

Governance Controller

This factsheet provides additional information to the proposed amendments to the *Local Government Act 2019*, as outlined in Discussion Paper Part C. Please refer to this [paper](#) for full details.

What is good governance?

Good governance refers to the processes and practices that guide how a local government council makes and implements decisions. It is about being accountable, transparent, ethical, and compliant with legislation.

When governance is done well, it helps councils meet their obligations, strengthens decision-making, and supports effective service delivery.

Good governance leads to better decisions, stronger relationships, and a more trusted local government sector.

Why is good governance important?

Good governance builds trust—within the council, between elected members and staff, and with the community.

It ensures decisions are fair, transparent, and lawful, and that council processes are robust and accountable.

What is a Governance Controller?

The Department of Housing, Local Government and Community Development has identified the need for early support tools to help councils strengthen their governance capability before issues escalate, and become extremely difficult for both the council and the community.

One proposed tool is the introduction of a Governance Controller: an independent person who may be appointed to support councils experiencing governance challenges that have not escalated to the point where regulatory intervention is required.

When is one appointed?

The following options are proposed for the appointment of a Governance Controller:

1. The Minister directly appoints the Governance Controller based on advice provided by the regulator, an independent assessor or other local government body such as LGANT
2. The Governance Controller is appointed by the regulator (the Department of Housing, Local Government and Community Development) based on a set of criteria that determine if a council is experiencing governance challenges

3. Appointed by the council. A council might also wish to ask the Department to appoint a Governance Controller to provide early intervention and assistance.

Other pathways to the appointment of a Governance Controller are also being considered, such as following the making of a code of conduct complaint.

What could they do?

A Governance Controller might to do the following things:

1. **Observe** governance practices in a council
2. **Report** on governance issues to the council and/or the regulator (the Department of Housing, Local Government and Community Development)
3. **Advise** councils that are experiencing governance problems about how to fix the problems
4. **Recommend** further action to improve governance

Further questions?

If you have further questions, please email LG.Questions@nt.gov.au