

Getting Our Co-op Principles Right

Here's a quick reference version of the co-op principles that we've adapted especially for housing co-ops.

7
Concern for Community
 Housing co-ops work to build strong communities inside and outside the co-op. They help to improve the quality of life for others and they take care to protect the environment.

1
Voluntary and Open Membership
 Membership in a housing co-op is open to all who can use the co-op's services and accept the responsibilities of being a member, without discrimination.

2
Democratic Control
 Housing co-ops are controlled by their members. Each member has one vote. Housing co-ops give members the information they need to make good decisions, and take part in the life of the co-op.

6
Co-operation among Co-operatives
 By organizing together in federations, housing co-ops grow stronger and help to build a healthy co-op movement. Where they can, housing co-ops use the services of co-op businesses to meet their needs.



3
Member Economic Participation
 Members contribute financially to the co-op and share in the benefits of membership. The co-op does not pay a return on the members' shares or deposits. Instead it sets aside reserves for the future and charges the members only what it needs to operate soundly.

5
Education, Training and Information
 Housing co-ops offer education and training to the members, directors and staff so that everyone can play a full role in the life of the co-op. Housing co-ops find ways to tell the public what they are and what they do.

4
Autonomy and Independence
 Housing co-ops are independent associations. They follow the laws that apply to them and their agreements with governments or other organizations. But the members control the co-op.

Good Governance and the International Co-op Principles