



Guide 1: Organizing and Running Resident Councils

Part 2: Resident Council Structure & Governance



Training Overview

Roles and work of
resident councils

Resident council
governing
documents

Resident council
structure

Role of the board
of directors

Responsibilities of
the board officers

Resident council
and board
development

Examples of what
resident councils
can do



Key Points



- Successful resident councils have structures and procedures to ensure they operate democratically and follow HUD guidelines.
- Resident council bylaws, procedures, and a written agreement with the public housing agency (PHA) will ensure that your operations are clear and easy to engage with.
- Tenant participation funds allow your resident council to fulfill its goals. To receive these funds your resident council will need an MOU with the PHA.
- Effective resident councils have an active board of directors, committees, and members. The board should be continuously working to build new leadership.



Successful resident councils will work to:

- Represent resident interests with the housing agency — maintenance, security, and programs.
- Build relationships with the PHA and community organizations.
- Educate residents on their tenant rights and responsibilities.

- Bring programs to improve quality of life and opportunities.
- Organize recreation, social services, and other resident activities.
- Bring in new resident leaders.
- Build a sense of community.



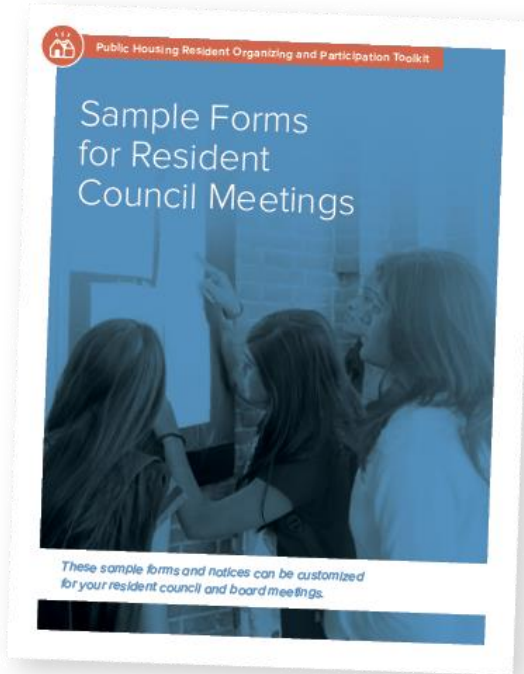
To achieve their goals, successful resident councils will:

- Have regular meetings & elections.
- Negotiate an MOU with the PHA.
- Secure tenant participation funds and other funding.
- Maintain accurate and transparent financial records.
- Hold events and invite speakers.
- Meet regularly with the PHA.

- Actively participate in the overall mission and operation of the PHA.
- Continually recruit & engage residents.
- Seek out technical assistance to support the resident council.
- Work cooperatively to address community needs and accomplish its goals.



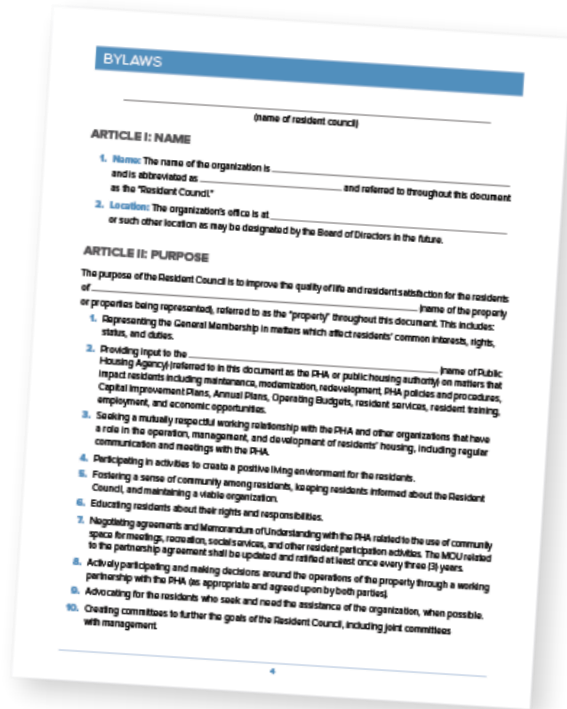
Resident Council Documents



- [Guide to Creating Public Housing Resident Council Bylaws](#)
- [Sample Resident Council Bylaws](#)
- [Sample Resident Council Procedures](#)
- [Sample Forms for Resident Council Meetings](#)
- [Sample Forms for Resident Council Elections](#)
- [Sample Resident Council and Housing Agency Memorandum of Understanding](#)



Resident Council Bylaws



Primary governing document — operating manual

Sets out how the organization:

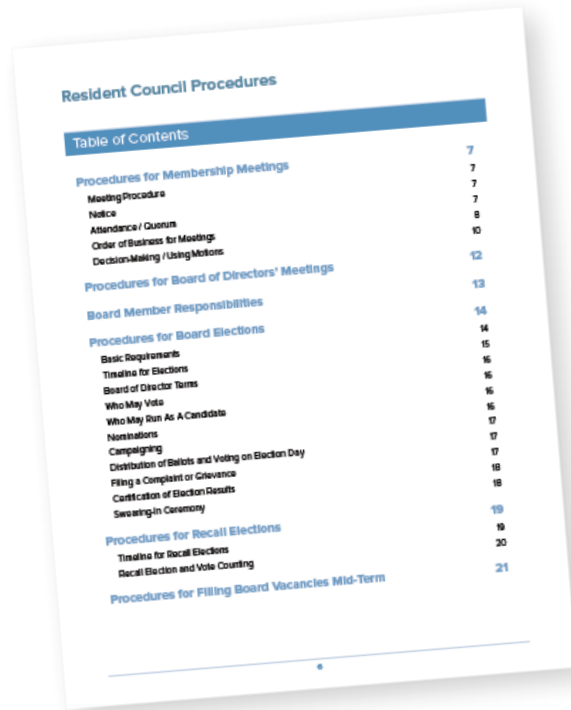
- Makes decisions.
- Elects, and recalls, the board.
- Creates committees.
- Handles its finances.

Explains the:

- Responsibilities of the board.
- Rights and responsibilities of the members.



Sample Resident Council Procedures

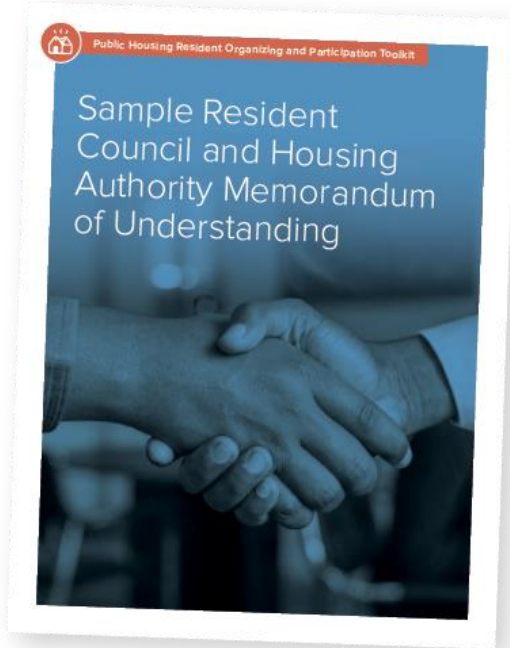


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- Details for procedures the resident council regularly uses:
 - » Meetings
 - » Board positions
 - » Board elections /recalls
 - » Fill vacancies
- May be created by a committee
- Use the Sample Forms to carry out the procedures.



Sample Resident Council and Housing Agency Memorandum of Understanding



The MOU spells out the working relationship between the PHA & Resident council and includes:

- Support the PHA will provide the resident council.
- Programming & services the PHA will bring to the property.
- Frequency with which the groups will meet.
- Ways members can have a voice with the housing agency on issues like safety, maintenance, and community life.
- RC records & accounting procedures.



Sample Resident Council and Housing Agency Memorandum of Understanding

The sample document provided includes:



How to create an
MOU with the PHA



Negotiating the MOU
with the PHA



Sample
customizable MOU



Knowledge Check



A resident council should have written processes for their elections in their:

- a. Bylaws
- b. Memorandum of Understanding
- c. Procedures
- d. Sample documents



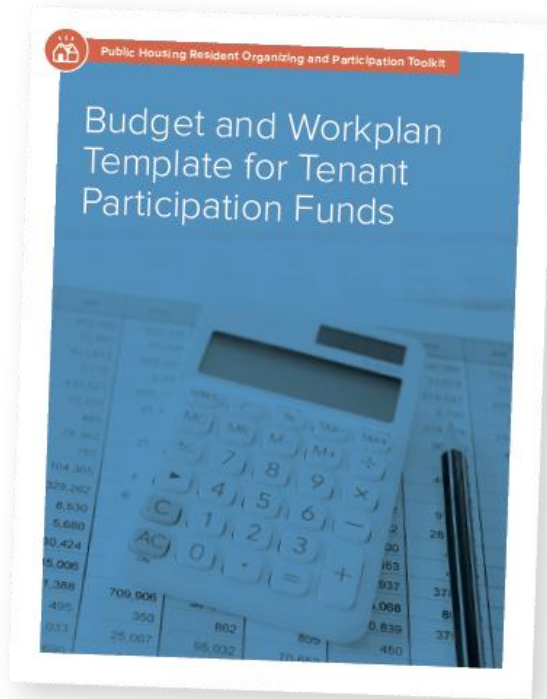
Knowledge Check



c. Procedures



Tenant Participation Funds



HUD provides funding to public housing agencies for resident participation activities. The housing agency then passes along funding to duly-elected resident councils.

Tenant participation funds can be used to support a range of resident council operations and activities, including stipends for resident council officers.

CFR: 964.150 Funding tenant participation.



Tenant Participation Funds — Resources



[Guide 9 Training: Tenant Participation Funds](#)

The Toolkit provides:

- [Sample Resident Council and PHA Tenant Participation Funds Agreement](#)
- [Budget and Workplan Template for Tenant Participation Funds](#)
- [Tenant Participation Funds Decision Support Tool](#)



Knowledge Check



What is a benefit of having a duly-elected resident council:

- a. Access to tenant participation funds
- b. Can collect dues from members
- c. Can pay the Board as employees of the resident council
- d. All of the above



Knowledge Check



- a. Access to tenant participation funds

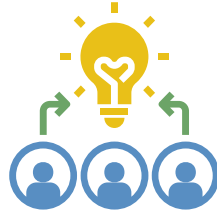


Resident Council Leadership Structure



MEMBERSHIP:

Identifies issues, plans, finds solutions, and makes decisions



COMMITTEES:

Organize activities, problem solve, take on specific tasks



BOARD:

Day-to-day work of running and representing the organization



Board of Directors



BOARD:

Day-to-day work of running and representing the organization

Ensures the running and day-to-day operations of the resident council.

The board of directors is responsible for:

- Planning and providing notice for membership meetings.
- Representing the resident council to outside groups and the housing agency.
- Keeping the resident council in good standing as a duly-elected resident council.



For more information on the roles and responsibilities of these positions see the “Board Member Responsibilities” section of the [Sample Resident Council Procedures](#).



Board Members

Board Member Qualities

Represent all communities at the property — race / ethnicity, language, age, family makeup (seniors, families with children), and gender

- Optional: Floor or building “captains”

Willing to put in work on behalf of the organization

Trustworthy, and will put the best interests of the community forward



Board Members Responsibilities

All board members are expected to:

Work to improve the quality of life and resident satisfaction for their community.

Attend all board meetings.

Attend all membership meetings.

Further the mission of the resident council and accomplish organizational business between meetings.

Take advantage of training opportunities to better carry-out their responsibilities and serve their community.

Assist the resident council and the board in following the bylaws.



Board Officers: President



The President:

- Acts as chair of the board of directors and general membership meetings.
- Represents the membership and the board of directors.
- Signs correspondence and documents on behalf of the organization (except as otherwise designated by the board).
- Exercises general oversight of the organization.



Board Officers: Vice-President



The Vice-President:

- Perform the duties of the president when the president is absent or unable to perform their duties.
- Assists the president in carrying out their duties.



Board Officers: Secretary



The Secretary:

- Takes and maintains minutes of all board of directors and general membership meetings.
- Records attendance, whether there is a quorum, and the votes taken.
- Ensures that proper notice of all meetings is given to the members.

In the absence of the secretary, a temporary secretary may be designated to record the meeting minutes.



Board Officers: Treasurer



The Treasurer:

- Keeps the organization's financial records.
- Signs off on checks authorized by the board of directors.
- Provides regular statements of income and expenditures from all funding sources to the board and once a year to the membership.
- Ensures that all checks issued by the organization have at least one signature, generally the president's, in addition to their own.



Additional Board Positions



It is common for Boards to have additional positions.

- Assistant treasurer and assistant Secretary
- Parliamentarian — ensures the bylaws and procedures are followed
- At-large member — can fill in for officers
- Building representatives



Board Development — Training

The Board should continually seek out training

Possible training organizations:

- Housing agency
- Other resident organizations
- Local community colleges & vocational schools
- Local public, and community organizations
- HUD and other federal agencies
- National organizations for renters



Possible trainings:

- Leading meetings
- Strategic planning
- Managing tenant participation funds
- Developing budgets



Board Development — Leadership



The Board should continually build new leadership

- Tasks within resident council — outreach, meeting sign-in table
- Committees



Committees:



COMMITTEES:
Organize activities, problem
solve, take on specific tasks

Refine ideas
that come up
in resident
council
meetings.

Propose
ideas to the
full resident
council.

Carry-out
the work
on specific
projects.

Are a great
way to build
engagement
and
leadership!

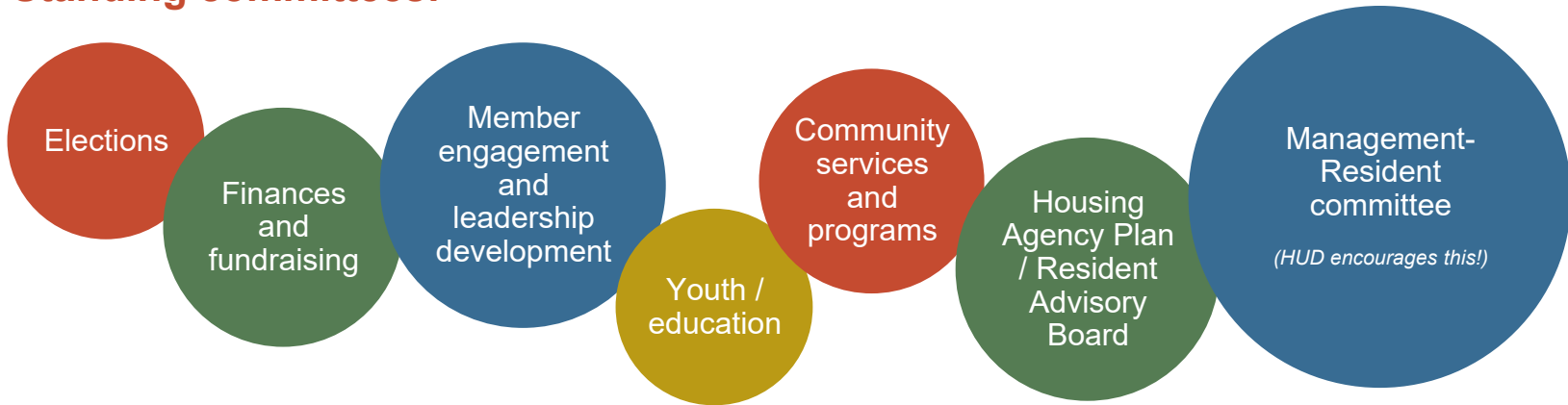


Examples of Committees

Ad-hoc committees (working groups):

- Event — Health and wellness fair committee
- Project — Back to school backpacks and supplies for kids

Standing committees:



Knowledge Check



Where can a resident council find support and technical assistance:

- a. The housing agency
- b. The local HUD office
- c. Community organizations, including national organizations
- d. Other resident councils
- e. All of the above



Knowledge Check



e. All of the above



What can resident councils do?

Across the country, public housing resident councils are having big impacts in their communities.



Bring services and programs to communities



In Cincinnati, the Jurisdiction-Wide Resident Advisory Board won grants from HUD's Resident Opportunities and Self-Sufficiency (ROSS) program and formed the Business Service & Coordination Center. The Center offers residents support with employment, legal, mental health, domestic violence, and other issues, and offers case management and support.



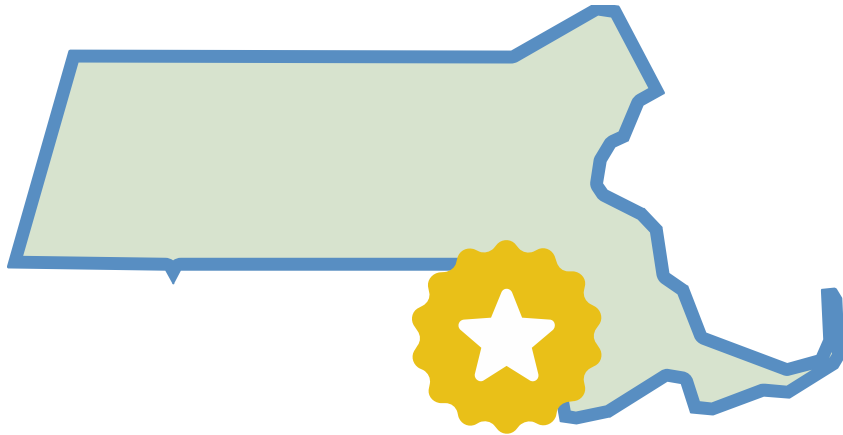
Form resident management corporations



In New Orleans, the Guste Homes began working toward self-management in 1988. Ten years later, they formally took over management, and now manage their own buildings and other affordable housing in New Orleans.



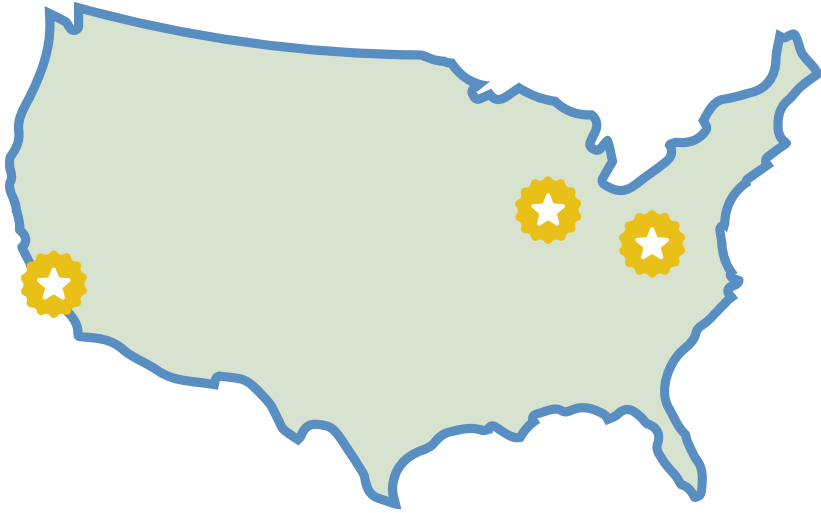
Participate in Housing Agency Plans & Policies



In Fall River, Massachusetts, the Resident Advisory Board negotiated resident involvement in property inspections so that a resident council representative, in addition to the property manager and maintenance will accompany the inspectors. The PHA and Resident Advisory Board included this in their MOU.



Organize people to vote and advocate with elected leaders



In Chicago, resident councils organize get out the vote events for their residents.

In Los Angeles County, residents organized a visit to the Long Beach City Council to commend recent streetscape improvements, and advocate for more.

In Charleston-Kanawha, WV, a resident leader advocated with an elected official and got the streets repaved at their 40-acre property.



Jurisdiction-wide Resident Councils

Jurisdiction-wide Resident Councils

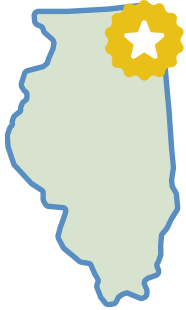
- Represent all public housing residents under the housing agency.
- Can advocate with the housing agency.
- Its representatives must be appointed by the PHA as the Resident Advisory Board when the PHA creates its Plan.

Created by

- A number of resident councils coming together;
- Councils electing a representative(s) to the jurisdiction-wide group; OR
- Direct elections open to everyone represented.



Examples of Jurisdiction-Wide Resident Council Structures



In Chicago, the Central Advisory Council brings together the Presidents of each family property and representatives of the senior buildings from each part of the city. The Central Advisory Council meets monthly. Their executive board also meets monthly and serves as the Resident Advisory Board.



In Cincinnati, the “Jurisdiction-wide Resident Advisory Board” (J-RAB) is a non-profit organization. Each building has a resident council, and the presidents of the buildings form the President’s Committee (the board) of J-RAB. J-RAB has its own staff and receives grants available to eligible resident councils directly from HUD and other sources.



Knowledge Check



A jurisdiction-wide resident council represents:

- a. All tenants in a city
- b. All public housing residents under that PHA's jurisdiction
- c. All properties that have resident councils
- d. All resident council boards




Knowledge Check



- b. All public housing residents under that PHA's jurisdiction





Animated video for this training ([link to script](#))

Resources



Tenant rights information by state:

https://www.hud.gov/topics/rental_assistance/tenantrights

National Low-Income Housing Coalition's (2001): Resident Participation in Public Housing, Part 964 Regulations, Outline of Key Features:

https://nlihc.org/sites/default/files/Part-964_Resident-Participationin-Public-Housing.pdf

National Housing Law Project, Resources related to public housing:

<https://www.nhlp.org/resource-center/public-housing/>

The Massachusetts Union of Public Housing Tenants:

<https://massunion.org/>

A Quick Reference Guide for Hosting World Café:

<http://www.theworldcafe.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/Cafe-To-Go-Revised.pdf>

United States Code of Federal Regulations related to Tenant Participation and Tenant Opportunities in Public Housing:

https://www.govregs.com/regulations/title24_chapterIX_part964_subpartB



End of Training on Guide 1



This training is part of the **Public Housing Resident Organizing and Participation Toolkit**. The full toolkit includes topical guides, customizable resident council documents and forms, tools related to tenant participation funds, and case studies of resident organizations around the country. To see the full toolkit go to: <https://www.hudexchange.info/programs/public-housing/resident-toolkit/>

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