

CO-OP MEMBERSHIP POLICY 29.8.18

The policy outlines the approved membership process in accordance with Co-operative Rules (6, 14, 18 & 19) & By-laws.

Membership Committee

The Membership Committee is elected each year at the Co-operative's October Annual General Meeting. The Committee is responsible for assisting prospective members and guests through the membership and guest process, organising meetings and acting as a guide throughout.

The Committee members must be familiar with information in the "Joining" section of the Co-operative website. The Committee is responsible for ensuring the website is accurate and up to date, and should advise the website administrator of any changes required.

When an interested person contacts the Co-operative (via the website, secretary or membership committee) a Committee Guide is allocated to assist them through the process. The Guide should not be family or friends of the applicant.

The membership process commences when the Guide receives the form for Membership Application Step One.

Guide Responsibilities

The Guide is responsible for assisting the applicant:

- to make an informed decision about joining
- to answer questions about the Co-operative and membership process
- to contact other members and learn more about the Co-operative
- to 'tour' the Co-operative (provide map & info if needed)
- to arrange stays with members for their second week at the Co-op
- to complete documentation

Applicant Requirements

The applicant must:

- complete the Membership Application Form Step One & Two
- read the Co-operative's Rules, By-Laws and Code of Conduct
- understand and formally agree that the Co-operative is to be their **'principal place of residence'**
- attend two monthly meetings
- meet a minimum of 15 members (of different shares)
- stay two weeks at the Co-operative: one week at the Camp Kitchen and a second week with preferably three members (not known to them before)
- provide three character referees
- complete an Identity and National Criminal Record Check.
- read *'Creating a Life Together: Practical Tools to Grow Eco Villages and Intentional Communities'* by *Diana Leafe Christian* and/or view its YouTube videos

Shares

Information regarding shares for sale will be provided during the first week of stay.

The names and contact details of members on neighbouring sites will be provided and it is the applicant's responsibility to contact and meet these members.

Co-operative members are not permitted to take deposits for the sale of their share. Deposits are only payable to the Co-operative after the applicant has been approved as eligible for membership.

During the application process an applicant may lodge a share holding deposit of \$7,000 with the Treasurer for a site they are interested in. When membership eligibility is approved and a member agrees to sell, the share transfer is processed and membership ratified. Then the deposit is retained by the Co-operative. If membership is not approved the deposit is refunded to the applicant.

Co-operative members who wish to sell their share must advise the Secretary, who will inform members via the member's section of the website and the phone tree.

Meetings and Eligibility

1. The applicant meets with the Guide, another Committee person and one Co-operative member after the first week of stay to provide further guidance and answer any questions.
2. The Guide invites all Co-operative members to a review meeting to discuss the application, without the applicant. If any concerns are raised the applicant will be given an opportunity to discuss and respond.
3. Towards the end of the process a second meeting is held with the Guide, the applicant and another Committee member, to discuss the information provided in the application, complete the checklist and collate documentation.
4. The community meeting will vote on their membership eligibility. If the applicant is present at that meeting the chairperson will ask the applicant to leave during the vote (the Guide should advise the applicant prior to the meeting). A 2/3 majority vote is required to be eligible for membership.

The Co-operative, at its discretion, may refuse an application for membership or shares without assigning any reasons for its actions.

Share Ratification

- If the applicant is approved as an eligible member, the Co-operative will vote to formally ratify the share transfer.

- The applicant's name, allotted share number and date of allotment will be recorded by the Secretary in the Member Register.

Documentation

After the membership process is completed all documentation is returned to applicants, with the exception of the Share Transfer, Membership Ratification and Identity Check forms, which are filed by the Secretary.

Children of Members

Member's children who wish to continue living at the Co-operative when they turn 18 are required to complete the following steps:

- Read the Rules, By-Laws and the Code of Conduct.
The child and the parent/s sign an Adult Child of a Member Agreement.
- Voting approval is not required.