

THE AGENCY FOR CO-OPERATIVE HOUSING

POLICY MANUAL

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2.6.2: Staff Guidelines for Handling Disputes

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SUBJECT:

Client-Service Standards

1. Introduction

The Agency delivers services of various kinds to the general public, housing co-operatives, Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, co-op residents, and other stakeholders, such as federations of housing co-ops. The Agency's administration of programs reflects a collaborative approach that recognizes an alignment of interests among these groups.

The standards of service delivery for legal clients, such as Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, do not come within the scope of this policy. CMHC has defined its expectations of the Agency's service levels in Schedule D of its agreement with the Agency. This policy sets out standards of service delivery for all other groups and, where appropriate, for service satisfaction.

2. Common Service Standards

Some Agency service standards are common to all the groups to which we provide services, to members and residents of housing co-operatives and to the general public. These standards are set out below.

2.1 **Communications**

The Agency will respond to general communications within the following time limits:

- **Voice mail left in the general-delivery mail box:** within four business hours;
- **Voice mail left in an individual staff member's mail box:** within four business hours of the individual's return to the office (Front-line staff will leave information about their return time or date in their voice-mail message, if they are away, and will refer callers to someone for immediate assistance.);
- **E-mail:** within one business day of the recipient's return to the office (Front-line staff will leave information about their return time or date in their auto-reply message, if they are away, and will refer correspondents to someone for immediate assistance.);
- **Fax or letter:** acknowledgement within two business days.

If a full response is not possible within these time limits, the Agency will give an interim response within the applicable time limit. Where possible, this acknowledgement should say when a full response will be given.

2.2 Transparency and the Provision of Information

The following standards apply to the provision of general information:

- **Contact information for Agency staff and Board members** posted in English and French on the Agency's public website: within one week of any change;
- **Summaries of Agency board-meeting proceedings** posted in English and French on the public website: within two weeks of the adoption of the minutes;
- **New or updated Agency policies** in English and French posted on the Agency website: within four weeks of their adoption by the Agency's Board of Directors;
- **New or updated policy or program information** in English and French posted on the Agency website: within four weeks of the Agency's receiving it from the issuing authority.

3. Additional Service Standards for Housing Co-operatives

3.1 Transparency and the Provision of Information

These additional standards apply to the provision of information to client co-operatives:

- **Notification of any change in the co-op's primary contact** at the Agency: within five working days of change;
- **Notification to affected co-ops of posting on the public or client website of any significant change in policies or programs** (by e-mail or, if a co-op has no e-mail address, by fax or regular mail.): within two business days of the posting;
- **Posting of individual reports to co-ops on the client website** following delivery to the primary contact at the co-op: within four weeks.

3.2 Service Requests

The Agency will respond to service requests from client co-operatives within the time limits below:

- **Interim response to request for approval to spend replacement reserve funds** where additional information is required: two business days;
- **Final response to request for approval to spend replacement reserve funds**: five business days;
- **Response to request for approval of capital-replacement-reserve plan**: four weeks;
- **Response to information request** (by mail, voice mail, e-mail, or personal contact): two business days;
- **Response to receipt of complete request for approval of budget**: four (4) weeks.

If it is not possible to give a final response to a request within the above time limits, the Agency will give an interim response within two business days, advising when a final response will be available.

3.3 Agency Processes

The Agency will complete its processes and report back to its clients within the time limits below:

- **Validate Annual Information Return** following receipt of the co-op's complete return, audited financial statements and signed Board Certification: within four weeks;
- **Report to the co-op on its compliance with its operating agreement** following validation of the AIR: within five weeks;
- **Provide a risk-assessment report to the co-op** following validation of the AIR: within five weeks;
- **Forward the results of the co-op's property inspection to the co-op:** within two months of the inspection date;
- **Communicate any health or safety concerns discovered during the inspection:** within three days of the inspection date;
- **Provide a co-op data report to the co-op** following validation of the AIR: within five weeks.

In any instance where the time limits above cannot be met, the Agency will inform the co-op in advance, explaining the delay and advising when the review or report will be completed.

4. Additional Service Standards for Organizations that Serve Co-operatives

4.1 Transparency and the Provision of Information

The Agency will share information with service-partner organizations within the time limits below:

- **E-mail any new contact information for Agency staff** to all affected service-partner organizations: within one week of any change;
- **Notify all affected service-partner organizations** of any new or updated policy and program information: within four weeks of the change;
- **Notify the specific individual** at any service-partner organization when the Agency refers a caller to them: within one business day.

5. Satisfaction Standards

The Agency will strive to achieve the following satisfaction standards in its work with its client housing co-operatives:

- 80 per cent of co-ops responding to a survey identify Agency service as satisfactory or better in its **timeliness**;
- 80 per cent of co-ops responding to a survey identify Agency service as satisfactory or better as to **staff knowledge and competence**;
- 90 per cent of co-ops responding to a survey identify Agency service as satisfactory or better as to **staff courtesy**;
- 80 per cent of co-ops responding to a survey identify Agency service as satisfactory or better as to **fair treatment**;
- 80 per cent of co-ops responding to a survey identify Agency service as satisfactory or better as to **outcome** (meaning that they got results they can live with);
- 90 per cent of co-ops responding to a survey confirm that they received service in the **official language** of their choice.