

Membership Process By-law, By-law No. 32

This by-law contains the rules that are followed when people apply to live in the Co-op and includes all the events that lead up to a person moving into the Co-op. This By-law covers the major steps at the beginning of the process. The Co-op's *Organizational By-law*, *Occupancy By-law*, and *Waiting List By-law* cover the remaining steps. The Membership Policies and Procedures (1983) are repealed.

Article 1: General

1.1 Aims of the Application Process

The main aims of the application process include making sure:

- that applicants have enough information to decide whether they are interested in living in the Co-op
- that the Co-op has enough information to decide whether an applicant is suitable for membership
- that all applicants are treated fairly

1.2 Non-Discrimination Policy

The Co-op will not discriminate against applicants because of:

- race
- ancestry
- place of origin
- ethnic origin
- citizenship
- colour
- creed
- age
- gender
- marital status
- political affinity or activity
- sexual orientation
- family relationship
- physical disability
- conviction for which pardon has been granted or time served
- receipt of public assistance
- for any other reason defined by the Ontario Human Rights Code as a violation of fundamental human rights.

1.3 Assessing Applicants

Applicants for membership must meet the following standards:

commitment to Co-op principles and a willingness to participate in Co-op activities and decision making (e.g. members' meeting, committees, board, other positions or tasks);

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- financial responsibility;
- indication of permanency or long-term commitment to the Co-op;
- likely to be a good resident(s) and a good neighbour who will maintain their homes in good condition and will respect rights of others;
- the household must indicate that they can afford the housing charge, or housing charge assistance must be available;
- the household size must be within the Co-op's occupancy standards (occupancy standards are in the *Occupancy By-law*);
- applicants must have a positive attitude toward living in a community with people from different social, economic, and cultural backgrounds.

The Co-op will apply these criteria equally to all applicants.

1.4 Application Requirements

Each applicant must submit a completed application. This means that they must answer all questions on the application and it must be signed by all adult household members.

The application gives permission for the Co-op to conduct income verifications and landlord checks. The Board will set rules for doing income verifications and landlord checks.

Applicants are expected to attend an Information Session, if an Information Session is available.

Article 2: Applying to the Co-op

2.1 Applying Directly to the Co-op

People applying to the Co-op who are not requesting housing assistance will apply directly to the Co-op by filling out the market application form. People who apply directly to the Co-op will go through the membership process if there is a unit available for them. If there is no unit available for them, they will be placed on the external waiting list. The *Waiting List By-law* explains how the waiting list works.

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2.2 Referrals from Toronto Social Housing Connections

The Co-op participates in Toronto Social Housing Connections, a centralized waiting list in Toronto for people applying for housing assistance.

A person referred to the Co-op in this way will go through the same membership process as all other applicants.

2.3 Special Designated Groups

The Co-op has identified three special designated groups which may be given priority for housing assistance. The special designated groups identified are low-income seniors, Persons Living with HIV/AIDS, and homeless households.

A person referred to the Co-op in this way will go through the same membership process as all other applicants.

Article 3: Interviews

3.1 Membership Interviews and Recommendations

The Board and Member Selection Committee will set rules for interviewing applicants. Every member of the household who is age 16 or over must attend the interview. The Membership Committee will conduct an interview and will make recommendations about accepting or rejecting applicants. The staff member will use the membership criteria in Article 1.3 to make recommendations.

The Board will make the final decision about accepting or rejecting applicants for membership.

3.2 Notice of Rejection

The notification letter will tell a rejected applicant that they have the right to appeal the decision.

The Co-op is not obligated to give written or other reasons for rejecting an application for membership in the Co-op.

3.3 Appeal in Case of Rejection

An applicant may appeal a rejection of their application for membership.

To do so, the applicant must give the Co-op office a letter saying that they want to appeal the decision. This must be done no more than 14 days after the postmark date on the letter of rejection.

All applicants who make an appeal are entitled to a second membership interview and will be verbally informed of the reason for rejection.

The second interview in an appeal will be done within 30 days of the Co-op receiving the request. The interview will be done by Membership Committee members who was not involved in the first interview and will focus on the reason for initial rejection.

The results of the interview will be reported to the Board. No more appeals by an applicant will be allowed.

3.4 Re-application for Membership

Rejected applicants can submit a new application in the future. For example, the applicants may feel their circumstances have changed and they now meet the Co-op's membership criteria.

The Board may decide not to give an interview to the applicant if they feel the circumstances have not changed. There will be no appeal of the decision of the Board.

4. Other

4.1 No Liability

Anything in the Co-op's by-laws, or any commitment made by anyone who claims to be authorized by the Co-op will not create liability for the Co-op.

The Co-op will not be liable to anyone for:

- any error, omission, or mistake concerning the waiting lists
- the allocation of units or assistance
- the failure to allocate units or assistance to persons on a waiting list.

4.2 Matters Not Addressed in By-law

The Board will decide anything relating to the subject matter of this By-law not set out in the By-law or in the Co-op's other By-laws.

4.3 Conflict Between By-laws

In case of any conflict between this By-law and the Co-op's *Occupancy* or *Organizational By-laws*, the *Occupancy* or *Organizational By-laws* will prevail.

Date approved by the Board of Directors:September 5, 2002

Date confirmed by the Members:September 19, 2002