

[Full name of housing co-op or letterhead]

Rules of Order for Co-op General Meetings

1. Main Motion

Purpose: To get the meeting to take some kind of action. The motion and its meaning should be clear. It should include what, when, where, who, how and timeline, as needed.

Use: Secunder required. Debate allowed. All other motions apply to it.

Note: If amended, vote must be taken on main motion as amended.

In most cases, unless your co-op's Rules provide otherwise, a simple majority (more than half of the votes cast) is required to pass a motion.

The *Co-operative Association Act* (the Co-op Act) requires the co-op to pass a "special resolution" in order to take certain actions (like changing the co-op's Rules, or removing a director from office).

To pass a **special resolution**:

- members must be given at least 14 days' notice of the meeting,
- the notice of meeting must include the full text of the special resolution to be considered, and,
- the majority in favour of the motion must be at least two-thirds (or more, depending on your Rules).

Check the Co-op Act, the Guide to the Co-op Act and your Rules for details about when a special resolution is required and the majority it needs to pass (Rule 1.1).

2. To Amend

Purpose: To make some change to the main motion without changing its intent. Amendments may not be directly against or unrelated to main motion.

Use: Secunder required. Debate allowed on the proposed amendment. Simple majority required to incorporate the amendment into the main motion

Note: Vote on amendment(s) must pass or fail before discussion on main motion can resume.

Once an amendment is passed, the meeting continues to discuss and eventually vote on the main motion as amended.

Friendly amendment: A member may ask the mover and seconder of the main motion to accept an amendment as “friendly”. If they both agree, the main motion is debated as amended. A friendly amendment should only be used to make minor changes or correct obvious errors.

Amendments to a special resolution may only be proposed if permitted in the notice of meeting.

3. To Refer

Purpose: To send the main motion to another body for consideration (e.g. the board, committee).

Use: Secunder required. May debate whether to refer or not. Provides direction about who to refer to and timeline for reporting back to the meeting, if necessary. Simple majority required.

4. To Close Debate

Purpose: To close debate on the motion under discussion without hearing any more speakers, and proceed directly to the vote.

Use: Secunder required. No debate. Two-thirds majority required.

Note: This is sometimes called “calling the question”. Someone who has already spoken on the motion cannot move to close debate.

At any time, if no member wants to speak on the motion, the chair may call for a vote and there is no need for a motion to close debate.

5. To Table

Purpose: To postpone consideration of a motion, usually to a stated time.

Use: Secunder required. No debate. Simple majority required.

6. To Withdraw

Purpose: To withdraw any motion under consideration.

Use: May be moved only by mover of the motion and requires permission of seconder. No debate. No vote required unless there is an objection to the withdrawal, in which case a simple majority would be required.

7. To Appeal

Purpose: To appeal a decision of the chair.

Use: Secunder required. No debate. Mover states reason for appeal, then chair states reason for decision. Simple majority required to uphold the chair or not.

8. Point of Order

Purpose: To correct an error in the conduct of the meeting.

Use: No debate. The member calls out “point of order”. The chair interrupts the current speaker (if there is one) and asks the member to state the point of order. Point is decided by the chair. The chair’s decision may be appealed. After the point of order has been dealt with, the meeting continues where it was interrupted.

Note: May also be used as point of information where a mover asks for clarification about the business at hand.

9. Point of Privilege

Purpose: To make a request to the chair or to propose a motion on a matter that may affect the integrity, comfort, rights or privileges of the meeting or of individuals.

Use: No debate. The member calls out “point of privilege”. The chair interrupts the current speaker (if there is one) and asks the member to state the point of privilege. Point is decided by the chair. The chair’s decision may be appealed.

Any resulting motion (if permitted by chair) is debated. All other motions apply to it. Simple majority required.

After the point of privilege has been dealt with, the meeting continues where it was interrupted.

10. To Close

Purpose: To end the meeting.

Use: Secunder required. May be debated. Simple majority vote required. Not normally made until all business has been completed, except in cases of urgency.

Note: The chair may close the meeting without a motion when all the business is done, there is no quorum, or it has become impossible to conduct business.

11. To Adjourn

Purpose: To adjourn the meeting to a future time, date and place. No business shall be conducted at an adjourned meeting other than the business left unfinished at the meeting from which the adjournment took place. (Refer to Rule 14.15. Adjournment of a meeting at which quorum is present.)

Use: The chair of a meeting may, and if directed by members must, adjourn a meeting at which quorum is present. Secunder required. May be debated. Simple majority required.

There are two motions that have less priority than the main motion, because they cannot be made until the vote has been taken on the main motion. They are:

12. To Reconsider

Purpose: To reconsider the vote on the main motion.

Use: Debatable if original motion was debatable. Can be moved at any time, by any person who voted in favour of the original motion, providing that no one has acted on the original motion and it can be reversed. Requires same notice and same majority as the original motion.

Cancels the outcome of a previous vote on the main motion and allows the meeting to debate and vote again on the motion.

13. To Rescind

Purpose: To cancel a main motion.

Use: Debatable. Two-thirds majority required. Has the effect of cancelling an earlier decision (if the decision has not yet been acted upon). If passed, a new motion may be placed before the meeting. Rarely used and not in order if a motion to reconsider would have the same effect.

Rules of Order effective date: *[enter date]*