy.

Code of conduct

The code of conduct prescribes the appropriate behaviour for all officers and employees of Mackay Regional Council. It can be located on the intranet.

Superannuation

Superannuation is a specially designed long-term investment for your retirement. Superannuation is known as 'retirement savings' or 'pension income' around the world. Investing in superannuation while you are working is designed to help you build a nest-egg for your retirement. Nearly every employed person in Australia is a member of a superannuation fund. Superannuation in Australia is commonly known as 'Super'. Your superannuation entitlements will be outlined in your letter of offer. You can also contribute extra money into your Super.

RELOCATING TO MACKAY

Cost of Living

The city of Mackay is growing faster than the Australian and Queensland averages, with more than a billion dollars in new residential and lifestyle developments planned along the waterfront over the coming decade. These developments will see Mackay confirm its position as the regional capital supporting one of Queensland's growth hotspots.

Due to this growth, the cost of living is quite high in Mackay. Housing is expensive including both renting and buying. It is important that you make yourself aware of the costs of living in Mackay prior to committing to relocating. You need to ensure that your income will cover rent, groceries and bills plus general expenses.

Housing

It is strongly advised that you start your housing investigations before relocating to Mackay as it is difficult to find rental accommodation due to a short supply of properties. You should have a look at rental properties on the internet before you commit to moving. Typically, an unfurnished house will be in excess of \$320 rent per week and an unfurnished flat/unit in excess of \$200 rent per week.

It is advisable to keep in contact with several Real Estate Agents to find suitable and affordable accommodation. There are many Real Estate Agents throughout the region, which have listings of rentals and properties for sale.

Temporary Accommodation

It is a good idea to find temporary accommodation for when you first arrive in Mackay until you can secure a rental property. A good source of temporary accommodation is caravan parks and hostels. Many caravan parks have self contained units with full kitchen facilities and hostels often have cooking facilities.

Caravan Parks:

Andergrove Van Park www.ndergrovepark.com.au

Bucasia Beachfront Caravan Resort www.bucasiabeach.com.au

Central Tourist Park www.holidaynq.com.au/nq-accom/MackayCentral



The Park Mackay

www.toptouristparks.com.au

Premier Caravan Park

www.premiercp.com.au

Hostels:

Gecko's Rest, 34 Sydney Street

www.geckosrest.com.au

Mackay Regional Council does have some properties available for the first month after arrival, dependent on availability. Contact Human Resources for details.

Share Accommodation

To reduce the costs of renting, some people share a rental property with other people. You will generally have your own bedroom but the living areas, kitchen and bathroom are shared. Usually the total rent for the property as well as the utility expenses are split between the number of people living in the property. Share accommodation is normally advertised in the local newspaper, The Daily Mercury as well as the Pocket Trader and Pocket Ads Classifieds booklets. All of which are available at local newsagencies and service stations. It is advisable to view the property and meet the other tenants before making a decision.

Renting

To apply for a rental property, you may need to provide the following:

- 100 points of identification (eg. passport, drivers licence and recent electricity bill).
- A copy of your proof of income.
- A copy of a current bank statement to prove the ability to pay rent.
- Two personal references are required to check your character (wherever possible please ensure relatives are not used)
- Payment of bond, which is equivalent to 4 weeks rent on the selected property.
- Two (2) weeks rent up front.

Recommendation:

We suggest that you familiarise yourself with Mackay and surrounding suburbs before applying for rental properties. Please also ensure you have a clear understanding of the type of property you need and understand the costs of renting in Mackay before beginning your property search. Once aware of this you can start looking for properties, you can begin your search online at www.realestate.com.au/rent, if you do not have access to the internet enquire in person at Real Estate Agencies. A comprehensive list of local real estate agents is contained on the following page. The majority of Real Estates require you to view the property before submitting an application, it is recommended that you view as many suitable properties as possible and submit applications for several of these.

Helpful Hint: Before searching for a premise, you might want to think about your living requirements, furnished or unfurnished premises, pets or no pets and the area you wish to live in.

It is also an option to rent a property directly from a landlord rather than through a Real Estate Agency. These are usually advertised through the local newspaper, The Daily Mercury as well as through local advertising booklets such as the Pocket Trader or Pocket Ads Mackay.

It is recommended that you still sign a tenancy agreement and complete a condition report and that it is lodged with the Residential Tenancies Authority (RTA). For further information contact the RTA on 1300 366 311 or visit www.rta.qld.gov.au.

Purchasing a Property

Before purchasing any property, it is recommended to contact a legal firm that offers Property Law advice.

The Real Estate Institute of Queensland (REIQ) is a professional body for Real Estate Agents. This institute offers information and general advice on selling and renting of property.

Contact REIQ:

- Telephone: (07) 3249 7341
- Visit: www.reiq.com.au

A comprehensive list of local real estate agents is contained on the following page. Alternatively, you can find Real Estate Agents locations and contact numbers in the Yellow Pages of the telephone directory or visit www.yellowpages.com.au.

Connection of Utilities

Telephone

To connect telephone services contact Telstra on 12456 or Optus on 133 345. Your first telephone account will have the connection fee added to it.

Electricity

To connect electricity to your property contact Ergon Energy:

- Telephone: 131 046
- Or Visit: www.ergon.com.au

Gas

To connect gas to your property you will need to set up an account with your selected provider. One provider is Origin Energy:

- Telephone: 13 24 62
- Or Visit: www.originenergy.com.au

List of Real Estate Agents Mackay

Name	Website	Phone	Address
ATK Real Estate Solutions	www.realestate.com.au	(07)4951 8999	222 Victoria St, Mackay
Blacks Real Estate	www.blacksrealestate.com.au	(07)4963 2500	43 Wood St, Mackay
Borg's Real Estate	www.borgsrealestate.com.au	(07)4959 2777	16 Dutton St, Walkerston
Century 21 Don Agnew	www.century21.com.au	(07)4957 2121	74 Victoria St, Mackay
Eastment & Richards	www.eastmentandrichards.com.au	(07)4957 2951	130 Wood St, Mackay
Elders Real Estate	www.eldersrealestate.com.au	(07)4951 9000	171 Victoria St, Mackay
Gwen Ware Real Estate		0427 157 901	Shp8/ 22 Central St
Harcourt's Mackay	www.mackay.harcourts.com.au	(07)4963 0100	131 Victoria St, Mackay
Hibiscus Coast Realty	www.hcr.net.au	(07)4951 1222	123 Sydney St, Mackay
Hot Property	www.hotpropertyrealty.com.au	(07)4942 8855	Cnr Willetts & Sams Rds, North Mackay
Hugh Reilly Real Estate	www.hughreilly.com.au	(07)4957 7373	98 Wood St, Mackay
JM Rawlins Realty		(07)4953 1845	67 Juliet St, Mackay
LJ Hooker Real Estate	www.ljhooker.com.au	(07)4944 0088	77 Gordon St, Mackay
MBB Queensland	www.mbb.com.au	(07)4951 8100	134 Victoria Street, mackay
Mackay Rentals	www.mackayrentals.com.au		80 Wood St, Mackay
Moorvale		(07)4959 3633	Walkerston Village Shopping Centre, Dutton St, Walkerston
Nexus Realty		(07)4969 7900	Shop 1 Nindaroo Shopping Centre, Nindaroo
Pollock First National	www.sarinarealestate.com.au	(07)4943 1616	48 Broad Street, Sarina
PRD Nationwide	www.prdnationwide.com.au	(07)4951 2588	2 Peel St, Mackay
Professionals Mackay	www.professionalsmackay.com.au	(07)4944 6666	53 Wood St, Mackay
Progressive Realty	http://www.progressiverealty.com.au/	(07)4953 5355	33A Peel Street Mackay
Raine & Horne	www.raineandhorne.com.au	(07)4951 8000	235- 237 Shakespeare St, Mackay
Ray White Real Estate	www.raywhite.com	(07)4969 2929	14 Heaths Rd, Leisure Time Centre, North Mackay
Realway Property Consultants	www.realway.com.au/mackay	(07)4959 9399	6 Palm Ridge Drv, Mackay
Remax Team Realty	www.remax.com.au	(07)4969 1800	55 Gordon St, Mackay
Richardson & Wrench	http://www.randwmackay.ca.com.au/	(07)4942 6449	Shop 38 Mt Pleasant Shopping Centre, Mackay
Seabreeze Realty		(07)4955 5292	Palm Grove Shopping Centre, Slade Point
Vision Real Estate	www.visionrealestateqld.com.au	(07)4951 4999	201 Victoria Street, Mackay
360° Property Management	www.360pm.com.au	(07)4944 1360	52 Wood St, Mackay



Finance

Apply for a Tax File Number (TFN)

Everyone who receives an income in Australia needs a Tax File Number. Income includes wages or salary from a job, money earned from investments and government payments.

The easiest way to apply for a TFN is over the internet 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Otherwise, application forms are available from Centrelink or the Australian Taxation Office (ATO).

Australian Taxation Office:

- Telephone: 13 28 61
- Or Visit: www.ato.gov.au

Create a Bank Account

In Australia, people keep their money in a bank, building society or credit union. Your income is distributed weekly or fortnightly into your nominated banking account, therefore it is recommended that you open your bank account as soon as possible. Contact the bank of your choice to make an appointment to open an account. Please advise your bank that you have an Australian Tax File Number to avoid higher rates of taxation. You will need your passport for identification and other supporting evidence as requested by your bank. It is advisable to open an account as soon as possible but definitely within 6 weeks of your arrival, as you usually need only your passport as identification. After 6 weeks you will need additional identification to open an account.

Refer to Yellow Pages of Telephone Directory for information on local Banks and other financial institutions: www.yellowpages.com.au.

Loans and Credit

A loan or credit is when you borrow money and agree to pay it back at a later date with an additional charge, known as interest. Some of the different types of loans are personal loans, home loans, credit cards and overdrafts. The cost of a loan will vary greatly depending on the type of loan, the lender, how long you take to pay it back, the interest rate and fees and charges. It is important that you do not undertake a loan or credit card if you cannot afford to pay it. Financial Counsellors offer free advice in confidence. To find a financial counsellor near you, contact the Australian Securities and Investments Commission (ASIC):

- Telephone: 1300 300 630
- Email: infoline@asic.gov.au
- Visit: www.fido.asic.gov.au

Migrant Banking Service

To obtain further information on banking services contact the Migrant Banking Service: Telephone numbers: (07) 3237 3065, (07) 3237 3064 or (07)3237 3067.

Transport

Car Rental

You may need to hire a car for a couple of weeks on your arrival, until you purchase your own transport or find out whether you can use public transport. Depending on where you stay, you may not have access to public transport.

Mackay has several car rental agencies, for a complete listing refer to the Yellow pages of the telephone directory or visit www.yellowpages.com.au.

The following are some car rental agencies in Mackay:

- www.avis.com.au
- www.hertz.com.au
- www.budget.com.au
- www.thrifty.com.au

Purchasing a car

When purchasing a car you have the option of buying a brand new car or a second hand, used car. It is cheaper to purchase a used car although be aware that if you buy an older model it may require more maintenance than a later model car.

To purchase a brand new car there are car dealerships in Mackay that you can visit to view and test drive the cars available. Most car dealerships also have a used car section. Alternatively, you can purchase used cars directly from an owner. These are often advertised in the local newspaper, The Daily Mercury or two classified booklets called Pocket Trader and Pocket Ads. The Pocket Trader, Pocket Ads and the Daily Mercury can all be purchased at local newsagents and service stations.

When buying a used car, be aware that the seller must have a safety certificate for the vehicle. For more details on purchasing a used car visit:

<http://www.tmr.qld.gov.au/Registration/Buying-or-selling-a-used-vehicle.aspx>

Obtaining a Queensland (QLD) Car Licence

If you are a permanent resident visa holder and have a current driver's licence from another country, in English or with an official translation, you are permitted to drive for your first three months after arrival. After that, if you want to drive, you will need to have an Australian driver's licence.

For more information, or to find out if you can drive while on a temporary visa contact:

Queensland Transport

- Telephone: 13 23 80
- Visit: www.transport.qld.gov.au

Mackay's division of Queensland Transport:

- Address: Corner Endeavour and Industrial Street
- Telephone: (07) 4953 1566

Requirements to transfer to a QLD Drivers Licence:

- Complete an application form
- Passport and proof of identification
- Foreign licence and translation
- Evidence of Queensland Residential Address in the form of: Rental lease, electricity bill, telephone bill, water bill or insurance accounts.
- You may need to pass a written road rules test and a practical driving test

Driving

Disobeying or breaking traffic laws can result in large fines, the loss of your driver's licence or even imprisonment. Using a mobile phone while driving is against the law, unless you do so using a 'handsfree' kit. There are seatbelts (also called 'restraints') in all cars for adults and older children. You will require special government approved restraints for young children and babies. The law states that everyone in your car must use a seatbelt or a proper child restraint, and if you are involved in a road accident you must report it to the police immediately. The laws are particularly strict regarding speed limits and driving after drinking alcohol. Ensure that you make yourself aware of traffic laws before driving in Australia.

Public Transport

Bus Services

- Bus stops are clearly marked in all local areas of Mackay.
- Buses only stop for passengers at bus stops and only when you wave for them to stop.
- Before you travel, find out the number of the bus you need to catch and the time it should arrive at the bus stop.
- Pay your fare when you get on the bus, you can also purchase bus passes.
- When you want to get off the bus, press the bell (buzzer) located above or next to the seats, so the driver knows that you want to get off at the next bus stop.

For a current bus timetable visit www.mackaytransit.com.au.

For further information, contact Mackay Transit on telephone (07) 4957 3330.

Taxi

To hire the services of a taxi contact Mackay Taxis on Telephone 13 10 08 or (07) 4944 4930.

For early morning and late evening taxi services, it is advisable to book ahead to avoid lengthy waiting periods.

Getting to and from Mackay

Rail

Queensland Rail (QR) offers regional railways services to Mackay on a daily basis. For further information on rail services visit www.qr.com.au.

Air

Mackay Airport has four domestic airlines:

Virgin Blue

- Telephone: 13 67 89
- Visit: www.virginblue.com.au

Qantas

- Telephone: 13 13 13
- Visit: www.qantas.com.au

Jetstar

- Telephone: 13 15 38
- Visit: www.jetstar.com.au

Tiger

- Telephone: (02) 9335 3033
- Visit: www.tigerairways.com

Health

Register with Medicare

The Australian Government provides help with medical expenses through a scheme called Medicare. You may be eligible to join Medicare and gain immediate access to health care services and programs such as free public hospital care, help with the cost of out-of-hospital care and subsidised medicines. To register, you will require your passport and/or travel documents.

Medicare has a Welcome Kit, which is translated into sixteen different languages. It explains Medicare and other government health services and the eligibility requirements for benefits and payments.

Medicare:

- www.medicareaustralia.gov.au/yourhealth/our_services/am.htm
- Telephone: 13 20 11
- Mackay Location: Shop 125
Caneland Shopping Centre
Mangrove Road

Private Health Insurance

There are a number of private health insurers, some of these are outlined below:

MBF Insurance:

- Location: Shop 186A, Mt Pleasant Shopping Centre Mt Pleasant, Mackay
- Telephone: General 13 11 37
- Local (07)4942 3911
- Visit: www.mbf.com.au



Medibank Private

- Location: Shop 125, Caneland Shopping town Mangrove Road, Mackay
- Telephone: 13 23 31
- Visit: www.medibank.com.au

Westfund

- Location: 97 Victoria Street, Mackay
- Telephone: General 1300 552 132
- Local: (07) 49 578 188
- Visit: www.westfund.com.au

For further health insurance providers refer to the Yellow Pages in the local telephone directory or visit www.yellowpages.com.au.

Private Hospitals

You will require identification and/or a Medicare Card to receive treatment or any services from Private Hospitals. Outpatient and inpatient services are available.

It is also highly recommended that you have private insurance as private medical costs are expensive. Please refer to private health insurance section for further information.

Private Hospital Listings:

Mater Misericordiae Hospital

- Location: 76 Willetts Road, North Mackay
- Telephone: (07) 4965 5666
- After hours contact: (07) 4965 5444

Local Public Health (including Immunisation)

You will require identification or a Medicare Card to receive treatment or any services provided by Public Health. Outpatient and inpatient services are available. Mackay Base Hospital is the only public hospital within Mackay.

- Location: Bridge Road, West Mackay
- Telephone: (07) 4968 6000

Associated Services:

- Dental Clinic: Mackay Base Hospital (you must have an appointment to attend this clinic)
- Breastscreen: 7-9 Wellington Street, Mackay
Telephone: 4968 3813 (you must have an appointment to attend this clinic)
- Acute Care: Mackay Base Hospital

Immunisation

Immunisation of children is provided free under the National Immunisation Program for the relevant age groups. Immunisation can be provided by a doctors surgery or the Mackay Child, Youth & Family Health Clinic. A GP consultation fee may be charged if you go to the doctors for the immunisation. The vaccines and relevant age groups can be viewed at www.immunise.health.gov.au.



Child, Youth & Family Health Clinic:

- Location: 12-14 Nelson Street, Mackay
- Telephone: 4968 3863

Community Health

For a complete listing of Community health Providers:

- Telephone: 4968 3858
- Visit:

http://www.mackay.qld.gov.au/community/community_directory/category?root_node_selection=51241

General Practitioners

There are many General Practitioners (doctors) within the Mackay Region. When visiting a Medical Centre you will need to supply official identification, or if issued, your Medicare Card. The cost varies depending on the clinic so it is advisable to ask the cost while making your appointment. There are a limited number of clinics that provide a bulk billing service to medicare card holders where you don't have to pay anything at the time of the appointment.

Please refer to the Yellow Pages of the telephone directory for complete listings of Medical Practitioners or visit www.yellowpages.com.au.

Dentists

There are many Dentist Surgeries throughout the Mackay region, however they are extremely busy and can be difficult to get an appointment with. If you leave your name and number with dental surgeries they will put you on the waiting list and call you when cancellations occur.

Please refer to the Yellow Pages of the telephone directory for complete listings of dental surgeries or visit www.yellowpages.com.au.

Education

Australian Education System

Under Australian law, children between the ages of 6 and 15 must attend school. You should enrol your children as soon as possible.

There are several levels to Australia's schooling system, it includes:

- Kindergarten or Prep – for children under the age of approx. six (6).
- Primary School – for children from the age of approx. six (6) to twelve (12) years.

- Secondary School – for children aged approx. thirteen (13) to seventeen (17) years.
- Tertiary Education – higher education through universities, private institutions, Tertiary and Further Education colleges.

Primary & Secondary School Enrolment

In Queensland, residents can enroll their children in either a state or private school.

Private Schools: If you chose to enrol your child into a private school, you are responsible for all education fees. Churches or other private organisations fund many private schools.

State Schools: Are funded by government and are free to attend, although parents usually pay for uniforms, learning resources and incidentals.

To enrol your child in a school, contact the school by telephone or in person. You will need to take your visa documents, proof of your child's date of birth and any papers including school reports relating to their previous education. You may also need to show immunisation documents.

For a complete listing and information on early childhood, primary and secondary and education institutions visit:

http://www.mackay.qld.gov.au/community/community_directory/category?root_node_s_election=51234

Tertiary Education

Mackay has one university campus; Central Queensland University, the campus offers a range of courses from a variety of disciplines. In addition to the University, there is the Central Queensland Institute of Technical and Further Education (TAFE).

For more information:

Central Queensland University

- Telephone: (07) 49 576 048
- <http://www.cqu.edu.au/>

Central Queensland Institute of TAFE

- Telephone: 1300 CQ TAFE (1300 27 8233)
- Visit: <http://www.cq.tafe.qld.gov.au/>

Government Services

Registering with Centrelink

The social security system in Australia provides income support and services for people who are in need. Social security benefits are provided through the government agency called Centrelink. You can find Centrelink office locations and telephone numbers in the local White Pages in the telephone directory.



Centrelink website: www.centrelink.gov.au

Access to Centrelink payments will depend on your visa class. Even if you have become a permanent resident of Australia, a waiting period for payments could apply.

If you have trouble speaking English, Centrelink can provide an interpreter for your appointment. You can contact Centrelink in your own language by telephoning:

Centrelink (Multilingual Services): 13 12 02

You must also provide identification documents (passport and travel documents, bank account details and accommodation details) to Centrelink when applying for payments. More information on identification requirements is available on the above number or by downloading the fact sheet "Proving your identity to Centrelink" from the Centrelink website.

You must have a Tax File Number in order to receive any Centrelink payments. Centrelink can provide you with an application form for you to lodge with the Australian Tax Office.

Waiting period for Centrelink Payments

Most newly arrived migrants have to live in Australia as a permanent resident for two years before they can get most social security payments, including unemployment and sickness benefits, student allowances and a number of other payments. To be eligible for age and disability pensions, you generally have to live in Australia for 10 years.

Family Tax Benefit

If you have children, you may be able to receive a Family Tax Benefit and Child Care Benefit to help with the cost of raising children.

There is no waiting period for these payments, but you must hold an Australian Permanent Resident Visa in order to be eligible. It is important to understand that the Family Tax Benefit is intended only as an income supplement, and is not enough to live on and is subject to an income test.

Family Assistance Offices have been established in Centrelink, Medicare, Australian Taxation Offices and ATO access sites where expert advice is available, or you can telephone Family Assistance Office on 13 61 50.

Study Support Services

Central QLD Institute of TAFE (Mackay Campus) offers Literacy and Numeracy Programs. If you require assistance with literacy and Numeracy, you are encouraged to contact TAFE on:

- Phone: 07) 4940 3222
- Email: tafe.langlet@det.qld.gov.au
- Visit: www.tafe.qld.gov.au/courses/literacy_numeracy/index.html

Community Support Centre offers Literacy and Numeracy classes once a week on Wednesday's, phone (07) 4957 3208.



Legal Aid

In every State and Territory there are community organisations that work to inform people of their legal rights and obligations and to improve their access to the justice system. For information and advice, contact:

Legal Aid Queensland

- Telephone: 1300 651 188
- Local: (07) 4961 0688
- Visit: www.legalaid.qld.gov.au

Queensland Association of Independent Legal Services

- Telephone: 1800 244 504

Women's Legal Service

- Telephone: 3392 0670

Mackay Community Legal Service

- Telephone: (07) 4957 2626

Mackay Division of Legal Aid Services

- Location: Ground Flood, 17 Brisbane Street, Mackay 4740
- Telephone: 1300 651 188

Private Legal Services: Mackay has many legal firms throughout the city. Please refer to the Yellow Pages in the telephone directory under the term Solicitors or visit www.yellowpages.com.au.

Employment Services

Job Services Australia

Any Australian resident can register with Centrelink for help in finding a job. Once you are registered you can be referred to Job Services Provider, contracted to the Commonwealth Government to help people find employment.

www.deewr.gov.au/Employment/JSA/Pages/default.aspx

Recruitment Agencies

There are private recruitment agencies to assist with finding employment. You register directly with the recruitment agency, generally by completing a form and providing your resume or details of your work history. The agent will then advise you of any positions that you are suited to. It is advisable to register with a number of recruitment agencies.

Overseas Recognition of Qualifications

The National Office of Overseas Skills Recognition (NOOSR) helps trained professionals to have their skills recognised in Australia.

For permanent residents already in Australia, the local Department of Employment and Training (D.E.T) office in Mackay can assist with application forms, etc.

- Telephone: (07) 4967 4485

For more information:

- Telephone: 1800 020 086
- Visit: www.aei.dest.gov.au/AEI/QualificationsRecognition/default.htm
- Email: noosr@dest.gov.au

For permanent Australian residents, the local Department of Education and Training; Skilling Solutions office in Mackay can assist you with formal skills recognition, training options and apprenticeships/traineeships.

For more information:

- Telephone: 1300 654 687
- Visit: www.skillingsolutions.qld.gov.au/
- Email: skillingsolutions@deta.qld.gov.au

Trades Recognition

For people who want to have their qualifications assessed before arriving in the country (this is particularly important for people arriving on skilled migration schemes) you have to go through a body called Trades Recognition Australia (TRA). Trade Recognition Australia checks if trade skills gained overseas are recognised in Australia.

For more information:

- Visit: www.workplace.gov.au/TRA
- Telephone: +61 2 6121 7456
- Email: traenquiries@deewr.gov.au

Community Services

Childcare Services

Mackay has many Child Care Centers, vacation and after-school programs. Children over the age of 6 weeks can be enrolled for care. Be sure to discuss associated fees with your chosen childcare facility.

Please be advised that early enrolment is encouraged to guarantee a placement.

For further information on local Child Care Centers and After School/Vacation Care Providers visit:

http://www.mackay.qld.gov.au/community/community_directory

For details on the Community Child Care and Preschool Centers visit:

www.candk.asn.au

Mackay Family Day Care:

Located at: 418 Shakespeare Street, South Mackay

Telephone: 4957 2627

Email: mfdc@bigpond.net.au

Diversity in Child Care Queensland

The program provides information to migrants about their childcare options and helps families participate in various programs. The Organisation also helps people to register for family assistance and place their children in suitable childcare.

For more information:

- Telephone: (07) 3861 1088

Neighbourhood Centers

George Street Neighbourhood Centre Association Inc. This organisation provides community information, support, advice, referral and general counselling support.

Services on offer include:

- Literacy and Numeracy classes
- Multicultural Family Support Groups
- Dutch Club
- Home Based Family Support Program

Located: 4 George Street, Mackay

Telephone: (07) 4957 2626 or (07) 4957 6728

Email: geroge_st_nc@orion-online.com.au

Postal: PO Box 4112 South Mackay Qld 4740

Andergrove/Beaconsfield Neighbourhood Centre

Located: 98 Bedford Road, Andergrove Qld 4740

Telephone: (07) 4955 1631



South West Mackay Neighbourhood Centre

Located: Corner Pompey and Clements Streets, South Mackay Qld 4740

Telephone: (07) 4959 4565

Walkerston Neighbourhood Centre Group Association Inc.

Postal: PO Box 224, Walkerston Qld 4751

Telephone: 4959 2170

Multicultural Services

There are a number of multicultural groups in Mackay that provide assistance with settling in and organise social gatherings and events and an opportunity to meet other people with similar backgrounds. For a list of multicultural groups in Mackay visit:

http://www.mackay.qld.gov.au/community/community_directory/category?root_node_s_election=51228

Multiculturalism is a strategy for all Australians. It encourages all Australians to express, share and value one another's cultural heritage. Multiculturalism aims at ensuring that all Australians have equality of opportunity to benefit from and contribute to all aspects of life without prejudice or discrimination.

Multiculturalism is based on the premise that everyone should have an overriding and unifying commitment to Australia and to its interests and future. Multiculturalism exists within the structures and principles of Australian society – the rule of law, Parliamentary democracy, freedom of speech and religion, English as the national language and equality of the sexes. In the framework, it promotes universal ideas of human rights based on mutual respect, cooperation and a fair go for all.

Migrant Settlement Program:

- Located: 4 George Street, Mackay
- Telephone: (07) 4957 2626 or (07) 4957 6728
- Email: geroge_st_nc@orion-online.com.au

Services Provided:

- Support to newly arrived migrant/humanitarian entrants to the Mackay region
- Literacy and Numeracy classes
- Basic computer skills training

Migration Agents

Mackay Regional Council has a list of Migration Agents that can help you with Migration advice and immigration assistance. Log on to:

www.mackay.qld.gov.au/community/are_you_new_to_mackay

Multicultural Affairs Queensland (MAQ)

MAQ is responsible for providing advice on multicultural issues, coordinating multicultural policy development and planning across the Queensland Government and promoting positive community relations.



Queensland's Multicultural Policy:

The Queensland Government is committed to fostering an inclusive, cohesive and open society and to developing strategies that promote equal rights, responsibilities and opportunities for all Queenslanders, regardless of their cultural, ethnic or religious background, gender, national origin, how long they have been here or where they live in the state. Cohesion is to be promoted ensuring access and participation for all Queenslanders.

Multicultural Reference Group

Mackay Regional Council has a multicultural reference group run by a mix of employees who have moved to Australia and locals. They can give you valuable help and advice as you settle into life in Australia.

http://www.mackay.qld.gov.au/community/arts_culture_and_heritage/local_area_multicultural_partnership

English Classes

Communicating in English is very important and the key to your successful settlement. English language courses for new arrivals in Australia are provided under the Adult Migrant English Program (AMEP). As a new resident, you may be entitled to receive free English language tuition of up to 510 hours. Register as soon as possible or you could lose your entitlement. Contact AMEP on:

TAFE Queensland English Language and Literacy Services (TELLS), Brisbane
Telephone: (07) 3234 1666
Email: TELLs@deta.qld.gov.au

AMEP Distance Learning
Telephone: 1800 017 015 (freecall)

Mackay Language College
Telephone: (07) 49 511 300
Visit: <http://www.mlcqld.com.au/>

English Classes for Council Employees

Strategic Leadership Team (SLT) has endorsed the Mackay Language College to deliver English classes to Council employees who have English as a second language. The costs to attend English classes will be covered by each Department's Learning and Development training budgets and are therefore *free* for employees. For more information please speak to your manager.

Library Services



Mackay Libraries have branches at Mackay City, Mt Pleasant (Gordon White Library) Walkerston and a Mobile Library that services the area from Midge Point in the North, Chelona in the South and Eton in the West.

Join the Library

Library membership is free to anyone who lives permanently in the Mackay Regional Council areas or resides in Bowen, Broadsound, Beylando, Mirani, Nebo, Sarina, Thuringowa and Whitsunday Shires.

Joining the library is as simple as:

- Presenting proof of residential address
- Agreeing to library use terms and conditions

If 16 years and under, a parent or guardian must show proof of current address plus photo identification or proof of signature.

Visitor Membership

Visitors and temporary residents are welcome to join the library as temporary members. A deposit of \$20 is payable and will be refunded when the membership is cancelled and original receipt presented.

For further information visit www.mackaylibraries.com.au/about_us.

Religious and Spiritual Institutions

Under the Australian Constitution, people in Australia are free to practice or worship the religion of their choice without fear of persecution. Mackay has places of worship for many religions and faiths.

For a detailed list of religions and spiritual institutions visit:

http://www.mackay.qld.gov.au/community/community_directory/category?root_node_selection=51253

Emergency & Crisis Support Services

In case of an Emergency, you must telephone 000 immediately for:

- Police
- Ambulance
- Fire Brigade

All calls to 000 are free of charge. When you call you are to provide your name, address and telephone number and type of service you require.

If you cannot speak English fluently, you must firstly tell the operator what kind of help you need by asking for the service you require, and then say the language you speak. You



will then be connected to the Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS) directly, so do not hang up. The TIS interpreter will then help the police, fire or ambulance service to obtain your address and other details. In urgent matters where you require police, ambulance or fire assistance place call 000 immediately.

For non-urgent incidents please call:

Police: 4968 3444

Ambulance: 13 12 33

Fire: 4944 8000

CRISIS SUPPORT SERVICES

Poisons Information Centre	13 11 26
Child Abuse Prevention Services	1800 688 009
State-wide Sexual Assault Helpline	1800 010 120
Family Drug Support	1300 368 186
Lifeline Counselling	13 11 14
Centacare Counselling	4951 2533
Grow Mackay	4957 6060
Kids Help Line	1800 551 800
Parents Help Line	13 30 13
Victims of Crime	1300 733 777