



The Hon Barry O'Farrell MP

Premier of NSW

Minister for Western Sydney

MEDIA RELEASE

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NSW PHOTO CARD TO BE FREE FOR MORE SENIORS

The NSW Government will remove NSW Photo Card fees for Seniors Card holders and carers, honouring another NSW Liberals & Nationals election commitment.

NSW Premier Barry O'Farrell and Minister for Ageing Andrew Constance made the announcement at the first of three Premier's Gala Concerts in Sydney, to coincide with the start of NSW Seniors Week.

"The NSW Photo Card is a voluntary card for people who do not hold a current NSW drivers licence to help them with their proof of identity," Mr O'Farrell said.

"Many transactions in daily life require some form of photo identification – people without can face stress and humiliation, extra costs, and sometimes miss out on entitlements or things they need.

"A year ago we promised to remove the fees for seniors and today we are delivering.

"Today's announcement will save seniors \$46 for a new card and \$22 for a replacement.

"This is a small but important gesture by the NSW Government to seniors who have contributed so much to their families and the community.

"The NSW Government is working hard to reduce cost of living pressures on seniors – today's announcement will be welcome relief and addresses an anomaly left behind by Labor."

The NSW Liberals & Nationals are delivering on a range of initiatives to increase the participation of seniors in the community and to enhance their quality of life.

- **The Whole of Government Ageing Strategy** - to be released in July, will ensure the issues of ageing and older persons are brought into the mainstream of policy making.
- **Grandparents Day** – established by the NSW Government last year, and celebrated on the last Sunday in October.
- **Seniors Card** – signed a reciprocal agreement with the New Zealand Government to give Seniors Card holders in NSW access to commercial discounts across the Tasman.
- **Stamp duty concessions** – extended to 'empty nesters' over 55 years who sell an existing home and purchase a newly constructed dwelling worth up to \$600,000.

Mr Constance said free NSW Photo Cards would also be made available to carers – going beyond the commitment made at the election.

“Carers in NSW who receive only the Carer Allowance from Centrelink will also be entitled to a free photo card – currently they are not eligible,” Mr Constance said.

“Free photo identification is invaluable to support carers in their roles.

“Today’s announcement is great news for those in our community who provide unpaid care and support to family members or friends with a disability or medical condition, or the elderly.”

Under existing regulations, only eligible pensioners are exempted from the fees. Seniors Card holders and carers who receive only the Carer Allowance are not eligible pensioners. The changes will be implemented in the second half of 2012.

Mr Constance said NSW Seniors Week, now in its 54th year, will feature 900 events in communities throughout the State.

“The Premier’s Gala Concerts are one of the highlights of Seniors Week, with the 30,000 tickets snapped up in just two and a half hours of their release last month,” Mr Constance said.

“The Gala Concerts are the biggest event for seniors in the Southern Hemisphere, and the audience will be treated to performances from some of Australia’s biggest names in musical theatre over the next two days.

"More than 250,000 seniors are expected to take part in events and activities over the next seven days.

"It's an opportunity for seniors to get out and try new experiences, learn new skills and lead healthy lifestyles."

More information is available at www.nswseniorsweek.com.au.