



MAHC is the cooperative housing industry source for board members, professionals and vendor associates.

- ◆ Conferences and Networking
- ◆ Educational Resources
- ◆ Promotional Opportunities
- ◆ Support and Savings
- ◆ Validated Certification

MAHC Education.

MAHC is a leader in the development and presentation of quality education programs for those involved in the cooperative community. Boards of Directors, staff, managers, accountants, Venders, maintenance personnel and government personnel are among those who benefit from our cooperative training.



"TOGETHER WE CAN DO IT"



Cooperative Handbook

The Advantages of Co-op Living

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TOGETHER WE CAN DO IT!

PARTICIPATION

Is the lifeline of the cooperative, The cooperative depends on each member to keep it alive and successful.

**TOGETHER WE CAN DO IT, -
ALONE WE FAIL**

You and your fellow members represent different cultures, countries, customs, and languages, but one of many things you all have in common is that you have pulled together as one and provided the best possible housing for yourselves!

Cooperative living is a challenge and is not for everyone. It requires hard work, it requires knowing your neighbor, and it requires working



MEMBERS AND BOARD TRAINING

Most co-op residents understand that there is a board protecting the interests of their community and individual owners— Running a co-op is like running a million-dollar business.

BOARD CERTIFICATION

MAHC has a certification program that all board members should take. Certification provides an industry standard, a commitment to a level of knowledge and learning that can be relied upon.

CLEARINGHOUSE FOR INFORMATION

MAHC has become a clearinghouse and exchange for information about cooperative housing. Our website at www.mahc.coop has been built into a vast internet library of cooperative information.

NEWSLETTER :

The quarterly newsletter provides timely informative articles from the “how to “ of problem solving, to analysis of new legislation.

NETWORKING:

MAHC responds to inquiries from individuals seeking to move into a housing cooperative by providing a list of our members in the identified area.



Together We Can

Welcome to the Cooperative

THE ADVANTAGES OF CO-OP LIVING

Co-ops offer their members many advantages that are often unavailable in other forms of housing:

As a co-op member, you have security of tenure. That means you can live in your home for as long as you wish if you follow the rules of the co-op and pay your housing charges on time.

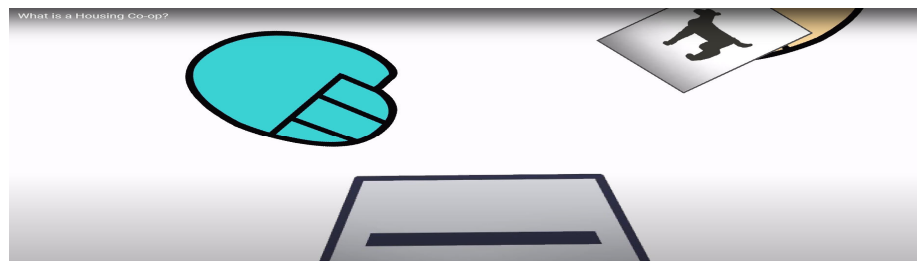
As a co-op member, you have a say in decisions that affect your home. You and your neighbors own your homes together, which means you have a say in how they are managed. Coop housing is not public housing. Co-ops are self-governed mixed income communities, home to people of all ages and backgrounds. This diversity is one of the co-op movement's greatest strengths.



ELECT DIRECTORS

Perhaps members most critical task is the election of a good board of directors. It is generally not possible for members to know all of the operating details of a cooperative so they delegate power to the board of directors. They represent the whole cooperative, so it is very important that members elect capable people for the board.

It needs to be stresses that members can only exercise their governance authority in a legally sanctioned meeting. Board members are only board members during a meeting.



Annual Inspection Safe and Sanitary

The Board of Directors require you to make your home available to our service personnel at least once a year for an unit inspection program is to see that co-op property is in safe and habitable condition and to ensure that co-op occupancy rules are not being violated. The inspection also helps us to check on the condition of various fixtures and appliances to make sure that everything is in proper working order. Cooperators are encouraged to bring special service needs or problems, ask questions about the inspection itself, and offer suggestions.



CO-OPERATIVES

what are they?

Co-ops are communities in the truest sense of the word. While it's common to hear people in other forms of housing say they don't know or never speak to their neighbors, co-op members live and work together to create homes in active communities.

Co-op members are not landlords or tenants. As cooperative owners, members work together to govern their association and manage their homes to foster strong communities.

Members elect a board of directors from among themselves to govern the co-op's operations. Most co-ops also contract with managers to handle the daily operations and maintenance of their homes.

The board is elected by and accountable to the co-op's members. Directors are volunteers who have a legal obligation to act honestly, in good faith, and in the best interests of the co-op.

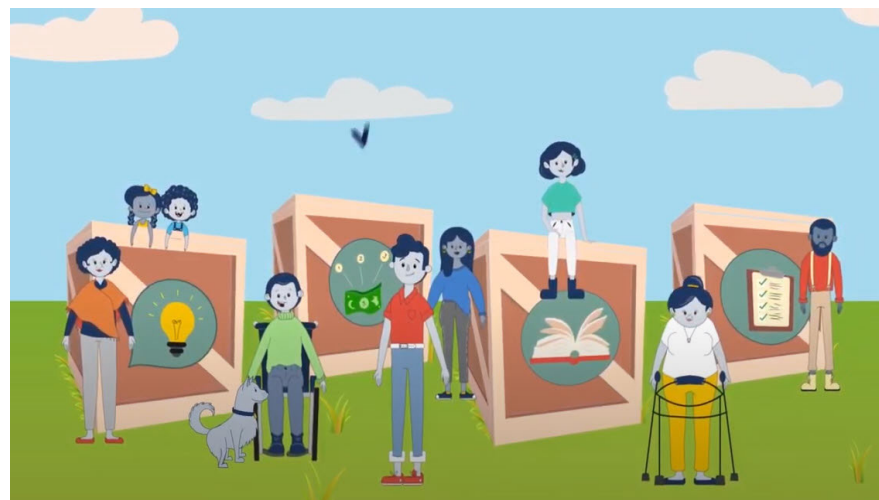
INTRODUCTION

WELCOME TO THE COOPERATIVE!

Anyone who knows housing co-ops will tell you that they are much more than bricks-and-mortar or a roof over your head. Co-ops are made up of people who form a close bond of association and work together to provide safe, secure and affordable homes for their members.

You have joined with other residents in providing for each other the best possible living situation, with the benefits of Joint ownership and democratic living in a cooperative.

This handbook is offered as an introduction some important aspects of living and participating in a housing cooperative. It answers some of the more commonly asked questions about cooperatives.



COMMITTEES

Committees are formed to get members actively involved in the business of the cooperative. Members are able to assist the board by making Recommendations, helping plan activities, finding information, enforcing policies, etc.

Examples of some committees are membership, house and grounds, newsletter, election, activities, pet, etc.

BE PART OF YOUR COOPERATIVE
ATTEND YOUR MEETINGS AND
WORK ON A COMMITTEE!

MEETINGS:

It is very important to attend your membership and annual meetings. Meetings are a way of keeping members informed about the business of the cooperative. It is a time for members to voice their opinions and make collective decisions

As you are responsible to pay your monthly charges on time, so too are you responsible to attend annual and membership meetings.

- ⇒ ARRIVE ON TIME
- ⇒ LISTEN
- ⇒ ASK QUESTIONS
- ⇒ MAKE SUGGESTIONS
- ⇒ VOLUNTEER
- ⇒ FOLLOW UP ON YOUR ASSIGNMENTS

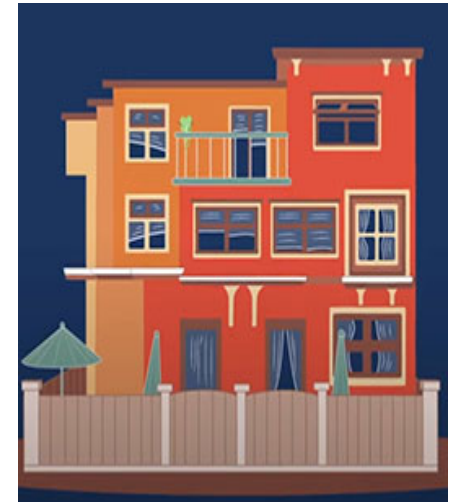


WHAT IS A COOPERATIVE

Living in a cooperative is very different from renting an apartment. Cooperatives are owned collectively by their members. You have bought a share of the corporation, which entitles you to live in one of the cooperative units.

Cooperative Association Owns

- Building
- Apartments
- Permit
- Fixtures
- Land



You Buy a Share

You become a part-owner to secure right to live in one of the cooperative units

You are no longer a tenant, but a **MEMBER**. As a member, you are a part-owner of the building and have a shared responsibilities for managing and maintaining the building.

As a members you receive a **MEMBERSHIP CERTIFICATE**, which proves that you own a share in the cooperative.



As direct stakeholders, members are motivated to act responsibly and become engaged in their community. By working collectively to run their housing, co-op members develop broader forms of interaction and strong communities are created. This involvement very often extends to the wider community as well, where co-op members are known to be engaged citizens.



REPAIRS BY THE COOPERATIVE:

The cooperative is responsible for the repairs of common areas, grounds, electrical systems, furnace, stoves, refrigerators, plumbing, etc. The cooperative makes sure that the building is kept in good condition.

BY THE MEMBERS

It is in your interest to live in a building you can be proud of. It is also in your interest to keep your unit in good condition, so that the cooperative does not spend all its money on repairs! However, you are responsible for any repairs caused by your neglect or misuse. For example, if your child drops a toy in the toilet and it backs up. You will be responsible to make the necessary repairs.

MAINTENANCE

Even though the cooperative hires a management company to provide management services, Members of the cooperative must do some work on a volunteer basis.

In order to lower maintenance cost, a cooperative will divide some of the maintenance duties among it's members. Some of these might include sweeping, mopping, clean up the trash on the property, Landscaping around the property.

Get involved in your cooperative's, maintenance tasks. Your involvement helps the cooperative succeed.

Monthly payments are not called rents, but **CARRYING or OCCUPANCY CHARGES**, You no longer pay rent to a landlord. Instead, your money goes to pay the cooperatives mortgage payment. Also goes to carrying charges pay for maintenance, Carrying charges also go to pay for maintenance, utilities, insurance, taxes, and other expenses of your cooperative . Your monthly payment represents a portion of the of operating and maintaining the housing.



As a co-op member, you have a say in decisions that affect your home. You and your neighbors own your homes together, which means you have a say in how they are managed. Co-op housing is not public housing. Co-ops are self-governed, mixed-income communities, home to people of all ages and backgrounds. This diversity is one of the co-op movement's greatest strengths.



LIMITED EQUITY COOPERATIVES

Limited Equity Cooperatives limit the price of membership, as well as limit the price members can obtain when they sell their membership.

Limited Equity Cooperatives are established in order to keep the cooperative affordable for low and moderate income families. The main purpose of establishing the cooperative is not so much for financial profit but for gaining and maintaining affordable, decent housing.

COOPERATIVE MAKES YOU A COOPERATOR

Cooperative living is an opportunity to control your own housing. You become a homeowner with many responsibilities. The cooperative makes you a cooperator and involves participating and working together with other members.

One important way that members participate is by attending membership meetings. It is your obligation to take part in these meetings. Decisions are made by the membership. Each household has one vote, regardless of unit size or number of family members.

THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Your cooperative is managed by a board of directors. The board is elected by the members.

The board does not take on the role of the landlord. They are members who have been elected to represent you. They are responsible for the operation of the cooperative, such as making sure the cooperative does not go broke and making sure to make its payments. They must keep on top of every detail to make sure that the cooperative runs smoothly.

The board puts in extra time to make the cooperative run effectively. Know your board members and work with them. Working together makes the difference.



6. **TAKE PART** opportunities for members to form friendships, pursue common interests and, ultimately, strengthen their community. Build life skills, confidence and become more active in the communities and vote.
7. **HOLD** each other accountable for the decisions made on behalf of the cooperative.
8. **MAINTAIN** your unit in good condition. Conserving use of utilities and clean up after your self and family. Carrying charges are based on cost to the cooperative.
9. **Involving** tenants in decision making is a management approach that not only helps to give tenants greater dignity and pride in their residence



DOCUMENTS WHICH GOVERN THE COOPERATIVE

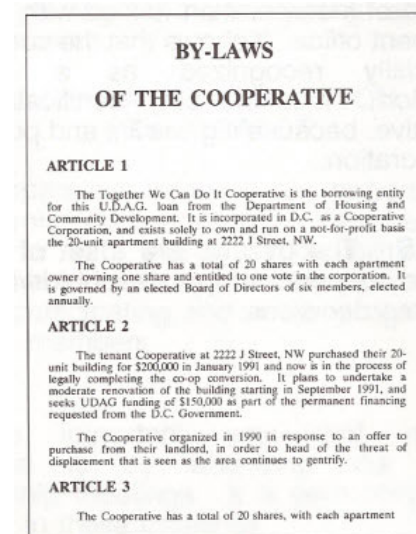
The Key documents of your cooperative are the following:

CERTIFICATE OF INCORPORATION

The certificate of incorporation is filled with the State. It shows that the cooperative is officially recognized as a business corporation. It is the birth certificate of the cooperative, because it gives life And purpose to the corporation.

BY-LAWS

The by-laws are a set of rules by which the cooperative operates, holds meetings and makes decisions.

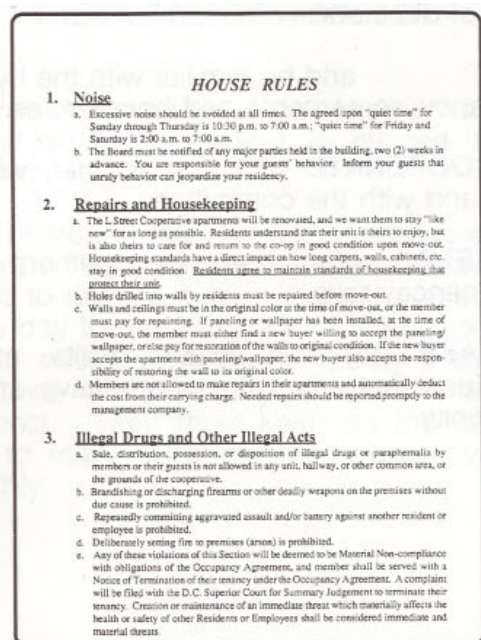


OCCUPANCY AGREEMENT:

The occupancy agreement is an agreement that details responsibilities of occupying the unit. It is similar to a rental lease.

HOUSE RULES

House rules are the everyday rules or guidelines of living in the cooperative. House rules are set and agreed upon by the elected board of Directors so that the best standards for the cooperative are maintained. House rules cover such items as pets, supervision of children, garbage, noise, etc.



YOUR DUTIES AS A MEMBER

As a co-owner in the cooperative, you should:

- ATTEND** Membership meetings to keep informed of your cooperatives progress and to make decisions about how to run the cooperative.
- PARTICIPATE ACTIVELY AND RESPECTFULLY** in collective decision-making processes, live according to the rules decided collectively by all members, and being willing to live according to the principles of co-operation.
- LEARN** be familiar with the by-laws, occupancy agreement and house rules. Learn unique opportunities to develop and practice community leadership skills.
- COOPERATE** with one another, with the board, committees, and fellow cooperators. Being willing to truly listen to and respect the opinions, needs and wishes of all members;
- HELP** local people taking a leading and lasting role in creating secure, affordable homes and strengthening their communities.