

# Q&A

## Questions and Answers ON the Agency's Consent-to-Share-Information Form

### What is a Consent-to-Share-Information form?

A consent to share information is a form authorizing the Agency to share business information about your co-op with specific entities. It does not allow us to share personal information about co-op members or staff.

### What does the Agency need the form for?

The consent form allows the Agency to discuss your co-op's business information with a local or national federation of housing co-ops that you belong to.

If your co-op is successful, we would like other co-ops to know what you do best so they can learn from your example. But, without your permission, our staff may not be able to mention your co-op by name.

The consent form lets us take action to serve you. If your co-op develops a problem, it allows us to share information quickly with your mortgage lender and any government body that may be a source of new money for your co-op. Together we can get down to working with you before the problem worsens.

We believe that prompt action leads to a better result.

### Can we be sure that information about our co-op is safe?

The Agency has many different strategies to protect our information systems and the electronic documents in our care. We rarely keep paper documents. The full range of

information we hold on your co-op is available only to our staff and, if they wish to see it, CMHC.

The Agency and its staff are governed by our Confidentiality and Access to Information Policy. We invite you to read this policy on our website at <http://www.agency.coop>. CMHC's staff members are governed by a similar policy.

Certain information from your co-op is stored on Agency's password-protected client website in a form that co-ops generally find useful. Your board decides who in your organization has access to your co-op's password and username. From time to time your co-op is welcome to ask us to change your password.

Co-ops can help protect their data by telling the Agency when their contact information changes. Doing this ensures that messages and information from the Agency go where they should.

### Does the Agency need to keep personal information about co-op members?

The Agency will not be collecting information about your co-op's members, beyond the names and contact information of your co-op's leaders and staff. We have no need for personal information, although we may learn some as we work with your co-op.

The consent form does not authorize us to share any personal information about individuals.

Information about individuals is protected by federal and provincial privacy legislation. The

Agency intends to achieve no less than the highest standard of protection the law calls for. We invite you to read our Privacy Policy on our website to learn more.

**CMHC didn't ask us for this. Since the Agency has taken over most of CMHC's work with co-ops, why is it necessary?**

Today, professionals, organizations and government bodies often ask for consent to share information in order to do their jobs.

In the past, CMHC asked the Co-operative Housing Federation of Canada to get co-ops' written consent before CMHC would discuss them with CHF Canada.

When an ILM co-op needs a financial workout, the Federal Co-operative Housing Stabilization Fund asks for consent to share information before it begins its work.

By asking for your consent before discussing your co-op's situation with others, we are treating you with the consideration, respect and courtesy your co-op deserves.

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