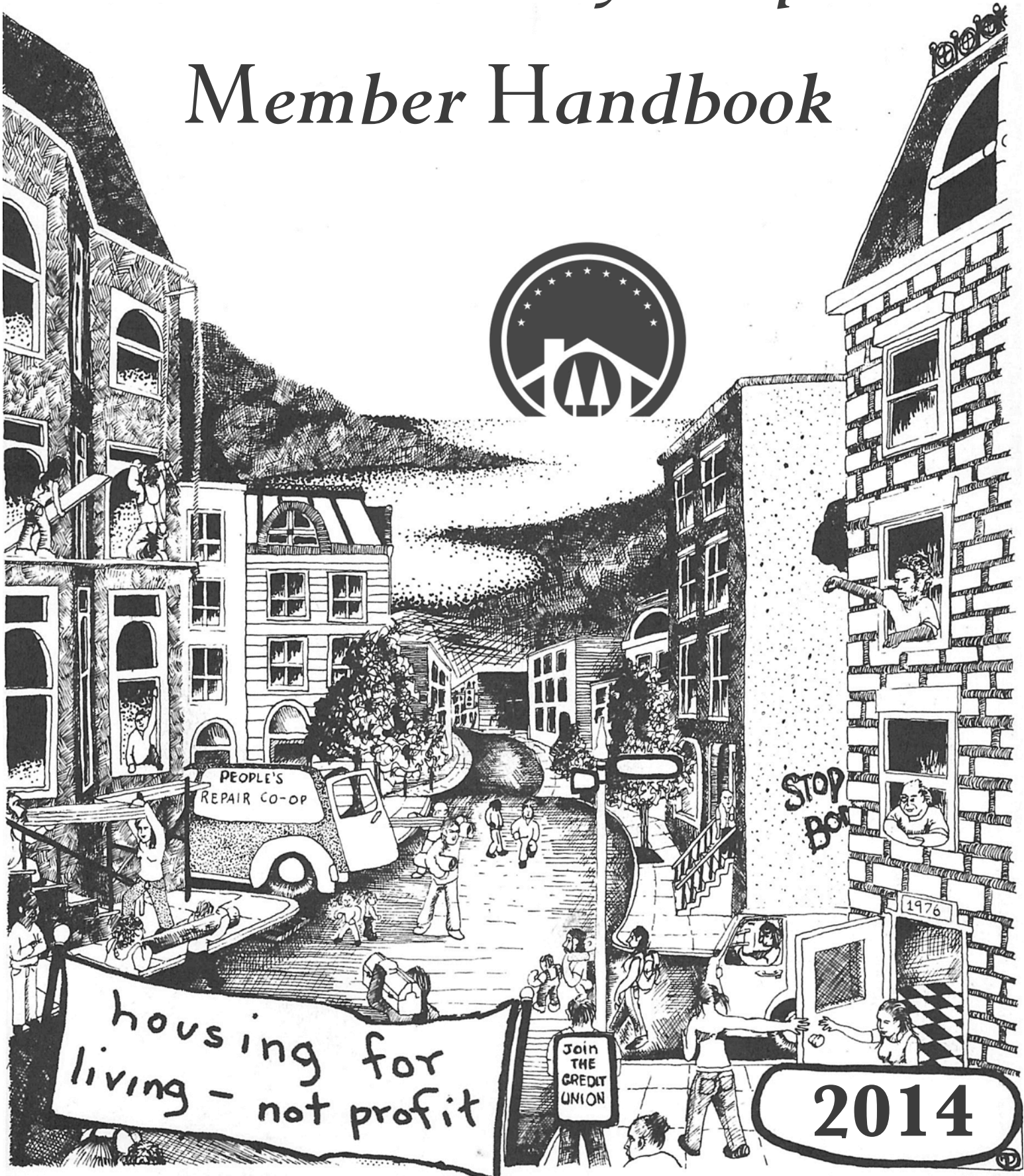


Madison Community Cooperative Member Handbook



2014

What is Cooperative Living?

The Qumbya Co-op (Chicago, IL) says the following in their member handbook (somewhat abridged and modified):

What is co-operative living? The simplest answer is that it is people living together in a self-governing group so that everyone benefits from the group's success. This house is your house, and you contribute directly to its well-being, and thus to your own. Cooperation is not about restricting your individual freedom and self-expression. Instead, it gives you a direct relationship with your environment, and creates a meaningful context in which you can act. Feeling happy and want to share it? Bake cookies. Or repaint a bathroom. Or build a table.

The freedom to act within a community context is much more valuable than the "independence" which can be purchased by wealth or status in our society. In a cooperative, you work together with other people toward common aims which at the same time make it easier for everyone to fulfill their personal goals. The moral of the story: do your part, we're all in this together.

When doing your part in the co-op, try to pick things that you really want to do, because there's no point in volunteering for a task you won't enjoy (or at least won't enjoy having completed). Part of working together effectively is having a division of labor that makes sense on a personal level, not just because the factory has to run such-and-such a way.

Part of self-determination is taking responsibility for your own actions, including little things like picking up after yourself. If you start something and don't finish it, make sure it's not in anyone's way.

A certain amount of conflict is natural. Capitalism obscures conflict by dealing with everything on a financial level - everything has a price, and if you break the rules you pay a fine. We prefer to talk about our problems, and resolve them to benefit everyone. This means you have to be willing to listen, and accept that different people may have different ideas about how the common rooms should look, or what's an appropriate thing to cook.

Much of this handbook is about how our system works and functions well with the many other systems we live among (such as everyone's schedules of school or work). But much of co-op living is not about systems, but about the cultivation of the particular and unique relationships here and now. Both aspects - systems and relationships - are vital; both need to work together. Houses have cooking systems that ensure that there is dinner several times a week, and we have relationships that are strengthened by the shared food, and community, and labor. When considering policy for the co-op, we need to keep both these aspects in mind.

There are many points of view and things to be learned about cooperative living. Everyone has things to say and to learn about this. There are not many places in this society where we get such a chance. So we should take advantage of it to foster a lively, relevant and helpful dialogue about cooperation.



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Welcome To MCC!

MCC operates eleven housing cooperatives located in Madison's downtown and near eastside neighborhoods. MCC is incorporated as a 501c(3) non-profit and as a cooperative in the state of Wisconsin.

The approximately 200 members of MCC control the organization through the Board of Directors (with representatives from each house) and General Membership Meetings (which all members can attend).

Each cooperative house in MCC follows a group living model, meaning that everyone has their own bedroom, and share common spaces such as kitchens, living rooms, and bathrooms with the other members of the house.

Houses make decisions as a group about what food to purchase, what kind of chore system to use, who is accepted to live in the house, when to have social events, and how they want to be involved with the community. Members pay for both their room, and for food, which is purchased communally. Houses have shared meals throughout the week, and most have weekly or bi-weekly house meetings.

Each house member is a member of MCC, which provides the houses with ongoing maintenance, financial and membership support.

Housing Solution: Living Co-ops?

University of Wisconsin, Madison, Wisconsin 53706, Saturday, Oct. 19, 1968
VOL. LXXIX, No. 26

5 CENTS A COPY



By SALLY PLATKIN
Cardinal Staff Writer

A small but growing number of students have found a way to combat the bureaucracy of dorms, isolation of apartments and competitiveness of sorority or fraternity houses.

The answer: living unit co-ops.

Close to 150 graduates and undergraduates this fall solved their housing problems. Their solutions vary, as do their definitions of co-operative units; but each house is united by government, maintenance and cooking.

"I don't think you can live cheaper in such decent housing with better food or a better location," says Seth Hirschorn, treasurer of the newly formed International Co-op House, 140 W. Gilman.

The largest of Madison's student co-ops, International House opened during the summer in the former Gilman House girls' dormitory. The unit is filled by about 50 persons on a foreign-native student ratio of 1:1.

Last spring's brainchild of Hirschorn and house president, Max Kummerow, the co-op was fully rented with only \$5 spent on advertising.

NEW ANSWER TO HOUSING. — Photo by Sanford Wolgel

Brief History of Madison Cooperatives and MCC

Madison's cooperative housing history goes back to 1915, with the founding of the Mortar Board Cooperative Cottage. Several other women's student cooperatives started in this period. More housing and dining co-ops were started during the Great Depression. Some of the early co-ops closed at the start of World War II. Groves Cooperative was started in the 1940s, along with the Green Lantern dining cooperative.

By 1968, there were about 10 co-op houses around Madison. A group of co-ops went to the NASCO conference that fall and came back ready to organize an association of cooperatives. Eight co-ops incorporated to form the Madison Association of Student Cooperatives, or MASC.

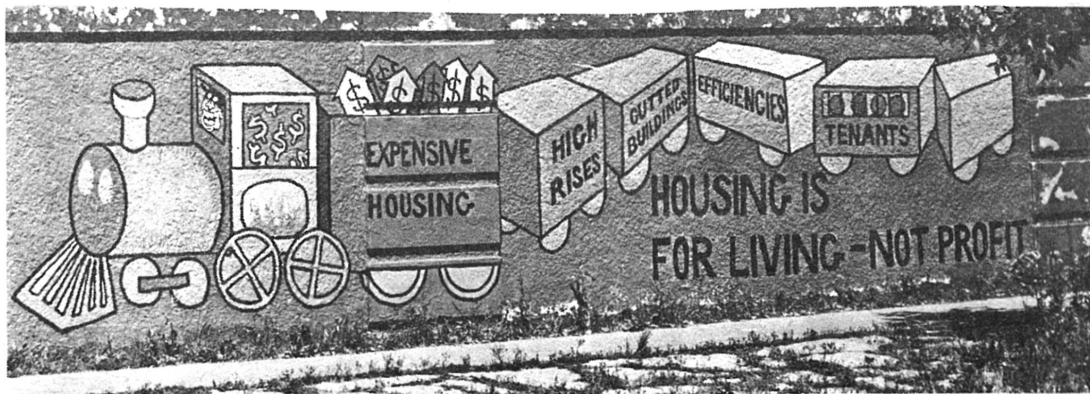
By the spring of 1971, MASC owned one building and leased many others. Several leased buildings had been lost due to lack of capital with which to buy them. Many meetings were held to decide how to create an organization that could help with organizational and financial challenges. Madison Community Cooperative, or MCC, was founded in 1971.

To learn more about the history of MCC, look up "Living the Revolution" by MadCoopTV on youtube.com, or check out the DVD from the office. We have also kept hundreds of original documents, newsletters and files from our entire history, which will be digitized and put on our madisoncommunity.coop website in time.

Mission Statement

Our mission is to improve the Madison community by providing low-cost, not-for-profit cooperative housing for very low to moderate-income people and to be inclusive of underrepresented and marginalized groups of the community.

VICTORY AT LE CHATEAU



For the past several months, the most important political issue in Madison has been the campaign against landlord James Korb (see FFA, vol 2, nos 6-8). The immediate objective of this campaign, the prevention of Korb's impending purchase of Le Chateau Coop, has now been attained.

In 1974, James Korb, a landlord known for chopping up houses into efficiencies, tried buying what is now Phoenix co-op at 636 Langdon. A large mural stood for many years.

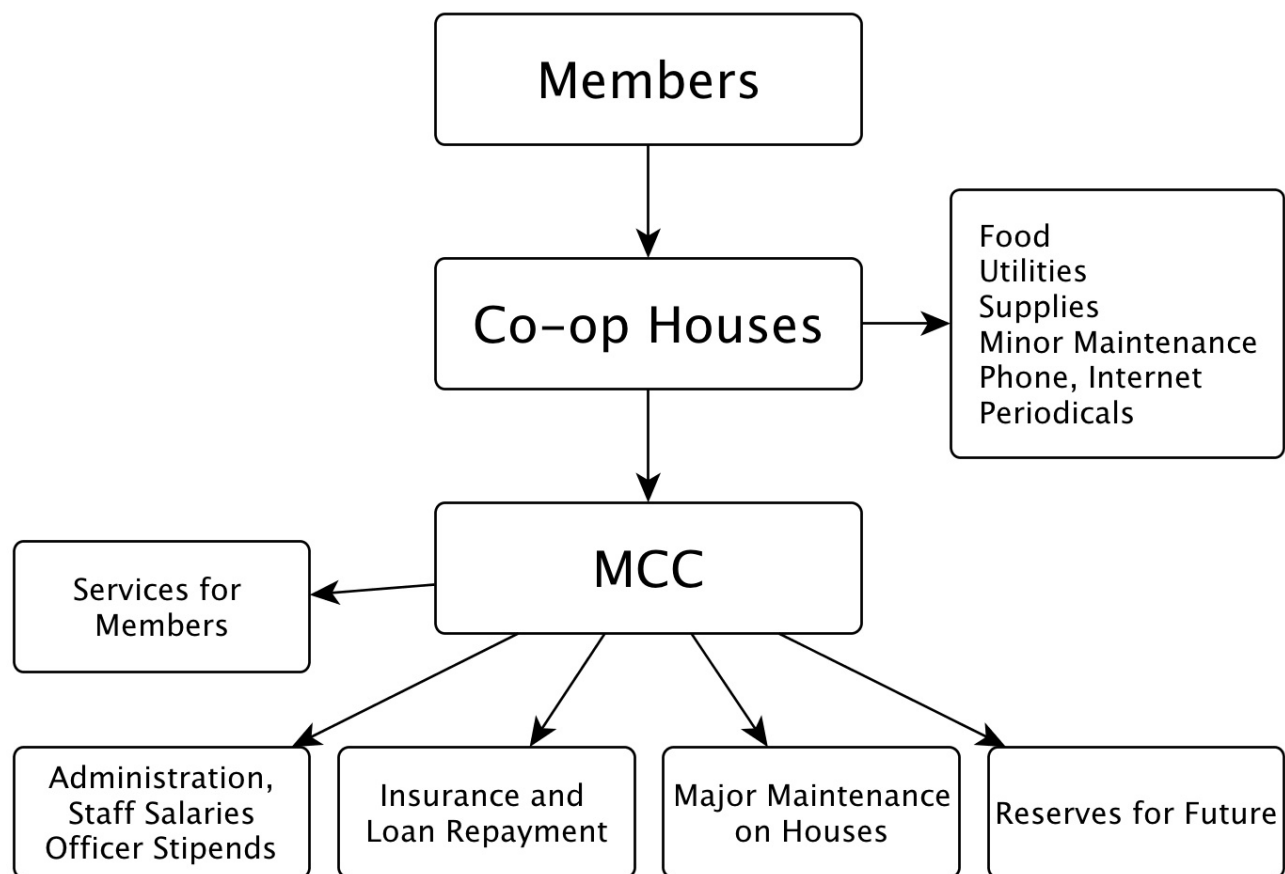
Where Does Your Money Go?

MCC is a “group-equity” housing cooperative. This means that members do not gain equity by living in MCC houses. Instead, all members pay a \$200 security deposit (refundable minus any damages or outstanding debt), a one-time non-refundable \$45 membership fee to MCC.

Members pay their rent (or share) to the house finance coordinator each month by the 1st. The 5th is the end of the grace period before late charges apply. Members of each house set their own budget and have control of how they collectively spend their money. The house pays for things like utilities, internet, periodicals, minor maintenance, and food.

The house pays a portion of each member’s share to MCC, according to the budget that is passed yearly by all members at a General Membership Meeting. This goes to the long-term obligations like insurance, mortgages, maintenance on houses, and staff.

Each house has a representative on the finance committee, which helps create house and MCC budgets.



Your Rights

- A democratically run house and organization.
- Improvement and change in your house.
- To be heard and listened to.
- Your privacy and space.
- A safe and healthy environment.
- Capable officers.
- Thoughtful criticism of house and organizational issues.
- A clean, well-organized house.
- Access to financial records of the house and organization.
- To take pride in and be fully involved in your house.

Your Responsibilities

- Attend house meetings and stay up to date on board issues.
- Understand policies, bring ideas to house meetings, ask for the assistance from the board of directors if necessary, and listen to others' ideas.
- Respect the privacy and space of others.
- Report maintenance problems that you can't fix yourself to your house maintenance coordinator.
- Complete your monthly house maintenance requirements.
- Talk to and support officers.
- Communicate your needs and concerns to your house and MCC.
- Act together to provide a cooperative, non-discriminatory and non-violent atmosphere.
- Work towards creative solutions.
- Do your labor and encourage others to do theirs.
- Pay your monthly share on time.

Moving In Checklist

- Signed a valid contract
- Paid security deposit, MCC and NASCO fees
- Paid first month's rent
- Contacted House Membership Coordinator to let them know when you are coming
- Get keys from house
- Completed Room Check-in Form

Moving Out Checklist

- Notify house in writing when you are leaving
- Pay your last month's rent so your security deposit can be returned to you
- Provide a forwarding address to your house
- Return your keys!
- Complete Room Check-Out Form

The Cooperative Movement

“And the humble cooperative weavers of Rochdale, by saving two pennies when they had none to spare, and holding together when others separated, until they had made their store pay, set an example which created for the working classes a new future.”

— George Jacob Holyoake

Although many forms of cooperation have existed and succeeded throughout history, a particular movement associated with modern co-operatives started in Rochdale, England during the 1800's. The Rochdale pioneers were a group of 28 blacklisted weavers hard-hit by the industrial revolution who opened a co-operative dry goods store. Rochdale is mythologized because it is the oldest surviving cooperative and it developed a set of widely applicable cooperative principles.

Today, cooperatives take many forms all over the world.

There are three main classifications of cooperatives:

- **Worker Cooperatives:** worker-members own the company where they work and often manage it democratically. All profit is controlled by those who produce it rather than rich capitalists. Collectives are a radical type of worker cooperative where members strive to attain absolute equality in wages, responsibility, and decisions.
- **Consumer Cooperatives:** designed to provide high quality, affordable services or goods to their members. Examples of consumer co-ops are co-op food stores, credit unions, housing co-ops, health care co-ops, etc. Some housing cooperatives are also what is called mutual housing, where cooking, cleaning, and decision making are shared by all. Community Development Credit Unions are a particular kind of credit union which is geared toward alleviating poverty and improving their community.
- **Producer Cooperatives:** members pool their resources in order to help each other with production, marketing and distribution of goods. Sunkist, Blue Diamond Almonds, and Land-O-Lakes are producer cooperatives, where each member is a rich agribusiness—not so groovy, huh? Producer cooperatives are also widely used by people to empower themselves in countries like Cuba, Nicaragua, and Tanzania.

In addition to the many different forms that co-ops take, they originate from varying ideological perspectives:

Utopian Cooperatives are intentional communities that are also trying to create a new society. Instead of changing the existing one, Utopian Cooperatives set out to start their own, usually with minimal contact with the outside world.

Rochdale Principles of Cooperation

The Rochdale Principles of Cooperation are based on the original cooperative efforts of the Rochdale Society of Equitable Pioneers in 1844 and focus on the study of cooperative economics. These principles serve as the basis for most cooperative operations and currently guide cooperative projects all over the world.

- 1. Voluntary and Open Membership:** membership in a cooperative should be voluntary and available without restriction or any social, political, racial, religious, or sexual discrimination, to all persons who can use its services and are willing to accept the responsibilities of membership.
- 2. Democratic Member Control:** cooperative societies are democratic organizations. All affairs should be administered by all persons elected or appointed in a manner agreed upon by the members and be held accountable to them.
- 3. Member Economic Participation:** members shall only receive a limited return on their capital investment, with no member gaining at the expense of another member. All other profits should be reinvested in the organization.
- 4. Autonomy and Independence:** cooperative organizations strive to remain autonomous. Any association with other organizations must ensure the ability of members to democratically control their community.
- 5. Education, Training and Information:** all cooperative societies should make provisions for the education of their members, officers, employees and the general public, in the principles and techniques of cooperation.
- 6. Cooperation amongst the Cooperatives:** all cooperative organizations should actively cooperate in every practical way with other cooperatives at local, national and international levels.
- 7. Concern for Community:** cooperatives should work for sustainable development in their communities.

Committees and Boards

General Membership

Everyone who lives in an MCC house as well as Type B members (people who don't live in the houses but are approved by the board and pay dues). As a general member you can go to any meeting and be a part of the process. At general membership meetings, we vote on large structural changes to the organization or changes to the MCC bylaws. As a general membership, we can also reverse decisions by the Board at GMM meetings or by referenda. All members can vote in spring elections for MCC's Officers.

Board of Directors

Composed of representatives selected by each house, plus the four elected officers, plus the United People of Color Caucus Chair, when one exists. Makes the mid-to-long term financial and policy decisions for the organization by hearing items from the committees.

Maintenance Committee

Setting standards for the repair and improvement of MCC-owned buildings; assessing the maintenance needs of MCC houses; drafting long and short-term maintenance budgets; and implementing and evaluating the progress of all maintenance projects.

Membership Committee

In charge of fulfilling MCC's membership, diversity, and outreach goals; working with issues of membership during difficult and or transitional periods; making relevant proposals or referenda to the membership; coordinating the orientation, education, and participation of members.

Finance Committee

Developing an annual budget for MCC; regularly studying and evaluating MCC's overall financial position; ensuring the accuracy and completeness of MCC's house books and house budgets; setting standards for accounting systems, collections, and rebate practices; and making recommendations on financial matters as requested by the Board.

Coordinating Committee

Taking actions on various matters as required by the Board or by law; facilitating the Board's decision-making process; reviewing projects, programs and resolutions; making recommendations to the Board; providing oversight of staff activities; and maintaining MCC's policy manual.

Individual Issues Committee

Assisting the membership with individual concerns, including but not limited to: late rent, payment plans, conflicts with individuals, contract terminations, and house concerns.

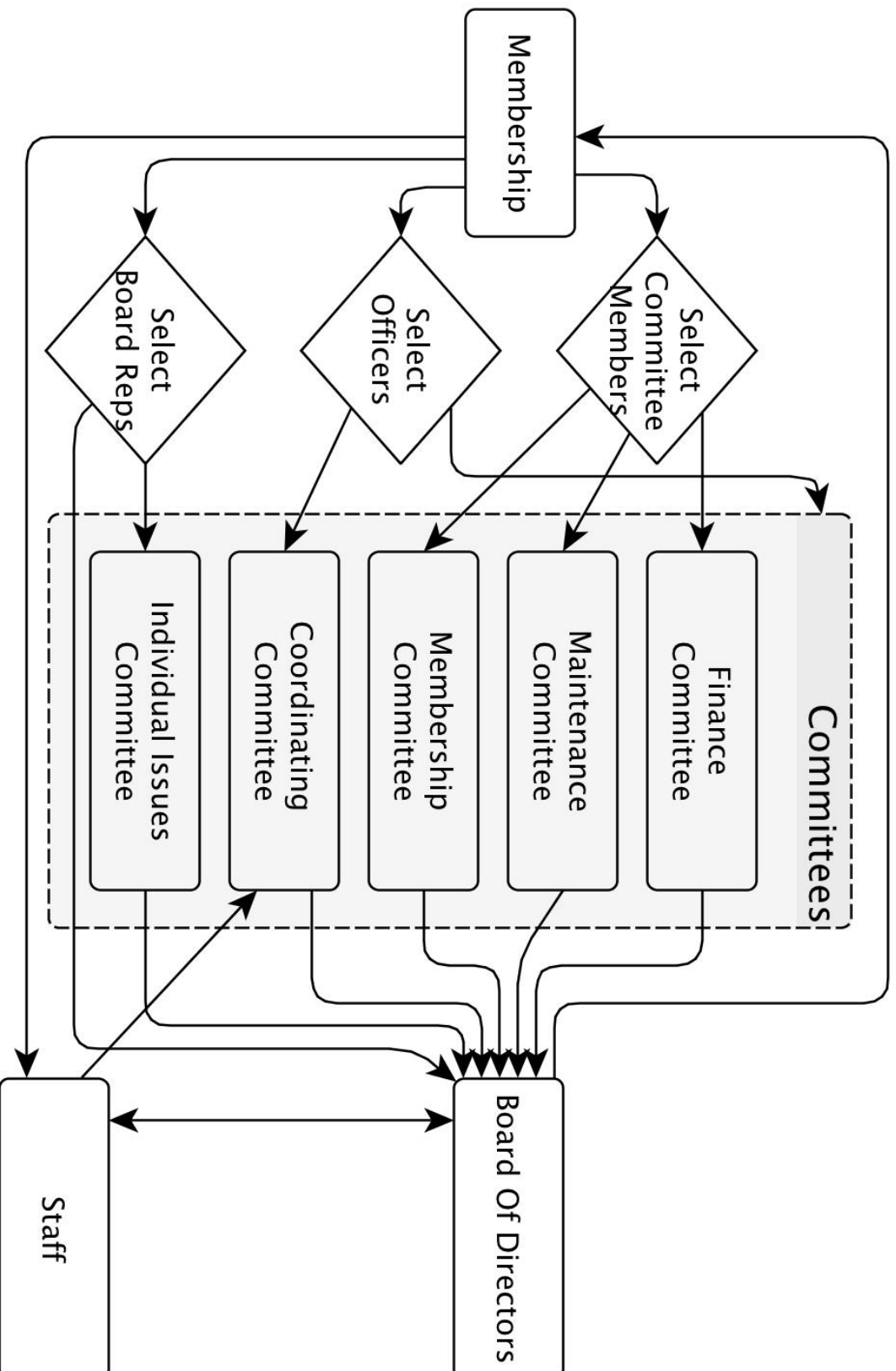
Development Committee

An ad-hoc committee. Researching matters relevant to the purchasing of buildings; educating the membership about development; negotiating expansion deals; coordinating targeted expansion areas occupied by underrepresented or disadvantaged groups; coordinating the provision of co-housing options; and making recommendations for the use of any MCC funds dedicated to development.

Other Committees

MCC also has a Grievance Committee (with a board-appointed chair and members), a caucus called the United People of Color Caucus, and members can propose new ad-hoc committees.

MCC's Organizational Flowchart



Staff Responsibilities

Staff members act as advisors and carry out the day-to-day operations of our organization. They carry out policies that we as a membership democratically put in place. They also advise the membership on expansion and development when necessary. Each coordinating staff member is required to come to at least the first portion of one Board meeting each month and attend when there is an agenda item that pertains to their area of expertise.

Maintenance Coordinator (Michael Carlson)

- Works with the Maintenance Committee.
- Teaches house members and House Maintenance Coordinators to do maintenance.
- Oversees maintenance, repair and remodeling projects on the houses.
- Gets bids from outside contractors when professional work is required.
- Creates the maintenance budget with project priorities.
- Hires Worker Group for doing maintenance in the houses.
- Maintains tool library and the MCC van.

Member Services Coordinator (Farheen Hakeem)

- Works with Membership Committee, and Individual Issues Committee.
- Processes member contracts.
- Handles current member debt, including payment plans and default notices to members who have not paid.
- Assists the membership in facilitation, new member orientations, and Board training.
- Helps with the newsletter.
- Supervises MCC Minutes Takers, Summer Interns, Webmasters and Office Assistants.
- Keeps the policy manual updated.
- Maintains, updates and keeps forms available in the office.
- Consults MCC's lawyer when necessary.

Finance Coordinator (Kathy Parker)

- Works with the Finance Committee.
- Manages the central finances of MCC.
- Trains new house treasurers.
- Creates MCC's annual budget, which is approved by the Board and General Membership.
- Completes house treasurer reports when a house is in financial trouble.
- Processes security deposit reimbursements.
- Assists with financial management concerns.
- Sits on the Social Justice Center Board of Directors.

Officer Responsibilities

Officers are members who are elected by the general membership to run committee meetings, assist members, help with administrative tasks, oversee our staff, and take action on various matters as directed by the Board. Officers serve on the Board of Directors. Each officer submits a written report on their committee's progress at each General Membership Meeting.

Coordinating Officer (President)

- Official representative of MCC in its relations to all other organizations.
- Chairs the Coordinating Committee, Individual Issues and General Membership meetings.
- Primarily responsible for regular communication with members and for increasing visibility of MCC through local media outlets.
- Maintains regular contact with independent cooperative houses and cooperative businesses as MCC's official liaison.
- Attends Social Justice Center (SJC) Board meetings and informs the Board of SJC issues.

Membership Officer (Vice President)

- Chairs the Membership Committee.
- Responsible for minutes and records of MCC, as well as making records available to members.
- Oversees the Member Services Coordinator.
- Oversees the educational materials of MCC.
- Responsible for overseeing conflict resolution committees.
- Works with expansion and development.
- Coordinates efforts to fulfill diversity goals.

Maintenance Officer (Secretary)

- Chairs the Maintenance Committee.
- Responsible for Maintenance Committee duties.
- Oversees the books and records of MCC's maintenance program.
- Sees that houses' needs are assessed annually, and that Maintenance Committee plans, coordinates and implements MCC maintenance program.
- Oversees the Maintenance Coordinator.

Finance Officer (Treasurer)

- Chairs the Finance Committee.
- Oversees MCC financial matters.
- Reviews the staff payroll records on a monthly basis.
- Views images of cleared checks written by MCC.
- Keeps a record at the office that lists each date that the payroll and cleared checks have been reviewed.

Decision Making in MCC

If you don't like something—change it!

“Through membership meetings, referenda, and open committee meetings, the members of MCC shall have direct control of MCCs operations.” –MCC Bylaws Section 20 3.03

You have the right to attend and speak at all meetings, cast one vote at all general membership meetings or polls, and either make or second resolutions, motions, or approvals at meetings. The decisions made at Board directly affect you and your house. You have the responsibility to take action and to play an active role in creating the type of cooperative you wish to see.

If you want to have a say in the general operations, policies, procedures, or even the budget that directly affects you, please show up, give your input, and cast your vote! Your house Board Rep can only do their best to represent your needs and concerns based on the input that you give. Board Members are the main resource on how MCC works and MCC policy. As liaisons, their advice should be sought after and highly regarded as far as managing the house's relation with MCC. In a sense, they are “ambassadors” or “senators” between the house and the organization as a whole.

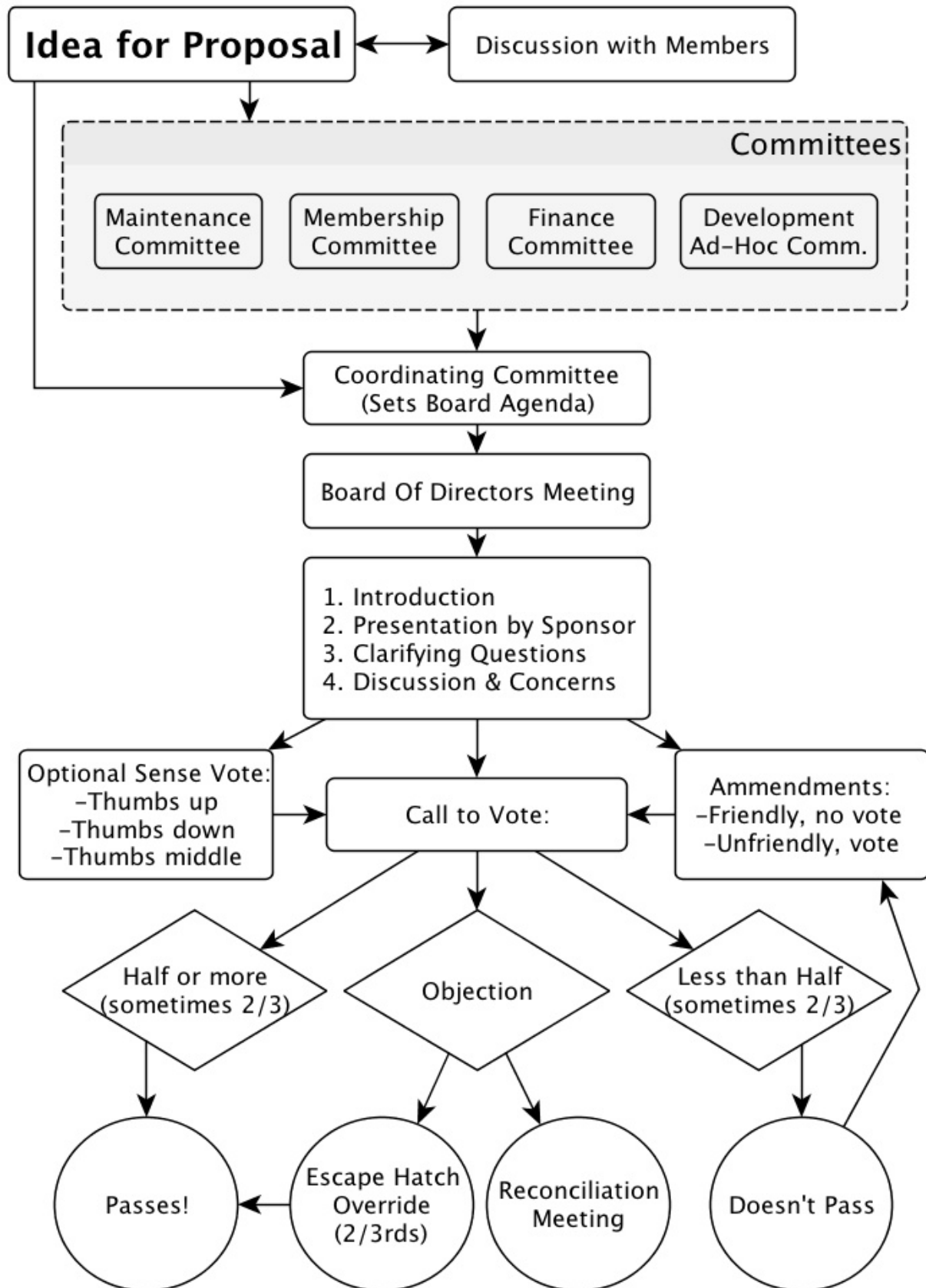
If you want to propose an idea:

1. Talk to your housemates and other MCC members. See if other people share your ideas and concerns.
 2. Take you idea to the appropriate committee.
 3. Once your idea has been approved by a committee, it is ready to go to the Board or a General Membership Meeting (GMM).
 4. Write your idea in the standard proposal format, which will allow everyone to more easily understand your idea (see page 16).
 5. Take your proposal to the officers or staff, who make up the Coordinating Committee. They decide the Board and GMM agendas. (GMM's happen three times a year)
 6. Present the item at the meeting and respond to questions.
- You may also call for an MCC wide referendum or a Special Membership Meeting by a petition of 10% of the membership or 50 members, whichever is less.
 - A member referendum is a proposed measure, similar to a petition, that calls for a direct vote to either accept or reject a particular policy or a direct change to the by-laws.



- ❖ Remember that you should be flexible and willing to work toward everyone's needs being met.
- ❖ All the members of MCC manage MCC equally.
- ❖ That means we all get a voice and all have an obligation to use our voice for the better of the MCC houses and the entire organization.

MCC Proposal Flowchart



Standard Proposal Format: Example Proposal

Title: Buy a Motorcycle

Sponsor(s): Ima Cooper

Type: Decision

Date: 7/29/2013

Background: We have a van for maintenance already, so we should have a motorcycle for joy rides.

Actual Text: MCC Board of Directors budgets \$20,000 in the 2014 fiscal year to purchase a motorcycle. \$20,000 shall cover the purchase of a secondhand motorcycle, insurance and repairs. The user shall pay for the gas. The motorcycle shall be stored in Syntropy's carriage house during the winter.

Alternatives:

- Alternate between houses
- Individuals insure themselves
- Buy two small scooters
- Have free MCC bicycles

Pros:

- Helps people with limited transportation
- Could help fill vacancies

Cons:

- Not all members have licenses
- Can't ride it during the winter

For: _____ Opposed: _____ Objecting: _____ Abstaining: _____

Some Basic Terms for Meetings

Proposal:

- Concerns a change in policy, the establishment of a new policy, or any situation that has arisen and must be dealt with in the organization.
- Proposals to the Board of Directors are explained within agenda packets, which are distributed to all houses the weekend before the meeting.
- House members get a chance to discuss issues at house meetings and advise their Board Representatives.

Amendment:

- An amendment alters a proposal. Generally, amendments in the “clarifying questions” part of the process make the intent of the proposal clear (i.e. correcting wording to get the message across more clearly).
- Amendments during the “discussion” part of the process usually follow a good bit of discussion and aim at expressing an important change, with hopes of achieving modified consensus.
- When amendments are made during the meetings, they may be taken directly from the “alternatives to proposal” section of the Standard Proposal Format, therefore it’s a good idea to discuss house feelings about those alternatives before a Board meeting.

Facilitator:

A different facilitator (discussion leader) volunteers for each item during the meeting. The facilitator guides the discussion through the process described by the flowchart. Any personal views voiced by the facilitator must be identified as such. The facilitator, as we describe them, has three responsibilities:

- Add names to the speaker’s list as members raise their hands, then call on them in turn. The facilitator must put themselves on this list, just like everyone else.
- Sense when the discussion has been effective or is stuck, and announce that the process has moved to general feelings.
- Create an open and safe atmosphere in which people feel free to voice and accept criticisms, ensuring that all those who would like to speak get their voices heard in a respectful manner.

Motion:

A formal proposal suggested at a meeting, which needs another member to second the motion to be voted on.

Call to Vote:

A request to cut off the conversation on a certain topic and call a vote right then.

Sparkle:

Waving your fingers in the air to silently convey approval or agreement with the current speaker. (This is the American Sign Language sign for applause).

Stack:

A list of people in the order in which they raised their hands to speak who wish to discuss the current topic.

Amendment:

When somebody wants to make a change to someone else’s motion, they must propose an amendment. It needs to be accepted by the person who made the original motion, or voted on if not accepted.

The Floor:

When somebody “has the floor”, they may speak as long as they feel is necessary, unless they pass the floor or acknowledge another speaker who wishes to respond to them or ask them questions.

Round Robin:

When each person holds the floor until they are done, and then the floor goes to the person next to them, until the floor has been passed to each person in the room.

Direct Response:

When you wish to directly address what is being said, or ask a question, and wish to ask the speakers permission to interrupt and say your piece.

Point of Information:

When you know a fact that has a direct bearing on the discussion, and without which the discussion would not correctly be resolved. Signaled with a triangle made with thumbs and pointer fingers.

Table:

To put off discussion of a topic until a future meeting.

Maintenance and Fire Safety

What To Do About A Maintenance Problem?

If you have a medical, fire, or other related emergency, call 911 first! (then call the MCC Office or staff to notify them about what has happened)

1. See if you or someone in your house can take care of the problem (try checking the internet for helpful tips or solutions). Inform your House Maintenance Coordinator (HMC) about the issue.
2. If nobody knows what to do, ask your HMC to call the MCC Maintenance Coordinator Michael Carlson at 608-251-2667 (office) or 608-213-3551 (cell).
3. If none of the options above work, use your best judgment and try one of the numbers listed below. Tell them that you would like to “place a work order,” describe the problem to the dispatcher on the phone, and ask them to send the invoice to the MCC office at 1212 Williamson St., Suite 106 Madison WI 53703.

Plumbing Emergency:	H. J. Pertzborn Plumbing	608-256-3900, after hours 271-1405
Electrical Emergency:	Westphal Electric	608-222-0105
Appliance Emergency:	Central Service Co.	608-222-8658
	Appliance Pros	608-271-8848
Heating Emergency:	Hillestad Heating	608-231-3888
Pest or Vermin:	Professional Pest	608-258-3136
Clogged Drain:	Rooter Express	608-241-8889
Locksmith:	J&K Security Solutions	608-255-5799
Smell Gas? Leave the house and call MG&E Emergency Response:	608-252-7111	

Fire Safety

Before a Fire:

- Always keep hallways, walkways, fire escapes, and building entrances and exits clear! If a hallway is dark and full of smoke, you don't want to be tripping over debris in the hallway. Seconds count in an emergency.
- Familiarize yourself with the evacuation plans and all fire exits near your bedroom and in your building.
- Do not prop open fire doors (even your bedroom door).
- Do not overload electrical outlets and make sure that furniture and other items are not placed on top of or are causing damage to extension cords.
- Regularly check the smoke detector in your bedroom every month. This is required by Madison City Fire Ordinance.
- **If the fire alarm system is activated, evacuate the building as quickly as possible.**
- **MCC and other co-ops have had fires! While rare, they are very serious.**
- **Smoking on porches is dangerous! Do not smoke on couches!**

During a Fire:

- When you discover a fire, pull the alarm and call 911.
- Use an extinguisher with caution and always stay between the fire and the exit.
- Grease fires should be extinguished with baking soda, a pot lid, or chemical extinguisher—never water as this can cause serious injury.
- **If the fire becomes too large, close your door and leave the building at once. Evacuate the building immediately. Walk, do not run.**
- Use the stairs. Do not exit from windows except in case of emergency.
- When smoke or heat is encountered, keep low or crawl to avoid inhaling toxic fumes. Breathe through a cloth, if possible, and take shallow breaths.
- When the fire alarm sounds feel your room door to see if it is hot before opening it. Do not open the door if the knob is hot—exit through a window or fire escape.
- Do not re-enter the building until the alarm has been reset and you have received authorization from the Fire Department.
- **Tampering with fire safety equipment or refusing to evacuate during an alarm are serious violations of state law and can involve possible criminal prosecution.**

Urban Realities

Living in an urban environment offers us exciting opportunities, places, and diverse communities, but it can also present risks. Use common sense to keep safe.

Burglaries: The co-ops occasionally get burglarized. Lock house doors and windows. Store your valuables in a safe spot. Be especially careful when you are away, during the summer, and at big parties. It's true – laptops and other valuables can leave your room in less time than it takes you to shower or grab a cup of coffee. Deadbolts are much harder to get past than your standard lock on the door handle. It can be wise to purchase renter's insurance, as the organization is not liable for stolen or damaged personal property. Be sure to alert your house members if anything gets stolen so that you can raise awareness. You may also consider contacting the MCC Office and/or the police to file a report of stolen property (this can help you get your property, especially bikes, returned to you).

At Night: When you go out at night, try not to go alone, and keep to lit, populated areas when possible. Don't listen to headphones or talk on your cellphone; be aware of your surroundings. **If you are a student and find yourself alone at night, you can contact the University's free security service, SAFEwalk, at 608-262-5000.**

Bed Bugs: Bed bugs have been a growing nuisance in cities. It is not advisable to bring mattresses or other furniture off the street and into your house. Bedbugs can fit into very small cracks on many items. Clothing can be treated by sending it through the dryer at high temperatures. However, it is best not to take chances unless you fully research the topic. Diatomaceous earth, a naturally occurring sedimentary rock powder, can be used to kill or slow down bed bugs and any other insect that have exoskeletons. It should be used in places where it will not be disturbed, as it is not good to breathe in due to it containing silicates.

Call 211 for info on area resources or assistance with basic life needs and personal issues (food/shelter/financial & legal assistance/alcohol & drug abuse/child & elderly care/mental health/health care/crisis intervention and much more in Dane County).

Other Important Emergency Numbers

Madison Police (non-emergency)	255-2345	Crisis Intervention	251-2345
WI State Patrol Emergency	846-8520	Parental Stress Line	241-2221
UW Police	262-2957	Poison Center	800-222-1222
State Capital Police	266-7700	Rape Crisis Center	251-7273
Crime Hotline	266-6014	TDD Telecommunications	608-266-1111
Arson Hotline	800-362-3005	Youth Crisis	800-448-4663
Disaster Information Helpline	800-525-0321	Nat'l Runaway Switchboard	800-786-2929
Federal Bureau of Investigation	833-4600	Nat'l Suicide Prevention Lifeline	800-273-8255

Our Homes



Ambrosia: Ambrosia Cooperative is a sunny, welcoming mansion right on the lake. Built in the 1910's, the house has been a cooperative since the late 1960's. Formerly named Stone Manor, Martha's and Assata, this vibrant community enjoys its back porch and dock in the summer, sauna and fireplace in the winter. Ambrosia is a community that allows a diverse social environment to thrive. We encourage members of all ages and always have many families and someone around to cheer a person up or to strike up an interesting conversation. With 27 bedrooms and large common spaces for folks to hang out in, there are enough places to be social or to find some privacy. Though members have come and gone over the years, the house seems to hold itself to a cheerful, inviting standard.

Audre Lorde: Audre Lorde Cooperative is a 15-room household, which provides a safe space for people of all ages committed to advocating a sustainable and socially just society. We are an actively racial justice, pro-People-of-Color, pro-Feminist, and pro-Queer/LGBT-loving household. Our intent is to bring together individuals in an environment that fosters and is supportive of their activist endeavors as well as creating a safe place for living. House decisions are made by group-modified consensus. House members contribute a required six hours of their time each week for workjobs such as cooking, washing dishes, cleaning various common spaces, paying bills, grocery shopping, serving as a house representative for various committees of Madison Community Cooperative, and many other jobs that go towards the upkeep and continuance of the household. Everyone in the house pays \$95 a month to purchase bulk food, which is mostly organic, and locally grown when possible; we strive to buy from vendors that are owned and run by people-of-color and/or women. A vegetarian meal with vegan option is served during the weekdays around 7pm. Contact the Audre Lorde residence at audrelordecoop@gmail.com for more information!



Avalon: Avalon Cooperative is an eight-room house intent on creating a safe, sane, and supportive environment as part of the Madison Community Cooperative organization and within the city of Madison as a whole. We are a community that welcomes people of all ages, sexes, colors, sexual orientations and economic backgrounds. Key to our evolution as a healthy and united household is the development and practice of constructive, direct communication, and communal decision-making. Some of us work and some go to school. Our house is centrally located in a quiet and diverse neighborhood, which is two blocks from James Madison Park and four blocks from the capitol. We take turns making great vegetarian meals and working in our garden. We welcome open-minded people who are interested in enriching our community and environment.

Briarpatch TLC: Briarpatch TLC is our newest cooperative that just joined the Madison Community Cooperative family. It maybe changing its name soon as new members move in every day. This is an eight-person house, which is a result of several collaborating partners throughout the Madison Area. We are excited to have this latest addition and, hopefully, we will give you more information soon.

Coming Soon!



Friends: Our community enjoys working together to find creative solutions to problems both in informal discussions and formal decisions made by consensus. We use consensus to make collective decisions that all members are comfortable with, which pushes us to consider all of the possible effects and implications of our decisions, and to ensure that everyone's ideas and concerns are understood and recognized. Our recent attic renovation has increased our usable common space, allowing for more game nights, studying hangouts, and guests from political, cooperative,

and animal rights organizations. Our garden brings members together and provides us with valuable experience in growing healthy food for our 100% vegetarian and frequently 100% vegan house meals.

Hypatia: Hypatia is a fifteen-person cooperative that is currently home to graduate and undergraduate students, workers, and professionals. We are located in a beautiful mansion surrounded by a historic garden. Our house is in a quiet neighborhood three blocks north of the capitol, eight blocks from campus, and one block from Lake Mendota. Our spacious living and dining room has hardwood floors, floor-to-ceiling windows that face the capitol, and a fireplace.



International: The International Cooperative House has been around for over 40 years. Our premise is that a diverse group of 26 people can live together cooperatively, allowing each member both a sense of community and the freedom to determine their own affairs. We endeavor to create a comfortable atmosphere where people feel free to share themselves socially. We are culturally and politically diverse, including both Americans and international persons, and we make our own decisions by majority vote on policy and by consensus vote on membership. Our meal plan includes healthy vegetarian meals and occasional meat dishes. Free laundry facilities, phone, high-speed internet, some parking, and indoor bike storage are available. Our co-op is located two blocks from campus and State Street.



Lothlorien: Currently, Lothlorien is not open, but did have 30 rooms. Since our founding in 1973, Lothlorien Cooperative has striven to provide a welcoming and supportive atmosphere for people of all ages, genders, races and sexual orientations. Many of our members are politically active in queer rights, labor rights, environmental and feminist movements, and our home is an open resource to activist groups like: Food Not Bombs, Stop the War, Infoshop, and the Student Labor Action Coalition. We often host benefit concerts, fiestas, coffeehouses, and other events providing the city of Madison w/ good times. Based in egalitarian ideals, house decisions are made through Formal Consensus at weekly Elven Council meetings.

Ofek Shalom: Ofek Shalom Cooperative is a vegetarian and vegan co-op situated in a small, comfortable house near the Kohl Center on the corner of Bassett and Dayton. We are a dynamic community made up of 10 working and studying people from a range of backgrounds. We enjoy late-night discussions, jam sessions around the piano, movies and our two annual parties. We are dedicated to providing a comfortable environment for people with a variety of world-views. Every Friday evening we celebrate Shabbat with a joyous meal (including homemade challah) for anyone who would like to join us. In addition, we hold holiday celebrations throughout the year.





Phoenix: The Phoenix Cooperative currently houses 26 members - both students and professionals with a range of different ages - bringing a diverse and family-like environment to our co-op. We are located close to the Memorial Union and State Street in a spacious 1920's French chateau style building. Its original woodwork, a fancy spiral staircase, and a frequently used fireplace beautify the house. Phoenix uses a modified consensus decision-making process - everyone's voice is heard, and decisions are made democratically. We look for committed members who have a serious interest in living cooperatively as well as a desire to contribute their experience and energy to the house, even if they are just staying for the summer. We proudly stand behind MCC's mission of creating a healthy and safe space for every member, regardless of

their background or identity. Our goal as a cooperative house is to create a sustainable and empowering community for all who want to partake in it, as well as offering low-income housing to Madison as a whole.

Sofia: Currently, Sofia Cooperative consists of eight adults--ranging in age from mid-twenties to mid-forties--and three children. The adults take turns cooking, cleaning, and doing other chores. Each week, we enjoy several home-cooked vegetarian meals together. Situated in the Willy Street neighborhood, the house we live in is a beautiful two-story home with common space in the finished attic on the third floor. We have three porches and a backyard with a raised-bed garden. We are a dynamic community that strives to be as eco-friendly as possible. Our house is clean and cozy. We want to live with people who are more than just housemates, but part of a larger family.



Syntropy: Syntropy is an eight-member house on the near east side of Madison, one block from B.B. Clark beach. Our small community tends to attract relatively older (+/- 30) members, but we're open to people of all ages and currently range from the mid-twenties to mid-forties. Our house boasts hardwood floors, a wood burning stove, a lovely front porch with a swing and couches, shared vegetarian meals (with organic veggies from a CSA during the summer), a vegetable garden, two chickens in the backyard, and a view of Lake Monona from our bay window and front porch. The bus stop for the 3, 4, 7, 10, and 38 is right out front! We also have a sweet canoe! We currently subscribe to the Wisconsin State Journal and New York Times, have a house Netflix account, and basic local cable. All rooms are DSL ready and have wireless access.

Building a Healthy Community

In accordance with the 5th Rochdale Principle to provide education, training, and information for our members, we sponsor several workshops throughout the year that focus on promoting health and safe space in our communities. Members can use MCC funds, provided through MCC's Education Policy, to organize and sponsor workshops in conjunction with the Membership Committee.

Safe Space

What does "safe space" mean? A safe space ensures that you are free to express yourself openly, knowing that your community will be accepting and free of judgment. It means that all are expected to acknowledge and respect physical and personal boundaries. And it requires that you abide by our standards of anti-discrimination, positive consent, and non-violence.

Harassment Policy (excerpt)

Madison Community Cooperative (MCC) is committed to maintaining a positive environment for its members, officers, staff, and affiliates. All individuals have the right to enjoy an environment free from all forms of conduct that can be considered harassing, threatening or intimidating. True cooperation can exist only when every person is free to pursue expression of ideas in a non-threatening atmosphere of mutual respect. MCC is committed to protecting freedom of expression of all members and this policy against harassment and abusive conduct will be applied in a manner that protects those freedoms. Harassment and abusive conduct are offensive, impair morale, undermine the integrity of relationships and cause serious harm to the productivity, efficiency and stability of our organization. They are unacceptable and threatening to the success, well being, and growth of all members of our community and will not be tolerated. This policy applies to all members, officers and staff.

Harassment: Unwelcome verbal or physical conduct or discrimination based on race, color, creed, ancestry, national origin, age, disability, sex, arrest or conviction record, marital status, sexual orientation, membership in the military reserve or use or nonuse of lawful products away from work, or any other protected class. This also includes sexual harassment, defined as unwelcome, severe, and pervasive verbal, visual, or physical conduct of a sexual nature.

Sexual Harassment

You have a right to feel safe and not be subjected to sexual harassment in your co-op.

What is sexual harassment? Some examples are: unwelcome or irrelevant personal questions texts, or gestures; unwanted attention; sexual comments or jokes; unwanted and non-consensual touching, tickling or massaging; blocking movement, or any other invasion of personal space; comments about a person's body; suggestive or obscene, pictures, notes or emails; maligning or publicly humiliating after refusal of sexual advances; staring, following, or trying to coerce or convince someone to date or have sexual contact.



Consent

Physical and sexual activity require consent. Consent is defined as positive cooperation in act or attitude pursuant to an exercise of free will. Consenting individuals must act freely and voluntarily and have knowledge of the nature of the act or transaction involved. It cannot be obtained by threat, coercion, or force.

A current or previous relationship is not sufficient to constitute consent. Someone who is impaired or incapacitated may not give consent. Consent may not be inferred from silence or passivity alone. Consent must be present throughout and can be revoked at any time.

A simple guideline: Look for an emphatic "yes!" rather than an apprehensive "yes."

Conflict Resolution

"I know I have rights and I acknowledge your rights - so let's negotiate a settlement to this dispute that will suit us both".

This assertive, co-operative approach is the most satisfactory way to deal with major conflicts, since it involves people working together to find a solution everyone will commit to. Conflict is part of life. It is evidence that there is a wealth of experience, knowledge and ideas in the co-op. Within the co-op, some conflict is inevitable and we need to know how to deal with it in a constructive way when it arises.

Listening skills

Sometimes conflict arises simply because people do not feel heard. Just making the time for them to speak and actively listening to them can take the sting out of a situation and help you to more easily negotiate a resolution.

Active listening involves just listening and nothing else. Normally there is an overlap between listening, thinking and speaking and we are often trying to do all three at once! However, this means we are not really paying attention to the person we are listening to and we may miss some of the meaning of what they are saying. Also, we often focus more on what our response will be rather than on what the other person is actually saying.

Assertiveness

In a co-op, where management is democratic and where good teamwork is essential, it is vital for people to understand how to behave assertively - i.e. knowing their own mind and standing up for themselves and their own opinions, without being pushed around by others - and without pushing others around.

In contrast, people often behave in ways that are either:

- Aggressive – trying to get their own way by bullying or other power strategies.
- Passive – accepting other people's opinions or decisions without thinking for themselves.
- Manipulative – using underhanded or devious strategies to get their own way.

Assertive behavior is much less likely to lead to conflict and indeed there is a technique for giving criticism assertively that will help to bring about the changes you want without hurting or offending the recipient.

Here are some simple steps to getting someone to change difficult behavior such as habitual lateness or missing deadlines in an assertive way:

1. First, you need to be clear yourself about the behavior that you would like the person to change. Do not use this as an opportunity for a put-down; it's important that you address the behavior and not attack the person.
2. Remember that you both have rights - you have the right to expect housemates to meet the obligations you have all agreed on, and your housemate has the right to be treated with respect.
3. Find a time and a place where you can speak to the person privately.
4. Be specific about the change you want and talk about behavior you can see - talk about facts and your feelings, not your opinions. Use "I statements" – speak from your understanding and experience, rather than someone else's.
5. Do this as soon as possible after realizing the impact your housemate's behavior is having on you. Don't let it build up until you are angry and resentful.
6. Ask your housemate how they see the situation and try to get them to work with you to bring about the changes you want.

Following these steps means you're more likely to get the change you want. You have been assertive and it's more likely that you'll get a response that isn't aggressive or passive from your colleague.

Dealing with tension

It's sometimes helpful to use a well-trying and tested formula for dealing with tensions between individuals in the workplace. The aim is to be constructive and to seek changes that will make both of you happy, rather than attempting to "win". Again, it's important to be specific, talking about actions not opinions, facts not accusations, and examples not generalizations. Talk about how you feel (i.e. angry or disappointed) and be clear about what you want to change. Be positive - i.e. ask the person to start or increase doing whatever it is you want, not to stop doing what you don't want. Explain why, as it helps if they understand your reasons. And here's the famous script:

When you do (or did)(concrete example)
I feel(acknowledge your feelings)
and I want you to(specific concrete request) because(your reasons)

(This resource is based on a cultivate.coop article, shared under the Creative Commons Attribution Share Alike License http://cultivate.coop/wiki/Conflict_resolution_in_co-operatives)

Grievance Procedure

1. *Advising Phase*

1. Any member, officer, or staff person who believes that they have been harassed or subjected to abusive conduct should file a written complaint with the Grievance Chair
2. The Grievance Chair will provide support by listening to and discussing the case with the complainant, and will outline possible actions available, as listed below

2. *Action Phase*

A complainant may choose any one of these options:

1. The complainant may choose to meet the alleged harasser/abuser one on one, with the Grievance Chair acting as a mediator.
2. The complainant may choose to meet the alleged harasser/abuser with an advisor of their choice, with the Grievance Chair acting as mediator. The alleged harasser/abuser is also entitled to an advisor if they wish. If they choose to, the advisors may choose a neutral party they both trust to facilitate the process if they feel the Grievance Chair, Grievance Committee or Individual Issues Committee is biased in any way.
3. The complainant may choose mediation with the alleged harasser/abuser through the Grievance Committee, formed in accordance to the Grievance Policy adopted 12/1/82, Amended 7/30/08 and 12/3/08.

Important Notes:

- If the complainant enters the “Action Phase” the Grievance Chair must notify the alleged harasser/abuser by mail within five business days that a harassment/abuse complaint has been filed against them of the action the complainant wishes to take.
- In determining whether or not the alleged conduct constitutes harassment or abusive behavior, consideration will be given to the record of the entire incident as a whole and the totality of the circumstances, including the context in which the alleged incidents occurred.
- After consultation, if the Grievance Chair determines that irreconcilable differences exist between involved parties and/or the complainant chooses mediation through the Grievance Committee, the Grievance Committee may sanction the alleged harasser/abuser
- Conflicts involving Staff members shall follow the Staff Grievance Policy adopted 2/16/94.

3. *Remediation Phase*

1. The Grievance Committee, or when involving Staff, Individual Issues Committee (Per SGP), shall issue sanctions to the harasser/abuser with consideration of the character (severity) of the offense and the identity of the party involved (i.e. Member, Officer, Staff or Committee).
2. Member Sanctions may include, but are not limited to warnings (verbal or written), suspension from MCC meetings or events, suspension from MCC properties (e.g. victim’s house, the office) or MCC “5 Day Cure or Quit” notices.
3. Officer Sanctions may include, but are not limited to all previously listed Member Sanctions as well as suspension from office without pay, or removal from office.
4. Staff Sanctions may include, but are not limited to warnings (written or verbal), suspension with or without pay, non-renewal of contract, or contract termination. Contract termination shall follow procedures outlined in staff contracts.
5. Any illegal actions conducted by the harasser/abuser will be referred to law enforcement at the complainant’s discretion.

MCC's Fair Housing Policy

Fair Housing Laws and Membership

Whatever process your house uses to screen and accept members, make sure you realize that biases come from all over, and you must recognize and not discriminate based on any of these protected classes. In addition to being discriminatory, these classes are also protected by city, county, state and federal laws.

- Race
- Color
- Religion
- Sex or gender
- National origin
- Mental or physical disability
- Ancestry
- Family status (includes pregnancy)
- Marital status
- Sexual orientation
- Lawful source of income
- Age
- Appearance/physical appearance
- Mental illness
- Student status
- Arrest or conviction record*
- Military discharge status (including less than honorable discharge)
- Political beliefs
- Disclosure of social security number*
- Gender identity
- Domestic partnership status
- Genetic identity
- Receipt of rental assistance
- Status as victim of domestic abuse
- Citizenship status

MCC has a Fair Housing Policy, which is in the MCC Policy Manual. It's important to familiarize yourself with this policy as your house makes decisions about membership, workjobs, and any other house actions.

We want to make our homes as accepting and loving as possible. So recognize biases and don't discriminate. Let's be inviting to any walk of life.

Remember to accept people who not only fit in your house, but who are excited about MCC. Together, we make up the organization. Together, we are MCC.

Reasonable Accommodation Policy

Revised 11/2011

All prospective or current MCC members may apply for a reasonable accommodation or modification on the basis of a physical or mental disability at anytime during their membership application process or residency at an MCC cooperative house. MCC members are tenants in MCC's cooperative houses, and prospective members are those who are applying for membership (tenancy).

During the Membership Process:

Individual cooperative houses can choose whether or not to proactively ask all prospective members whether the prospective member requires a reasonable accommodation or modification.

However, if houses do ask prospective members whether they require a reasonable accommodation or modification, they must inform the prospective member that their response to the question will only be used to inform them of MCC's reasonable accommodation or modification process, and will not be used as a basis of acceptance or denial for housing.

Furthermore, a house must either systematically ask all prospective members this question, or none of them. If a house does decide to ask all prospective members this question, it must be a house policy to do so, and must be put in writing in the house's policy manual.

Reasonable Accommodations Request Process:

A prospective or current member who requests a reasonable accommodation or modification from an MCC cooperative house must be directed to that house's membership coordinator or MCC Member Services Coordinator (MSC).

The house membership coordinator or the MSC will provide the member or prospective member who is requesting a reasonable accommodation or modification with written application forms, which the person should use to request their specific accommodation or modification. These forms will ask only for information that is permitted to be used in determining a reasonable accommodation or modification, as defined by federal, state, and local laws. MCC, through either the house membership coordinator or the MSC, will provide assistance in filling out the form, if that is requested as an accommodation.

This form must be mailed or hand delivered to the MCC office to the attention of the Member Services Coordinator. MCC will respond to the prospective or current member's written request for a reasonable accommodation or modification within ten business days of receipt. The MSC will begin processing the request by researching the reasonable accommodation or modification that is requested. The MSC should consult, when appropriate, with relevant industry publications, tenant advocacy groups and MCC legal counsel.

After the research is completed, the MSC will present their findings to the Individual Issues Committee (II). The II Committee will make the final decision on the reasonable accommodation or modification on behalf of MCC.

A written letter explaining MCC's decision regarding the prospective or current member's request for a reasonable accommodation or modification will be sent to the address written on the reasonable accommodation or modification application form.

Ongoing Compliance:

The MSC will maintain and update MCC's reasonable accommodation or modification forms and resource materials to remain compliant with federal, state, and local laws.

In addition to ongoing support, the MSC will provide education about this policy to house membership coordinators and the Board of Directors twice a year.

Member Debt Explanation

Charges are due the first day of the billing month.

Your payment is due directly to your co-op house, and your house may have policies about what payment methods are acceptable. Your house accounts receivable (A/R) treasurer will post a "billing sheet" before the 1st of the month, which will tell you how much you owe.

If you can't pay your rent on the 1st of the month, you can submit a **payment plan**, which acts in place of your rent. This payment plan must be written on the MCC payment plan form (and comply with all MCC payment plan policies), and must be turned in to your house A/R treasurer by the 1st.

There are 2 things that must happen for your payment plan to be accepted (these can happen in any order)

1) Your house must approve it.

2) Your house A/R treasurer must submit it to the Member Services Coordinator with the monthly "Member Debt Report" that they submit. If you aren't sure if your house A/R treasurer will do this, you should submit a copy to the MSC at the office.

There is a "grace period" until the fifth of the month for you to submit either your payment or your payment plan. (Note: Some houses do impose late fees for payments or payment plans received after the 1st of the month)

On the 7th of the month, your house A/R treasurer must submit a "Member Debt Report" (MDR) to the Member Services Coordinator (MSC). Your house is fined for each day this report is late. The MDR has 3 components:

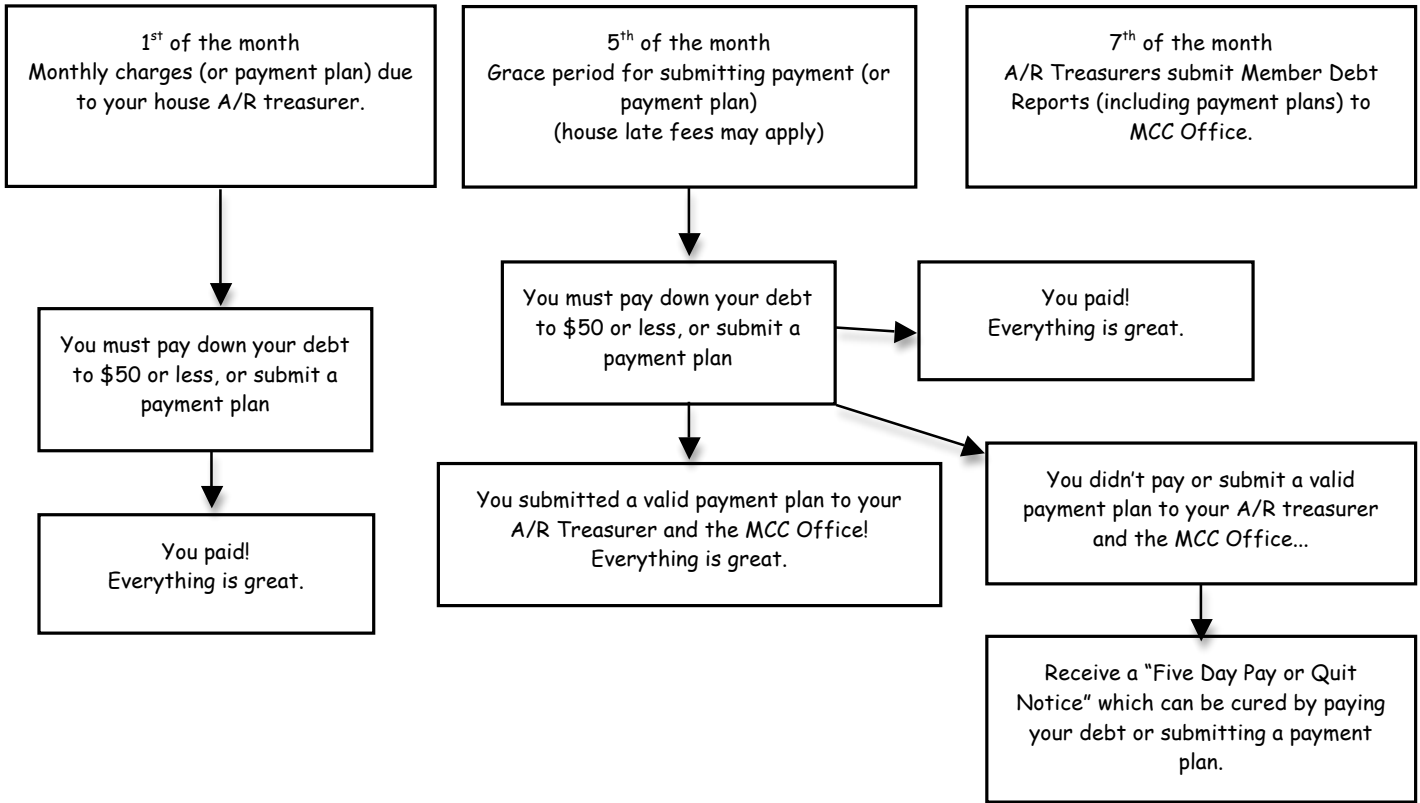
- 1) The billing sheet for the month, showing how much everyone paid by the 5th, and indicating whether people have allowable debt, exceed allowable debt, have proposed payment plans, or are following payment plans)
- 2) Copies of every payment plan that is being proposed (even if the house hasn't approved it)
- 3) An update on the progress of everyone who is currently on a payment plan.

When the MSC receives the Member Debt Reports, they look at the billing sheet and at the payment plans. If a member has more than \$50 in debt and does not have a payment plan submitted to the MCC office, the MSC will issue a "5-Day Notice".

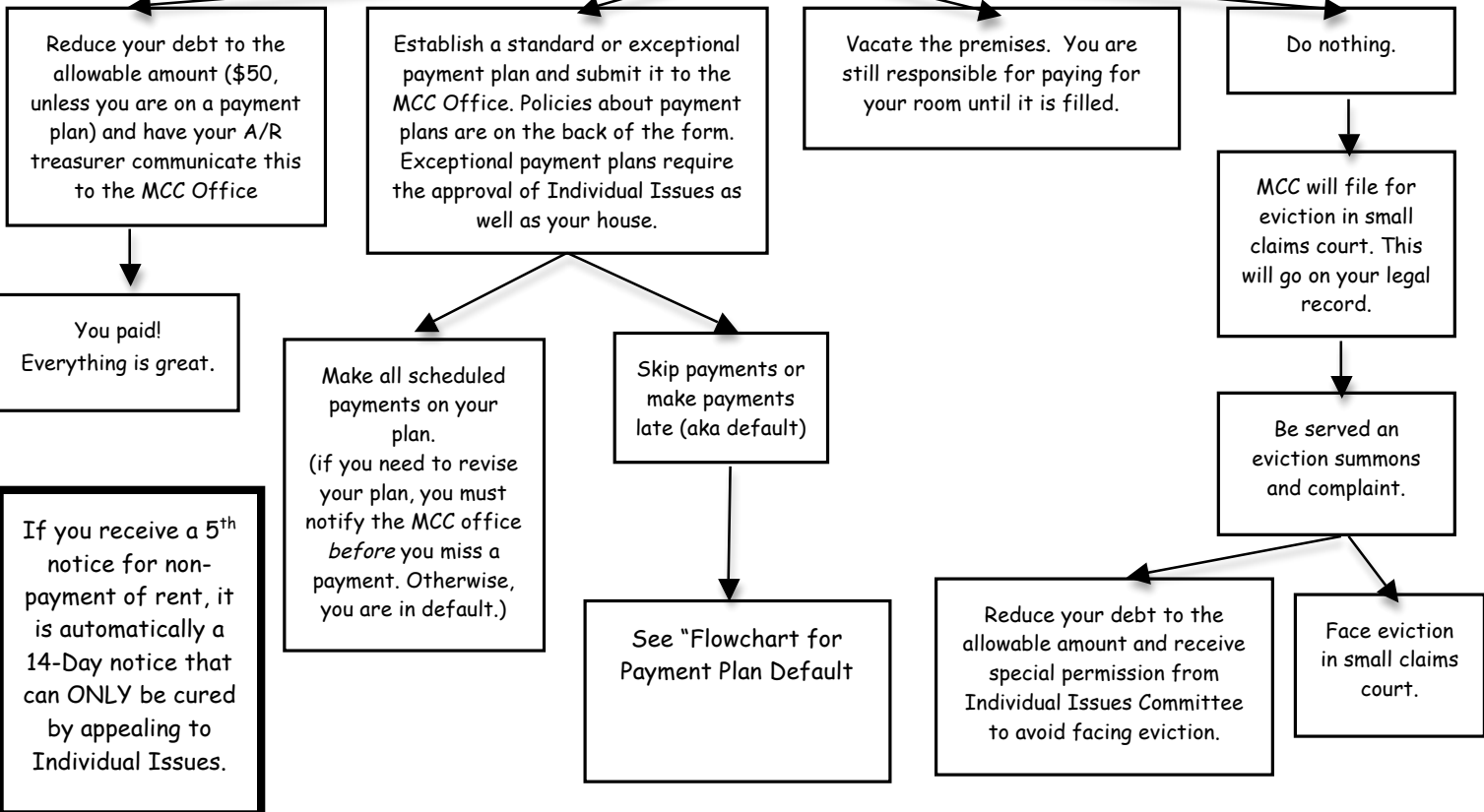
The 5-Day Notice is "curable" which means that if you pay, or submit a payment plan, within 5 days, the notice is cured and you will not be evicted. If you do not cure the notice, then you face eviction.

The exception to this is that if you receive 5 of these notices in 12 months, you get a "14-Day Notice" which is NOT curable, unless you appeal to Individual Issues.

Member Debt Flowchart

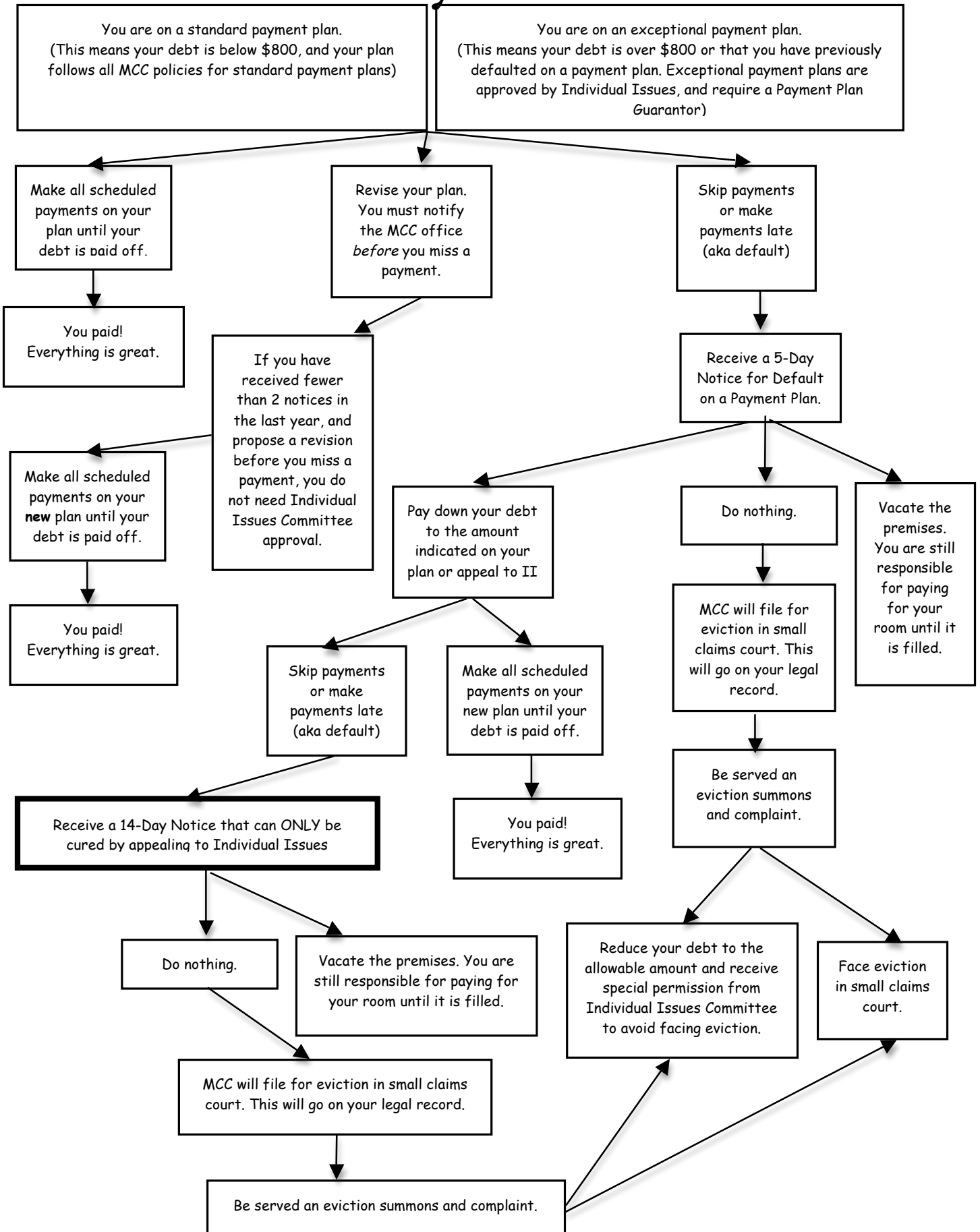


If you receive a "Five Day Pay or Quit Notice", you have 5 days to "cure" the notice.



If you receive a 5th notice for non-payment of rent, it is automatically a 14-Day notice that can ONLY be cured by appealing to Individual Issues.

Flowchart for Payment Plan Default



MCC Contact Information

Staff Position	Name	Phone	Email
Maintenance Coordinator	Michael Carlson	608-213-3551	maintenance@madisoncommunity.coop
Lead Worker Group Member	Mik Clayton		
Lead Worker Group Member	Eric Melton-White		
Member Services Coordinator	Farheen Hakeem	608-658-9390	services@madisoncommunity.coop
Finance Coordinator	Kathy Parker	608-251-2667	finance@madisoncommunity.coop



Places	Address	Phone Number/Email
MCC Office (Social Justice Center)	1202 Williamson Street Suite 106	608-251-2667 (See above for staff contact info)
Sofia	1239 Spaight Street	sofia@madisoncommunity.coop
Syntropy	812 Jenifer Street	syntropy@madisoncommunity.coop
Avalon	20 North Franklin Street	608-230-6890 avalon@madisoncommunity.coop
Hypatia	411 North Pickney Street	608-257-1195 hypatia@madisoncommunity.coop
Ofek Shalom	122 North Bassett Street	608-257-0035 ofek@madisoncommunity.coop
Friends	437 West Johnson Street	608-251-0156 friends@madisoncommunity.coop
International	140 West Gilman Street	international@madisoncommunity.copp
Ambrosia	225 East Lakelawn Place	Basement: 608-256-8476 ambrosia@madisoncommunity.coop
Lothlorien	244 West Lakelawn Place	lothlorien@madisoncommunity.coop
Audre Lorde	625 North Frances Street	audrelorde@gmail.com
Phoenix	636 Langdon Street	phoenix@madisoncommunity.coop

Anti-oppression at Madison Community Cooperatives

Agreements you can commit to in your co-op:

1. Acknowledge that our primary commitment is to learn from each other and live in an anti-oppressive atmosphere.
2. Keep our discussions confidential and respect every member's right to privacy.
3. Avoid making generalizations or accusations about others.
4. Speak from our hearts and experiences. Use "I" statements.
5. Avoid blaming others for the misinformation that has been taught to us and/or other members of our co-op.
6. Respect each member's opinions and knowledge or lack of knowledge of the discussed topics.
7. Listen to the wisdom everyone brings to the group.
8. Challenge the idea or the practice but not the person.
9. Share information about ourselves in relation to the social groups we identify with in order to learn from others and have others learn from us.
10. Allow every member to have an opportunity to express him or herself.
11. Treat every member as an individual and not a representative of a specific social group.

Reflective Questions:

- Identify Barriers and ways to overcome the barriers- Are their barriers within your co-op that prevent members from being active participants within the co-op community? Ex. Are all of the cooperative policies inclusive to all the members? Does the governance structure reflect the views of every member? Is every member given the same training and education?__-Does your Co-op sponsor activities that include the interest of every member? Are meetings inclusive to every member?
- Get information out to residents- the information should be conveyed in a way that includes all co-op members. Ex. If you are making a flier to notify members about a meeting, make sure the flier is concise and written in a language that is easy to understand. Also, be sure to display the fliers in places that are accessible to everyone.
- What makes your co-op a community ? Every co-op has its own culture, yet are your cultural practices inclusive to all the members. Think back to your first days as a member of the co-op, were there certain things that were "normal" for other members but new for you?
 1. Does your co-op provide meals that cater to every members diet?
 2. Does your co-op have policies that include the immediate needs of every member?
 3. Are their certain activities that new co-ops are not involved in ?

- How affective are your cooperative meetings? Can you check yes to all of the following meeting preparations?

1. Every member is included in the discussions	Yes	No
2. Every resident is properly informed about meeting dates and times	Yes	No
3. No personal attacks on individual members during the meetings	Yes	No
4. Everyone is given a chance to speak	Yes	No
5. The executive committee does not take sides	Yes	No
6. everyone can see and hear everyone present	Yes	No
7. The meeting area is comfortable for every member	Yes	No
8. The length of the meeting respects the members schedules	Yes	No
9. Different points of view are welcomed throughout the meeting	Yes	No
10. There is time for informal discussion and check in	Yes	No

- Does your cooperative have an inclusion plan? If so go on to A. If not go onto B.

A. Yes. . .

1. What is the inclusion plan?
2. Are all the members aware of the plan?
3. Are you satisfied with inclusion plan?
4. What has the plan achieved?
5. What improvements can be made to the inclusion plan and who will make them?

B. No. . .

1. Is there a need for an inclusion plan ?
2. What will be the main objective of the plan?
3. How will all the members be involved in creating the plan?

Key Words

The following words are words that are frequently associated with various diversity topics. The key words list was designed to give thoughts of how words can be used when talking about anti-oppression work.

- Oppression- To dominate over a group of people based upon given privilege. To be set against societal standards of normalcy.
- Racism- The belief that one race is superior to another. Found in both individual acts and dominant institutions.
- Prejudice- a judgment based upon preconceived notions and not upon facts.
- Stereotype- A label or generalization about a group of people.
- Discrimination- An action taken based upon a pre judgmental belief.
- Privilege- Having access to or benefiting from resources and social rewards based solely on race, gender and/or class
- Inclusiveness v. Equality- To include everyone in a community rather than attempt to treat them all equally. When equality may not be as effective.
- Self Representation- The way someone chooses to present him or herself to the world. Often misused by someone associating one person's representation to represent a whole community.
- Internalized Oppression- The result of People within an oppressed group believing, acting, and or enforcing the dominant system of beliefs about themselves or other members of their oppressed group.
- Cultural Appropriation- The adoption of cultural elements not in your own cultural, without full knowledge of or respect for its value within the original culture.
- Race- a group of people artificially classified together based on physical appearance, ancestral heritage, and/or ethnic classification.
- Ethnicity - A social group based upon shared values, behavior, language, and/or cultural heritage.
- Culture- The behavioral patterns, beliefs, and thoughts that are expressed by a certain community.
- Class- A social ranking based on income, wealth, status, and/or power
- Differently -abled- Persons who disabled emotionally, physically, and/or mentally. Target of ableism
- Person/People of Color- People who identify themselves a non-White/European.
- Bisexuality- Emotional and sexual attraction to people of both sexes and/or genders.
- Gender identity- How a person chooses to identify themselves based on society's gender roles.
- Intersexed- Persons who are born with sex chromosomes, external genitalia or an internal reproductive system that is considered to have the characteristics of both sexes.
- Transgender- Persons who cross gender lines and/or societal gender norms.
- Transsexual- A person who's internal image of themselves is opposite from the gender role assigned to them.

Ten Things Everyone Should Know About Race

Our eyes tell us that people look different, but what do those differences mean? Are they biological? Has race always been with us? How does race affect people today? There's less – and more – to race than meets the eye:

1. Race is a modern idea. Ancient societies, like the Greeks, did not divide people according to physical distinctions, but according to religion, status, class, even language. The English language didn't even have the word 'race' until it turns up in 1508 in a poem by William Dunbar referring to a line of kings.
2. Race has no genetic basis. Not one characteristic, trait or even one gene distinguishes all the members of one so-called race from all the members of another so-called race.
3. Human subspecies don't exist. Unlike many animals, modern humans simply haven't been around long enough or isolated enough to evolve into separate subspecies or races. Despite surface appearances, we are one of the most similar of all species.
4. Skin color really is only skin deep. Most traits are inherited independently from one another. The genes influencing skin color have nothing to do with the genes influencing hair form, eye shape, blood type, or any form of intelligence.
5. Most variation is within, not between, "races." Of the small amount of total human variation, 85% exists within any local population. About 94% can be found within any continent. That means two random Koreans may be as genetically different as a Korean and an Italian.
6. Slavery predates race. Throughout much of human history, societies have enslaved others, often as a result of conquest or war, even debt, but not because of physical characteristics or a belief in natural inferiority. Due to a unique set of historical circumstances, ours was the first slave system where all the slaves shared similar physical characteristics.
7. Race and freedom evolved together. The U.S. was founded on the radical new principle that "All men are created equal." But our early economy was based largely on slavery. How could this anomaly be rationalized? The new idea of race helped explain why some people could be denied the rights and freedoms that others took for granted.
8. Race justified social inequalities as natural. As the race idea evolved, white superiority became "common sense" in America. It justified not only slavery but also the extermination of Indians, exclusion of Asian immigrants, and the taking of Mexican lands by a nation that professed a belief in democracy. Racial practices were institutionalized within American government, laws, and society.
9. Race isn't biological, but racism is still real. Race is a powerful social idea that gives people different access to opportunities and resources. Our government and social institutions have created advantages that disproportionately channel wealth, power, and resources to white people. This affects everyone, whether we are aware of it or not.
10. Colorblindness will not end racism. Pretending race doesn't exist is not the same as creating equality. Race is more than stereotypes and individual prejudice. To combat racism, we need to identify and remedy social policies and institutional practices that advantage some groups at the expense of others. Copyright (c) California Newsreel, 2003

10 THINGS MEN CAN DO TO PREVENT GENDER VIOLENCE

- 1** Approach gender violence as a MEN'S issue involving men of all ages and socioeconomic, racial and ethnic backgrounds. View men not only as perpetrators or possible offenders, but as empowered bystanders who can confront abusive peers.
- 2** If a brother, friend, classmate, or teammate is abusing his female partner -- or is disrespectful or abusive to girls and women in general -- don't look the other way. If you feel comfortable doing so, try to talk to him about it. Urge him to seek help. Or if you don't know what to do, consult a friend, a parent, a professor, or a counselor. **DON'T REMAIN SILENT.**
- 3** Have the courage to look inward. Question your own attitudes. Don't be defensive when something you do or say ends up hurting someone else. Try hard to understand how your own attitudes and actions might inadvertently perpetuate sexism and violence, and work toward changing them.
- 4** If you suspect that a woman close to you is being abused or has been sexually assaulted, gently ask if you can help.
- 5** If you are emotionally, psychologically, physically, or sexually abusive to women, or have been in the past, seek professional help **NOW.**
- 6** Be an ally to women who are working to end all forms of gender violence. Support the work of campus-based women's centers. Attend "Take Back the Night" rallies and other public events. Raise money for community-based rape crisis centers and battered women's shelters. If you belong to a team or fraternity, or another student group, organize a fundraiser.
- 7** Recognize and speak out against homophobia and gay-bashing. Discrimination and violence against lesbians and gays are wrong in and of themselves. This abuse also has direct links to sexism (e.g. the sexual orientation of men who speak out against sexism is often questioned, a conscious or unconscious strategy intended to silence them. This is a key reason few men do speak out).
- 8** Attend programs, take courses, watch films, and read articles and books about multicultural masculinities, gender inequality, and the root causes of gender violence. Educate yourself and others about how larger social forces affect the conflicts between individual men and women.
- 9** Don't fund sexism. Refuse to purchase any magazine, rent any video, subscribe to any Web site, or buy any music that portrays girls or women in a sexually degrading or abusive manner. Protest sexism in the media.
- 10** Mentor and teach young boys about how to be men in ways that don't involve degrading or abusing girls and women. Volunteer to work with gender violence prevention programs, including anti-sexist men's programs. Lead by example.

This poster was produced by MVP Strategies, a gender violence prevention, education and training organization.
Email: MVPStrategies@aol.com

Be an Ally to Disabled People

Disabled people are everywhere, and yet are mostly invisible to the non-disabled world. Everyone grew up learning stereotypes about disabled people. Some of these stereotypes are negative (“helpless,” “dependent,” “useless”). Others seem positive but are just as limiting (“cheerful,” “inspiring,” “brave”). In order to end disability oppression, nondisabled people need to learn how to be allies to disabled people.

respect

- **Recognize** that disabled people are inherently worthwhile.
- **Listen** to disabled people’s stories, experiences, and perspectives.
- **Understand** that having a disability does not make our lives any more inspirational, pitiful or tragic than yours. Our disabilities are ordinary and familiar parts of who we are.
- **Ask before you offer help** to a disabled person. What you assume is helpful may not be. Start with a friendly but non-intrusive question: “Can I provide assistance?” or “Can I get that for you?” Be aware that your offer may not be accepted. Disabled people are the experts about our own lives and what we need.
- **Don't ask** intrusive questions, however well-intentioned. Because of how disabled people are separated from society, many of us deal with daily curiosity about our bodies and lives. This can be irritating, exhausting, and demeaning.
- **Challenge** your own assumptions. Many people have disabilities that might not be apparent to you. Everyone has a right to request and use the accommodations they need without being criticized or questioned.
- **Ignore** service dogs while they’re working. Don’t pet, feed, or interact with them.

language

- **Don’t use** the words “cripple,” “defect,” “spastic,” “lame,” “retard,” and “crazy.” These words have long been used to bully and oppress disabled people. You may hear disabled people calling each other “crip” or “gimp,” This is "insider" language, akin to LGBT people calling each other “queer,” but isn’t appropriate language for non-disabled people to use.
- **Use** the phrase “disabled people” or “people with disabilities.”
- When you hear other people use ableist language, **take the opportunity** to challenge and educate.
- **Don’t ask**, “What’s wrong with you?” Disabled people have many different relationships with our bodies/minds. Don’t assume you know what’s right or wrong.

a community resource—please distribute widely

created by disability rights activists

for more info: eclare@gmavt.net or www.eliclare.com

access

- **Work to create** accessibility in your community, workplace, and place of worship. Ramps and elevators are vital, but access doesn't stop there.
- **Access means** creating an inclusive and welcoming space for all members of your community:
 - Ensure** that people with mobility aids and/or personal attendants can use the bathrooms.
 - Minimize** the presence of scented products and other triggers for people with chemical sensitivities with the goal of creating scent-free space.
 - Offer** printed materials in alternative formats, such as Braille, large print, and audio.
 - Provide** sign language interpreters and real time captioning.
 - Choose** locations for community events near public transportation.
 - Offer** sliding scales at events that cost money.
 - This is not an exhaustive list, only a starting place.**
- **Understand** that no single accommodation will work for all disabled people. One solution doesn't fit all, but increased access does benefit everyone.
- **Take your lead** from disabled people. We know what works best for us.
- **Be creative.** Don't use lack of money as an excuse not to create access.

activism

- **Educate yourself.** Read about the disability rights movement. Attend disability culture events.
- **Recruit** members of the disability community to leadership positions within your organizations.
- **Confront** disability stereotypes and oppression ableism wherever you encounter them.
- **Integrate** disability issues into your understanding of racism, classism, sexism, homophobia, and transphobia. These systems of oppression are all interrelated.

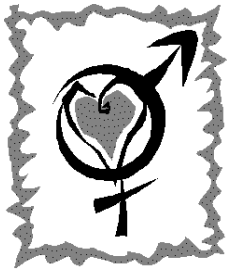
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Action Steps for Being a Trans Ally

by Samuel Lurie, Transgender Training and Advocacy; www.tgtrain.org

“Transgender” encompasses many different gender presentations and identities. From Male-to-Female and Female-to-Male to Femme Queen, Boi, Trannyfag, Female-born man, Transwoman, Tomboy, Butch, Crossdresser and many more.

Many people may not identify as “transgender” but still face discrimination based on their gender expression and for not conforming to traditional gender presentations.

Don’t make assumptions about a trans person’s sexual orientation.

Gender identity is different than sexual orientation. Being gay doesn’t mean you’re trans and being trans doesn’t mean you’re gay. Sexual orientation is about who we’re attracted to. Gender identity is about how we see ourselves. Trans people can identify as gay, straight, bisexual, pansexual or asexual.

If you don’t know what pronouns to use, ask. Politely and respectfully. Then use that pronoun and encourage others to do so also.

Confidentiality, Disclosure and “Outing.” Some trans people “pass” and some do not. Knowing a trans person’s status is personal information and up to them to share with others. Gwen Araujo and Brandon Teena were both murdered when others revealed their trans status. Others routinely lose housing, jobs and friends. Do not casually share this information, or “gossip” about a person you know or think is trans.

Don’t assume what path a transperson is on regarding surgery or hormones. Affirm the many ways all of us can and do transcend gender boundaries, including the choices some of us make to use medical technology to change our bodies. Some trans people wish to be recognized as their gender of choice without surgery or hormones; some need support and advocacy to get respectful medical care, hormones and/or surgery.

Don’t police public restrooms. Recognize that gender variant people may not match the little signs on the restroom door—or your expectations! Encourage businesses and agencies to have unisex bathrooms, and offer to accompany a trans-person to the bathroom so they are less vulnerable.

Don’t just add the “T” without doing work. “GLBT” is now commonplace to show support for queerness. To be an ally for Transpeople, Gays, Lesbians and Bisexual people need to examine their own gender stereotypes and transphobia and be willing to defend trans people and celebrate trans lives.

Listen to trans voices. The best way to be an ally is to listen to trans people themselves. Check out websites and books by trans people. Talk to trans folks in your community. All trans people are individuals. They are the experts on their own lives!

After many years as a white student radical (in high school and then college), I'm reconsidering my experience. I made a lot of mistakes and was blind in many ways, particularly as a white person. What follows are some lessons that I am learning, some strategies for reflecting on, interrogating, and disrupting racism in our lives.

1) Transforming the world means challenging and changing institutions and ourselves. Systems of oppression are ingrained in both and, accordingly, must be confronted in both. More than once an activist of color or an actively anti-racist white person has confronted me: "Why are you always rushing off to do solidarity actions with people in other parts of the world when you don't even make time to deal with your own shit?" They're right. As white student activists, we are in fact notorious for protesting injustices across the globe, yet neglecting to confront systems of oppression on our campuses, in our communities, and in ourselves. Being an effective student activist means making priorities, and at times we must prioritize slower-paced, not-so-flashy work over dramatic actions that offer immediate gratification. Being an effective white student activist means prioritizing daily dismantlement of white privilege--creating and participating in forums for whites to grapple with racism, allying with struggles that people of color are engaged in, constantly remaining open to our own mistakes and feedback from others.

2) Predominantly white activist organizations are built within society as it is and, as a result, are plagued by racism and other forms of oppression. We can minimize or deny this reality ("we're all radicals here, not racists") or we can work to confront it head-on. Confronting it requires not only openly challenging the dynamics of privilege in our groups, but also creating structures and forums for addressing oppression. For instance, two experienced activists I know often point out that, sadly, Kinko's has a better sexual harassment policy than most activist groups. Workers are accountable for their actions and victims have some means of redress. With all of our imaginative alternatives to capitalist and hierarchical social arrangements, I have no doubt that we can construct even more egalitarian and comprehensive ways of dealing with sexism, racism, and other oppressive forces in our organizations. And we must start now.

3) We absolutely should not be "getting" people of color to join "our" organizations. This is not just superficial; it's tokenistic, insulting, and counterproductive. Yet this is the band-aid that white activists are often quick to apply when accused of racist organizing. Mobilizing for the WTO protests, for example, I had one white organizer reassure me that we didn't need to concern ourselves with racism, but with "better outreach." In his view, the dynamics, priorities, leadership, and organizing style, among other important features of our group, were obviously beyond critical scrutiny. But they shouldn't be. We must always look at our organizations and ourselves first. Whose voices are heard? Whose priorities are adopted? Whose knowledge is valued? The answers to these questions define a group more than how comprehensive its outreach is. Consequently, instead of looking to "recruit" in order to simply increase diversity, we, as white activists, need to turn inward, working to make truly anti-racist, anti-oppressive organizations.

4) We have much to learn from the leadership of activists of color. As student organizers Amanda Klonsky and Daraka Larimore-Hall write, "Only through accepting the leadership of those who experience racism in their daily lives, can white students identify their role in building

an anti-racist movement." Following the lead of people of color is also one active step toward toppling conventional racial hierarchies; and it challenges us, as white folks (particularly men), to step back from aggressively directing everything with an overwhelming sense of entitlement. Too often white students covet and grasp leadership positions in large campus activist groups and coalitions. As in every other sector of our society, myths of "merit" cloak these racial dynamics, but in reality existing student leaders aren't necessarily the "best" leaders; rather, they're frequently people who have enjoyed lifelong access to leadership skills and positions--largely white, middle-class men. We need to strengthen the practice of following the lead of activists of color. We'll be rewarded with, among other things, good training working as authentic allies rather than patronizing "friends"; for being an ally means giving assistance when and as asked.

5) As white activists, we need to shut up and listen to people of color, especially when they offer criticism. We have to override initial defensive impulses and keep our mouths tightly shut, except perhaps to ask clarifying questions. No matter how well-intentioned and conscientious we are, notice how much space we (specifically white men) occupy with our daily, self-important jabber. Notice how we assume that we're entitled to it. When people of color intervene in that space to offer something, particularly something about how we can be better activists and better people, that is a very special gift. Indeed, we need to recognize such moments for what they are: precious opportunities for us to become more effective anti-racists. Remember to graciously listen and apply lessons learned.

6) White guilt always gets in the way. Anarcha-feminist Carol Ehrlich explains, "Guilt leads to inaction. Only action, to re-invent the everyday and make it something else, will change social relations." In other words, guilt doesn't help anyone, and it frequently just inspires navel-gazing. The people who experience the brunt of white supremacy could care less whether we, as white activists, feel guilty. Guilt doesn't change police brutality and occupation, nor does it alter a history of colonialism, genocide, and slavery. No, what we really have to offer is our daily commitment and actions to resist racism. And action isn't just protesting. It includes any number of ways that we challenge the world and ourselves. Pushing each other to seriously consider racism is action, as are grappling with privilege and acting as allies. Only through action, and the mistakes we make and the lessons we learn, can we find ways to work in true solidarity.

7) "Radical" doesn't necessarily mean getting arrested, engaging in police confrontations, or taking to the streets. These kinds of actions are important, but they're not the be-all and end-all of effective activism. Indeed, exclusively focusing on them ignores crucial questions of privilege and overlooks the diverse, radical ways that people resist oppression every day. In the wake of the WTO protests, for instance, many white activists are heavily focused on direct action. Yet in the words of anti-capitalist organizer Helen Luu, "the emphasis on this method alone often works to exclude people of colour because what is not being taken into account is the relationship between the racist (in)justice system and people of colour." Moreover, this emphasis can exclude the very radical demands, tactics, and kinds of organizing used by communities of color--struggling for police accountability, occupying ancestral lands, and challenging multinational polluters, among many others. All too frequently "radicalism" is defined almost solely by white, middle-class men. We can do better, though; and I mean we in the sense of all of us who struggle in diverse ways to go to the root--to dismantle power and

privilege, and fundamentally transform our society.

8) Radical rhetoric, whether it's Marxist, anarchist, Situationist, or some dialect of activistspeak, can be profoundly alienating and can uphold white privilege. More than once, I've seen white radicals (myself included) take refuge in our own ostensibly liberatory rhetorical and analytical tools: Marxists ignoring "divisive" issues of cultural identity and autonomy; anarchists assuming that, since their groups have "no hierarchy," they don't need to worry about insuring space for the voices of folks who are traditionally marginalized; Situationist-inspired militants collapsing diverse systems of privilege and oppression into obscure generalizations; radical animal rights activists claiming that they obviously know better than communities of color. And this is unfortunately nothing new. While all of these analytical tools have value, like most tools, they can be used to uphold oppression even as they profess to resist it. Stay wary.

9) We simply cannot limit our anti-oppression work to the struggle against white supremacy. Systems of oppression and privilege intertwine and operate in extremely complex ways throughout our society. Racism, patriarchy, classism, heterosexism, able-ism, ageism, and others compound and extend into all spheres of our lives. Our activism often takes the form of focusing on one outgrowth at a time--combating prison construction, opposing corporate exploitation of low-wage workers, challenging devastating US foreign policies. Yet we have to continually integrate a holistic understanding of oppression and how it operates--in these instances, how state repression, capitalism, and imperialism rest on oppression and privilege. Otherwise, despite all of our so-called radicalism, we risk becoming dangerously myopic single-issue activists. "Watch these mono-issue people," warns veteran activist Bernice Johnson Reagon. "They ain't gonna do you no good." Whatever our chosen focuses as activists, we must work both to recognize diverse forms of oppression and to challenge them--in our society, our organizations, and ourselves.

10) We need to do all of this anti-racist, anti-oppressive work out of respect for ourselves as well as others. White supremacy is our problem as white people. We benefit from it and are therefore obligated to challenge it. This is no simplistic politics of guilt, though. People of color undeniably suffer the most from racism, but we are desensitized and scarred in the process. Struggling to become authentically anti-racist radicals and to fundamentally change our racist society, then, means reclaiming our essential humanity while forging transformative bonds of solidarity. In the end, we'll be freer for it.