

THE AGENCY FOR CO-OPERATIVE HOUSING

POLICY MANUAL

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2.6.1: Complaints and Dispute Resolution,
2.6.2: Staff Guidelines for Handling Disputes

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SUBJECT:

Client Service and Satisfaction Standards

1. Introduction

The Agency delivers services of various kinds to the general public, to housing co-operatives and their residents, to Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, and to other stakeholders, such as federations of housing co-operatives. Our approach to service delivery is a collaborative one that recognizes an alignment of interests among these groups.

CMHC's expectations of the Agency's service levels appear in Schedule D of its agreement with the Agency and are not the subject of this policy. This policy sets out standards of service delivery for all other groups and individuals and, where appropriate, standards for service satisfaction.

2. Common Service Standards

Service standards common to all people and organizations with whom the Agency interacts 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 (4) business hours;
- **Voice mail left in an individual staff member's mail box:** within four (4) 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 (1) 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:** within two (2) 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 will 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** posted in English and French on the Agency's public website: within one (1) week of any change;
- **Contact information for board members** posted in English and French on the Agency's public website: within three (3) weeks of any change;
- **Summaries of Agency board-meeting proceedings** posted in English and French on the public website: within two (2) weeks of the adoption of the minutes;
- **New or changed Board-approved Agency policies** posted on the Agency website in English and French: within four (4) weeks of their adoption;
- **New or changed policy or program information** posted in English and French on the Agency website: within four (4) weeks of the Agency's receiving it from the issuing authority.

2.3 Concerns and Complaints

The following standards apply to concerns and complaints:

- **Acknowledge receipt of a concern or complaint:** within two (2) business days of receipt;

- **Provide a full response to a concern or complaint:** within four (4) weeks of receipt.

3. Additional Service Standards for Housing Co-operatives

3.1 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 (5) business days of the 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 (2) business days of posting;
- **Posting of individual reports to co-ops on the client website** following delivery to the primary contact at the co-op: within four (4) 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 capital-replacement reserve funds** where additional information is required: two (2) business days;
- **Final response to request for approval to spend capital-replacement reserve funds:** five (5) business days;
- **Response to request for approval of capital-replacement-reserve plan:** four (4) weeks;
- **Response to information request** (by mail, voice mail, e-mail, or personal contact): two (2) business days;
- **Final response to receipt of complete request for approval of budget:** one (1) month;
- **Final response to request for approval to encumber property:** within five (5) weeks of receipt of a complete proposal, where a current building-condition assessment is received at least two (2) weeks ahead of the encumbrance request, otherwise eight (8) weeks;

- **Interim response to request for unit-damage** allowance under the Rent-Supplement Program, where additional information is required: two (2) business days;
- **Final response to request for unit-damage allowance** under the Rent-Supplement Program: two (2) weeks.

Where it is not possible to meet the time limits above, the Agency will give an interim response to the request within two (2) 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 CMHC-program clients within the time limits below:

- **Validate Annual Information Return:** within four (4) weeks of receipt of the co-op's complete return;
- **Report to the co-op on its compliance with its operating agreement:** within five (5) weeks of AIR validation;
- **Provide a risk-assessment report to the co-op:** within five (5) weeks of AIR validation;
- **Provide the co-op with its Co-op Data Report :** within five (5) weeks of AIR validation;
- **Forward the results of the co-op's property inspection to the co-op:** within two (2) months of the inspection date;
- **Communicate any health or safety concerns discovered during the inspection:** within three (3) days of the inspection date;
- **Provide a report to the co-op** following an on-site review of the administration of the Rent-Supplement Program: within four (4) 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.

3.4 Annual Health Check Service

The Agency will complete its processes within the time limits below:

- **Provide Plain-Language Financials to the co-op:** within four (4) weeks of receipt of the co-op's complete AIR filing;
- **Provide all Annual Health Check reports to the co-op:** within six (6) weeks of receipt of the co-op's complete AIR filing.

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

The following additional standards apply to organizations that serve co-operatives, including federations of housing co-operatives, property-management firms and professional service providers.

4.1 Agency Contacts

E-mail any new contact information for Agency staff they deal with to regional federations and CHF Canada: within one (1) week of any change.

4.2 Program Information

Notify all affected service-partner organizations of any new or updated policy or program information: within four (4) weeks of the change.

4.3 Reporting and Referrals

- **Provide an annual review to CHF Canada for each co-operative participating in its refinancing program:** within six (6) weeks of receipt of the co-op's complete AIR filing
- **Notify the specific individual at any service-partner organization when the Agency refers a caller to them:** within one (1) business day.

5. Satisfaction Standards

The Agency strives 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);
- 80 per cent of co-ops responding to a survey identify Agency service as satisfactory or better as to **availability** (meaning that they connected without difficulty with the appropriate Agency staff member);
- 90 per cent of co-ops responding to a survey confirm that they received service in the official language of their choice