

CONSTITUTION OF CORETTA SCOTT KING HOUSE

Last Updated 9/24/2012

PREAMBLE

We, the members of Coretta Scott King House, associate ourselves in accordance with the spirit of the Rochdale Principles for the purpose of providing housing cooperatively. We adopt the following principles:

1. Open Membership - Membership shall be open and voluntary and shall not be artificially restricted.
2. Democracy - Each member has an equal voice in house decisions. Each shares equally in house duties and responsibilities and in all benefits derived through the operation of the house.
3. Distribution of savings - the members are collectively and severally responsible for the financial well-being of the house. Members share equally in any assessments if expenses for the year exceed estimated charges, and rebates if expenses are less than charges.
4. Education - The House will be a working example of cooperative living and will educate its members and others in the community in the principles of cooperative living.
5. Neutrality - The House itself will be neutral in all religious and political affairs; it shall be a member of no organizations other than cooperative societies and it shall not provide financial support to an organization of which it is not a member.
6. Cooperation with Other Co-ops - The House will work together with the Inter-Cooperative Council and other co-ops to further the cooperative movement in general.

ARTICLE I - GENERAL INFORMATION

Section 1

- a. The name of this organization is the Coretta Scott King Cooperative House. It shall be located at 803 E. Kingsley Street, Ann Arbor, Michigan.
- b. The House is a member of the Inter-Cooperative Council at the University of Michigan (ICC) and shall be operated in accordance with the Rochdale Principles, and the Articles of Incorporation Bylaws and Standing Rules of the ICC as well as in accordance with this Constitution.

Section 2: Copies of the House Constitution will be kept on file with the Inter-Cooperative Council. Each House member shall be given a copy of the House Constitution at the time the member signs a contract. A copy of the Constitution shall also be posted prominently in the House.

Section 3: The house is a non-smoking house.

ARTICLE II - MEMBERSHIP

Section 1: Requirements for membership. To be a member of the House, one must:

- a. Be accepted by the ICC according to the rules and procedures set forth by the Board of Directors;
- b. Sign an ICC contract and pay all applicable fees;
- c. Be assigned to this house by the ICC.

Section 2: Member duties and obligations

- a. Members of the House share equally in its operation. Members are responsible for their assigned work, including attending House meetings, participating in work holidays, and carrying out other tasks as required by the House from time to time. Under no circumstances may a member hire another person to do his/her work.
- b. This Constitution and all resolutions passed by the membership shall be binding on all members of the House.
- c. Members are responsible for the prompt payment of House and ICC charges according to the House financial policy as set forth in Article IV.
- d. Members are responsible for the contents of posted notices.

Section 3: Referral and Expulsion

- a. Grounds for referral or expulsion include:
 - (1) Non-payment of rent
 - (2) Non-work
 - (3) Consistent disregard for personal responsibilities as set forth in Article II, Section 4 of this Constitution.
 - (4) Behavior which endangers the House or its members.
 - (5) Uncooperative behavior as defined in the ICC standing rules
- b. The House reserves the right to place a member on referral, subject to ICC guidelines and the grounds listed in (a).
- c. Expulsion is the strongest penalty the House can impose. It should be undertaken only after due consideration-
 - (1) A motion for expulsion of a member must be presented in an open house meeting for which four days notice has been given. If the member does not attend the meeting, and does not request an alternate meeting time, this will indicate no defense in the matter, and the proceeding may take place in his/her absence.
 - (2) If the member is present at the meeting, s/he shall leave the room after presenting his/her defense and answering questions. A two-thirds vote of the House membership conducted by secret written ballot is required to pass a motion for expulsion.
- d. The President or his/her delegate shall notify the ICC when a member is placed on referral or expelled. -In the case of expulsion, the President shall take appropriate steps to ensure that the member moves out in a timely fashion and that the house is relieved of ICC Charges.

ARTICLE III - MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS

Section 1: Membership meetings

- a. Meetings will be held monthly, during the first week of each month.
- b. Responsibility for facilitating meetings will be rotated among the members, with the President facilitating the first meeting of the contract year and any meetings lacking a facilitator.
- c. The House Manager is responsible for scheduling a time when as many members as possible can attend. The House Manager will post a tentative agenda at least two days prior to the meeting. Members may add items to the agenda up to 24 hours before the meeting.
- d. Any member may call for a special meeting. Two days notice must be given if possible.
- e. A quorum of at least a majority of the current membership is required to make house decisions. A mail ballot may be used for important issues or where quorum can not be achieved.
- f. At each House meeting, House members shall correct the minutes from the previous meeting if necessary and approve them as the official record of that meeting.
- g. The House shall make no retroactive decisions.

Section 2 --Decision Making

- a. Unless otherwise noted in this constitution, house decisions are made by majority vote.
- b. The facilitator is responsible for-keeping the process running smoothly.
 - (1) In order to allow free and open discussion, the facilitator shall avoid, as much as possible, giving his/her opinions on the topic under discussion.
 - (2) The facilitator shall step down if s/he feels strongly about the topic under discussion, and the House shall select a mutually agreeable, neutral facilitator.

ARTICLE IV - OFFICERS

Section 1- Officers: The officers of this organizations shall be the President, Treasurer, House Manager, and the Maintenance Manager.

Section 2 - Election

- a. The members of the house shall elect all officers(except the President) at the beginning of each contract year, or when a vacancy occurs in an officer position, to serve for the duration of the contract. The President shall be elected for a one year term in April of each year.
- b. Officers shall be elected by simple majority vote. If no one candidate wins a majority of the votes, the candidate with the fewest votes shall be dropped from the list of candidates and the vote shall be conducted again. The process shall be followed as many times as necessary to achieve a majority for one candidate.

- c. The candidate shall leave the room for discussion. They may return for the vote and may vote.

Section 3 - Duties

- a. Officers shall attend all pertinent ICC officer training sessions.
- b. Officers shall keep accurate, up-to-date records which shall be accessible to all House members on request, and shall turn those records over to their successors.
- c. The President shall:
 - (1) Serve as the primary communication link between the House and the ICC, ensuring that the needs and opinions of the house members are represented at a central level, and informing house members of ICC-wide issues and events.
 - (2) Post all notices relevant to the members of the House, including notices to the house from the ICC and from the general mail.
 - (3) Represent the house to the Board of Directors of the ICC by attending and participating in Board meetings and committee meetings. Report relevant Board decisions at House meetings.
 - (4) Act as the Chief Executive Officer of the House
 - (5) Preside at House Meeting as specified in Article III
- d. The Treasurer shall:
 - (1) Collect monthly and other charges from House members.
 - (2) Post member accounts in a timely fashion.
 - (3) Pay house bills.
 - (4) Write and present the House budget to the House for approval by the members.
 - (5) Alert House members of all financial issues which concern them.
- e. The House Manager shall:
 - (1) Assign house work to all members, taking their preferences into account as much as possible, and ensuring that all work necessary to the proper functioning of the house is assigned.
 - (2) Ensure that all House member do their fair share of work.
 - (3) Alert the House and implement House procedures for dealing with members who fall behind in their work.
 - (4) Buy all necessary supplies for the House that the House approves.
 - (5) With the Maintenance Manager, organize work holidays at the beginning of each term..
- f. The Maintenance Manager shall:
 - (1) Provide that the building is maintained in good condition in compliance with the city housing code and ICC maintenance standards.
 - (2) Perform maintenance tasks as his/her abilities permit.
 - (3) Attend meetings of the ICC Maintenance Projects Committee.
 - (4) Obtain bids or estimates as necessary and submit proposals to the Maintenance projects Committee for projects that are eligible for ICC funding.
 - (5) Issue keys to House members
 - (6) With the House Manager to organize work holidays at the beginning of each term.
 - (7) Accompany the ICC Maintenance Coordinator on house inspections and the housing inspector on city inspections.
- g. The Executive House Secretary shall:
 - (1) On a routine and timely basis, forward the daily mail to past members of the house that have filed a correct forwarding address with the EHS. The EHS will provide this service to members for a time

period up to one calendar year after the departure of the member from the house (or longer at the discretion of the EHS). At the end of one year, mail capable of being forwarded will be labeled "return to sender" and remitted to the post office. Mail not capable of being forwarded will be discarded appropriately (recycled with consideration for mail security given i.e. torn up or shredded). The EHS shall also provide a written reminder to departing members that their mail will be forwarded for one year only.

- (2) Record and process minutes at house meetings. A copy of the minutes is to be posted in the house and another is to be filed at the ICC office.
- (3) Ensure that house recycling is processed appropriately. Bins are consolidated and placed at the curb for pick up by the city on a regular basis.

Section 4 - Recall of an Officer

- a. The House may recall an officer for the following reasons:
 - (1) Failure to perform adequately the duties of the office:
 - (2) Use of power for personal interests which are contrary to those of the House, the ICC, or the Rochdale Principles;
 - (3) Any acts which are detrimental to the purpose or functioning of the House.
- b. An officer may be recalled by a two-thirds majority of the total house membership.

ARTICLE V - FINANCIAL POLICY

Section 1 - Budget

- a. The budget year runs from September 1 to Aug. 31
- b. The Treasurer shall post a proposed budget at least one week before the October house meeting.
- c. The membership will discuss and approve a budget by the October house meeting.
- d. The budget may be re-evaluated at any time at the request of any member.

Section 2 - Expenditures: Expenditures shall be approved in the following manner:

- a. All expenditures beyond those outlines in an officer's job description must be approved at a House meeting.
- b. Emergency expenditures, necessary to health or safety, may be approved by the Treasurer and the member(s) involved in the emergency action.

Section 3 - Monthly charges

- a. Monthly charges shall be due by the Fifth of the month for which they are charged. The Treasurer shall post all member accounts in a conspicuous place by the 2nd day of the month
- b. Any member whose account is not current at that time shall sign a payment plan agreeable to the House. If the member fails to adhere to this plan or fails to show up at the House meeting, the treasurer shall put him/her on referral. The treasurer may also, at his/her discretion, call an expulsion hearing before the end of the month.
- c. If, by the next House meeting, the member has not paid as much as the payment plan requires, s/he will automatically be considered for expulsion at that meeting.

ARTICLE VI - SUB-LEASING

Section 1 - Conditions

- a. A member of the House may sublet his/her apartment with the approval of the ICC. The sub-lessee shall sign a short term membership contract with the ICC for the period of his/her occupancy and pay a short term membership fee.
- b. The sublettor and the sublessee must sign a sub-lease agreement at the ICC office and submit one copy to the House treasurer.
- c. The sub-lease shall not be made for a period of time longer than four months.

Section 2 - Charges

- a. The sublessee shall pay charges directly to the House Treasurer. When s/he signs the contract, the sublessee shall pay charges to the House for his/her share of the first months charges of the sublease, and a security deposit in the amount of his/her share of one month's charges. The House may, at its discretion, require greater payment in advance.
- b. If the sublettor offers the sublease at less than full charges, s/he shall remain responsible for paying his/her portion of the charges as usual.
- c. The sublettor shall remain primarily liable for the full charges on his/her lease including any damage that occurs to the apartment or appliances and any special assessments levied on the House membership. However, the House shall make every reasonable effort to collect such sums from the sublessee.

Section 3 - Rights and Responsibilities

- a. The sublessee shall have all the rights and responsibilities of other House members, except that the sub-lessee shall not have the right to extend his/her short term contract.
- b. The voting rights of the sublettor shall be suspended for the period of the sublessee's contract. The sublettor shall not be counted in the quorum necessary for house actions, but the sub-lessee shall be counted. If the sublessee abandons his/her apartment or is expelled, the sublettor shall have his/her voting rights from the date of the abandonment or expulsion.

ARTICLE VII - AMENDMENTS

Section 1: This constitution shall be adopted by a 2/3 majority vote of all house members either at a house meeting or through a written ballot.

Section 2: Amendments to this constitution shall be adopted by a 2/3 majority vote of all house members either at a house meeting or through a written ballot. All amendments must be posted in their final form for at least 48 hours before any vote may be taken.

Section 3: All previous house constitutions are considered null and void.

Last Amended 12/6/99

King House Cat Policy

1. A maximum of two cats are allowed per apartment
2. Each cat must have a designated owner.
3. Each cat must be:
 - a) fully inoculated (including against feline leukemia)
 - b) box-trained
 - c) spayed/neutered
 - d) fed indoors
4. No cats are permitted at any time in any House common area including the entry foyer, stairs or basement.
5. In each apartment with cat(s), the owner is required to cover all air circulation vents in the apartment with porous cheesecloth in order to prevent circulation of cat hair and dander through the House. Members without cats are encouraged to also cover their apartment vents with cheesecloth.
6. Cat owners are responsible for any and all damage to any House property caused by their cat(s).
7. This policy is to be enforced by the House, which has responsibility for addressing transgressions or violations.
8. Violations of this policy may be subject to the same system of warnings and fines which operates for House work or other House violations, although the House may choose to deviate from this system at its discretion.
9. This policy is to be posted at all times in one central location in the House.
10. This policy is to be reconsidered by the House each November prior to the year in which it will take effect.

King Move Out Procedure Policy

1. Apartment Condition

- a. The apartment must be in as good or better condition as when the member moved in. The condition of the apartment reflected on the room punch list form will be used to evaluate the current condition.
- b. The apartment must:
 - be completely clean (swept, mopped and/or vacuumed),
 - be vacant of all personal belongings and furniture,
 - have an empty and clean refrigerator,
 - have empty and clean cabinets and closets,
 - have a clean microwave, and
 - have all garbage removed from the apartment and house.
- c. The microwave oven is property of King House and must remain in the apartment.
- d. Any maintenance problems must be reported to the maintenance manager.

2. Apartment Condition Walk Through

- a. An apartment walk through will be held at the time the member is ready to vacate the property to verify that the apartment meets the criteria listed above.
- b. The walk through shall be administered by the a) maintenance manager, b) house manager or c) the interim house manager.
- c. The member moving out must schedule a walk through with the appropriate individual at least 24 hours in advance.
- d. All house, apartment and shed keys must be returned before moving out. If not returned, the individual moving out will be fined \$15 per key.
- e. If the apartment does not comply with the condition guidelines, the person administering the walk through may require the member to fix the problem (i.e. clean the bathroom) and/or fine the member.

3. Storage

- a. Upon move out, all personal belongings stored in the basement or any other location on the property must be removed. If any personal items are left in King House, the member will be fined and current members will have the right to dispose of the items immediately.
- b. There will be no storage contracts made between King House and previous members. Basement storage is reserved for current house members only.

King House Guest Policy

1. **DEFINITION OF PERSONAL GUEST:** A personal guest is a person who is sponsored by a current member, stays overnight in the room of that member or a common room in an ICC house, and has no contract.

2. **RIGHT OF REFUSAL:** The house or any person who would otherwise become a apartment-mate of the personal guest has the power to refuse a personal guest.
3. **RESPONSIBILITY FOR PERSONAL GUESTS:** Personal guests must be sponsored by a current member. The sponsoring member is responsible for the conduct and any damages caused by their personal guest.
4. **HOUSE GUESTS:** Houses may approve house guests for up to two weeks, provided that there is room. House guests may not prevent an ICC member with a signed contract for a space from occupying that space.
5. **LENGTH OF STAY RESTRICTION:** Personal or house guests may not stay for more than two weeks without signing a contract.
6. **ROOM CAPACITY AND GUESTS:** At no time may an apartment or room be booked over legal capacity due to personal or house guests.
7. **CHARGES FOR GUEST OVERSTAYS:** If a guest stays more than 2 weeks, the current member sponsoring the guest can be charged for House Charges. The assessment shall be for the number of weeks the guest stays, rounded to the nearest week.
8. **ENFORCEMENT:** The house president and treasurer shall jointly be responsible for notifying the ICC Finance Coordinator and the Member Services staff of such guests. A statement signed by any two members of the house shall also serve as notification. This policy does not imply that the ICC has given permission for the guest to stay. If a guest is not signed to an ICC contract within one week of being notified, the house can fine or put the sponsoring current member on probation.