

Birch Cliff

CO-OPERATIVE HOMES INC.

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MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE POLICY

General Overview:

The Membership Committee exists to help with interviewing prospective applications and working with maintenance committee on move-in/move-outs.

The Membership Committee's responsibility is to ensure that all applicants are treated fairly and that a process is followed. The Board's responsibility is to look at all aspects of the application process and determine if there would be suitable unit available to a perspective member. This could mean that subsidy could be offered to the household if they require it and if it is available. Also, being placed on the co-op's external wait list could mean that the person might not be offered a unit for quite some time (perhaps more than a year). People on this list (regardless of their financial circumstance at the time of applying) could have a change in their financial situation. Some examples of change could be a person applies and is making minimum wage or only has a part-time job. When that person is called 2 years later, they are working full-time at a new job making more money. This example can be reversed and the person was once making very good money but when an offer for a unit is made and the person is asked to provide up-to-date financial information, they unfortunately have lost their job and currently are receiving assistance (OW or ODSP). Each applicant must be evaluated at the time a unit becomes available to see what their current financial situation is.

Shelter is a human right and people should not be turned away based only on their financial earnings or a credit score. The entire "picture" must be reviewed by the Board.

All members participating on the Membership Committee must sign a Confidentiality Agreement. It is the responsibility of the Chair to ensure Confidentiality Agreements are signed and provided to the Board of Directors.

Committee Structure:

The Membership Committee shall aim for a maximum of seven and a minimum of five members.

Attendance:

Membership Committee members are expected to attend all membership committee meetings. Members who miss three consecutive meetings without cause may have their term on the committee reviewed. The Chair will approach the Member to see why they have missed the meetings. If the Member continues to be absent from the Committee, the Chair will report such absences to the Board and the Board will follow up with the Member to determine a course of action.

Marketing:

- a) Advertise the co-op in local newspapers and community centres. On-line marketing will be handled by the Board and Manager.
- b) Ensure the Co-op front lobby is stocked with updated blank application forms.
- c) Respond to emails and voicemail messages left in the office (which will be emailed to the Membership Committee's email address).

Process Applications:

- a) Request for application is received in writing or via the Co-op's Membership hotmail (e-mail) account. E-mail account will be monitored closely by a representative on the Membership Committee.
- b) Application form is mailed / e-mailed out.
- c) Once application is received back (with all information), it is dated and given an application number
- d) The Manager will conduct a credit check on all applicants which will be shared with the Board of Directors at the time they are considering Membership during a Board of Directors meeting.
- e) Two committee members are assigned to conduct the interview following the "interview questionnaire" format. Also responsible for checking references and provide detailed feedback to the Board. ***(This point is extremely important. When screening applicants, think about what skills they could bring the co-op and how could they help make Birch Cliff an even better place to live. It's extremely important to have the skill sets required to keep our committee's functioning properly.)***
- f) Committee is also responsible for obtaining copies of 2 forms of identification. Driver's license, passport or some form of government picture ID that identifies that the person who filled out the application is actually the person they claim to be. This information is imperative as it will protect the co-op should any legal matters arise.
- g) Interview team to make recommendations of acceptance/rejection to the committee. A vote is taken.
- h) Application with a completed membership committee report is passed to the Board with Membership's recommendations. **Although the Membership committee submits their recommendations, the Board of Directors has the final say in acceptance or rejection.**
- i) The office will send a letter to applicant(s) advising them of the Board's decision. If the applicant(s) involved wishes to appeal, they may do so to the Board. In the case of an appeal, the applicants would come before the Board for a final decision. **(Note:** All approved and declined applications must be returned to the Manager to be locked up and filed. This ensures that all personal information is kept confidential.) Declined applications will be destroyed (shredded) after a 6 month period.
- j) If the Board decides it is appropriate to approve an application based on a Co-signer, they will direct the Office to prepare the proper documents for signature by the new Member and the Co-signer(s).

Manage Waiting Lists:

- a) Ensure wait lists are filled for all unit sizes.
- b) Put applicants on waiting lists. This would include external and internal lists and unit size.
- c) Keep lists up-to-date as changes arise and post on the bulletin board inside the office.

A current “members-in-waiting” list is maintained. The office will send letters to external waitlist applicants at or near the beginning of each fiscal year to confirm if they wish to remain on the list. External applicants will be given a 10 day period from date of letter to respond. If contact proves unsuccessful, the names will be removed from the waiting list. The onus is not on the Co-op to chase people, but rather for the members-in-waiting to keep us provided with updated information.

Please note requests of a membership nature must be received in writing.

Move In/Out:

Membership is responsible for the following:

New Members/Internal Moves (move-in):

- a) Ensure Occupancy Agreement is signed by new member(s)
- b) Give information to new members – i.e., internal phone list etc.
- c) Receive first payments
- d) Hand over unit keys (including lobby, unit and mailbox keys)
- e) Membership Committee will contact Maintenance Committee or office to conduct a unit inspection.

Members Leaving the Co-op (move-out):

- a) Ensure all keys and garage clicker are handed in
- b) Membership Committee will contact Maintenance Committee or office to conduct a unit inspection.

Underground Parking:

The membership committee will collect garage door openers from a member that is moving out and hand the garage door opener over to the Parking Co-ordinator. The Membership Committee will also communicate with the Parking Co-ordinator when someone is moving in and obtain a parking spot number as well as a garage door opener (if one is available – if not new Member will use their key to enter the garage) to provide to the new Member. The new member will be provided with the Parking Co-ordinator’s name and advised to make any future parking arrangements directly with the Parking Co-ordinator.

Managing Various Lists:

The Membership Committee is responsible for:

- a) preparing and maintaining the internal and external waiting list.
- b) preparing and maintaining the internal telephone list.
- c) preparing and maintaining the parking list
- d) preparing and maintaining the laundry list

Laundry Schedule:

This committee maintains the “Laundry Schedule”. Preferences for evening and weekend hours are to be given to members who are currently employed. As new member moves in – it’s up to the committee to communicate designated laundry times to these members. A copy of the schedule is distributed to all members and posted in the Laundry Room each time it gets updated.

CERTIFIED to be a true copy of the Membership Committee Policy of Birch Cliff Co-operative Homes, passed by the Board of Directors at a meeting held on March 14, 2013.

Director

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