

Memorandum of Co-operation between Ontario Co-op Housing Federations and CHF Canada

Introduction

The relationship between the regional federations and CHF Canada spans many decades. While existing independently, sector organizations have benefited from a level of co-operation to provide leadership and service to member housing co-operatives across the country. Regional federations offer a strong local voice to housing co-operatives within five regions in Ontario. Nationally, CHF Canada provides a unifying voice to housing co-operatives across the country and through its Ontario Region within the province.

Over 125,000 Ontarians live in housing co-operatives. Most of the over 550 housing co-operatives consisting of 44,000 units in Ontario are members of both CHF Canada and regional federations.

Fundamental Purpose

The purpose of this agreement is to build on the existing partnership between Ontario regional federations and CHF Canada and provides a framework for support and services to housing co-operatives in Ontario. The principle goal of the partnership is to foster healthy, soundly managed co-operative housing communities. The relationship between the parties will continue to be based on mutual respect and co-operation.

The Ontario regional federations and CHF Canada confirm their commitment to working together and building consensus on roles, resource capacity and accountability in the services to member housing co-ops. The parties will together ensure housing co-operatives in Ontario have access to services that respond to their evolving needs and that create healthy businesses and healthy communities including addressing operating difficulties, improving business operations and management and enhancing co-operative governance.

Sector organizations exist to serve their members. A strong membership base supported by a dues structure that funds operations and service delivery is critical. To remain financially viable, all regional federations are encouraged to charge a dues structure that generates sufficient funds to provide an agreed standard of service delivery to their members. CHF Canada will continue to support the Executive Directors' Roundtables, biennial Federations' Conferences and annual meetings of Ontario regional federations with representatives of CHF Canada's Ontario Council. CHF Canada will contribute funds to support the delivery of services to housing co-operatives as set out in the Shared-Revenue Program.

Guiding Principles

The partnership between the Ontario regional federations and CHF Canada is guided by a commitment to the following principles:

- advancing co-operative principles and values of the Canadian co-operative housing movement;
- building strong co-operative housing communities through good governance and principled leadership;
- developing sound co-operative housing management practices;
- fostering good member services within housing co-operatives;
- encouraging education and training; and
- developing new co-op homes.

Further, the regional federations and CHF Canada make a commitment to working together in an environment of mutual respect and support for our respective organizations and avoiding competition or duplication of service. For example, regional federations will not offer an insurance program.

Responsibilities of Regional Federations and CHF Canada

1. Member recruitment

A successful and strong partnership is only possible when regional federations and CHF Canada retain the membership support of housing co-operatives. All parties agree that housing co-operatives should be members of both regional federations and CHF Canada.

2. Government relations

CHF Canada maintains a government relations infrastructure to support a sector advocacy program. CHF Canada and regional federations will work together to set the government relations goals and priorities with municipal, provincial and federal governments and political parties. All parties will promote key messaging and participate in government relations campaigns through their websites and social media platforms. In particular the parties will collectively work together on the implementation of the National Housing Strategy. And they will work to protect co-op affordability and autonomy within a changing provincial public policy landscape and the Ontario Long-Term Affordable Housing Strategy.

3. Co-op services

Regional federations and CHF Canada will work closely together to ensure all member housing co-operatives have access to advice and support. Co-op services includes supporting

good governance, principled leadership and sound management and working with co-ops in difficulty. In federated regions, regional federations will provide these services directly to their members or in partnership with CHF Canada. In all other areas, CHF Canada will deliver advice and support to housing co-ops. Regional federations and CHF Canada staff will meet periodically to review major files that they are working on.

4. Education and training

The parties agree that education and training is necessary for the success of housing co-operatives. Regional federations will offer a comprehensive education program to housing co-ops in their region that responds to local needs using trained and experienced workshop leaders. CHF Canada will not deliver workshops in any federated area unless negotiated in advance with the regional federation.

CHF Canada will support the development and delivery of regional education programs through sponsorships and in-kind contributions (e.g. workshop leaders). From time to time, CHF Canada and the regional federations will set out shared education outcomes which will be used to determine the level of financial support available from CHF Canada.

Regional federations and CHF Canada will work together to ensure that sufficient trained workshop leaders are available to support the education program. Sector workshop leader training programs will be held periodically based on mutually agreed upon topics and skills. The cost of workshop leader training programs will be shared equitably by the parties involved. CHF Canada will provide training to regional federation staff, workshop leaders and consultants on changes to legislation, funding programs and other issues of a provincial nature.

5. Enterprise services

CHF Canada designs and delivers a suite of Enterprise Services directly to member housing co-ops across the province including various insurance products, a refinancing program and asset management services. When delivering these services CHF Canada will inform regional federations about changes to the services or products and in the case of the refinancing program and asset management services, when services are contracted with housing co-ops.

6. Co-op cost cutters

The Ontario regional federations have a buying program known as Co-op Cost Cutters which has been operating since 1998. The program is accessible to all member housing co-operatives in Ontario. Regional federations receive a marketing fee based on sales in their area. In areas where no regional federation exists, CHF Canada receives a marketing fee.

7. Diversity scholarship

The regional federations and CHF Canada have partnered to offer a Diversity Scholarship program to members of member housing co-ops. The program is administered through CHFT's Charitable Fund. All parties agree to follow a standard program framework as negotiated from time to time including an application and selection process, and scholarship logo. All parties participating in the program will use the Diversity Scholarship logo on promotional materials and ensure that funds are available to cover the costs of their respective scholarships awarded. The parties will collaborate in fundraising efforts and make every effort to attend regional federation presentation events. The parties are also responsible for acknowledging all program sponsors and donors.

8. Co-op housing development

Canada is experiencing a crisis of housing supply and affordability across the country. The parties agree that they will each support exploring innovative approaches to unlocking our sector's real estate assets to generate collective growth. We will also work collaboratively to support the expansion of our member housing co-operatives.

Expected Outcomes

The expected outcome of this agreement is a unified sector approach to the development and delivery of services to housing co-operatives in Ontario. It is also expected that sector services will be delivered efficiently to members by the organization most capable of delivering the service.

Problem Resolution

At any time if a problem arises between the parties consultation will take place between the parties involved, who will make all reasonable efforts, in good faith, to resolve the problem.

Contacts shall be:

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**ONTARIO
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Amendments

Amendments can be made to this document with the written consent of the parties involved.

Duration and Termination

This Memorandum will be reviewed every four years, unless notice to terminate by a majority of the parties is received 120 days prior to the anniversary date.

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