

Finance Policy



This policy enacts the requirements of the Rules but does not take precedence over the Co-operative's Rules and By-laws.

Financial management procedures are regularly reviewed and updated.

1. Statutory Requirements

- a. As a 'small co-operative' there is no statutory requirement to have accounts audited.
- b. A non-distributing co-operative is exempt from income tax but must perform an annual self-assessment.
- c. With annual turnover below \$150,000 the Co-operative is exempt from GST obligations and BAS reporting.

2. Accounting Integrity

- a. The Co-operative's bank accounts are reconciled at least monthly to ensure payments and receipts are correctly recorded.
- b. The Treasurer's Report is submitted to each General Meeting.
- c. The Treasurer's Report accounts are checked and reviewed by an external account reviewer.

3. Assets and Depreciation

- a. The Co-operative's only fixed asset is the land owned by the co-operative.
- b. There is no benefit in calculating depreciation cost on assets to reduce taxable income as the Co-operative is exempt from income tax.
- c. Major investments such as roads, buildings, equipment etc. are taken up as immediate expenses, and if sold they will realise the current market value.

4. Accounts for New Members

- ~~a. The Treasurer must be advised of the General Meeting date at which ratification occurs to determine the Joining Fee to be invoiced.~~
- b. Before payment of share capital and joining fees, the Treasurer must have the following details to create a Co-operative member account to record payments:
 - i. Full name of each new shareholder.
 - ii. Current postal and email address for billing purposes.
Note: Invoices, statements and receipts are sent to the email address.
 - iii. Phone number.
 - iv. **Site** Share number being purchased.
 - v. Name of shareholder(s) who is/are selling.

5. Member Account Details

- a. Members must advise the Treasurer of changes to their email or postal address.
- b. Invoices, statements, receipts, and overdue notices are sent to the last known email or postal address.

6. Joint Membership

- a. In the case of joint membership, both shareholders accept responsibility for payment of all levies.
- b. If a joint membership is dissolved, the co-operative will not undertake apportionment of levies or refunds between joint shareholders.

7. Share Capital Contribution and Refunds

- a. The Co-operative's share capital contribution is \$7000 per **site** share.
- b. The Co-operative's Infrastructure Share contribution is \$6000 per site share.
- c. Share Capital **and Infrastructure Share** contribution is refunded to;
 - i. exiting members after ratification and the share transfer (less any unpaid levies)
 - ii. unsuccessful membership applications
 - iii. On winding-up of the Co-operative.
- d. **Exiting members or applicants must provide written advice of the preferred method of payment, either bank transfer (provide account details) or cheque (provide mailing address).**

8. Joining Fee (Rule 20b)

- a. **The Joining Fee is \$10000.**
- b. It is refundable if a membership application is unsuccessful, but once membership is ratified it is not refundable.

9. Death of a Member (Rule 30)

- a. A Death Certificate must be provided before the share can be sold or transferred to a beneficiary.
- b. The Joining Fee is not required by the Co-operative when the share goes to a beneficiary.
- c. If a share is sold following the death of a member any refund cheque will be made out to 'the estate of <name of deceased shareholder>' and mailed to the last known mailing address.

10. Levies and Subscriptions (Rule 20)

- a. Levies **and subscriptions** apply to individual shares.
- b. The Membership and Sinking Fund Levies are invoiced quarterly with 30-day payment terms e.g. **Invoice date 1/04/2024 + 30-day payment term = 30/4/24 due date.** **The member** becomes inactive from 1/05/2024 if full payment is not received.
- c. The Membership Levy is determined by a General Meeting resolution.
- d. The Sinking Fund Levy is determined by a General Meeting resolution. The Sinking Fund Levy is reduced by the quarterly receipts for the Infrastructure Share Subscription. Advanced payment of the Infrastructure Share Subscription will be reduced in the advanced invoicing periods.
- e. The Work Levy is determined by a General Meeting resolution, invoiced annually on 1 July **and payable by 31 May.**
- f. The Infrastructure Share Subscription is determined through the Terms of issue, invoiced quarterly with a 30-day payment term.

11. Work Claims

- a. The Work Levy is dischargeable by work hours at the approved rates.
- b. Members may request approval at a General Meeting for the Work Claim to be applied to the Membership Levy once the Work Levy has been exhausted.
- c. The Secretary and the Treasurer have prior General Meeting approval to claim the Membership and Work Levies on a quarterly basis.
- d. Work Claims must be submitted for General Meeting approval on the Work Claim Form and received by the Treasurer 10 days prior to a meeting.
- e. Work Claims must be submitted within 3 months of completing the work. A receipt is issued to confirm the claim has been processed. It is acceptable to photograph the claim form and submit it by email.

12. Billing Cycle

- a. Quarterly invoices are issued prior to 1 July, 1 October, 1 January, 1 April.
- b. Invoices for other charges will be sent as they arise.
- c. Statements showing current account balance and unpaid invoices are sent by 31 July, 31 October, 31 January and 30 April.
- a. Monthly statements are sent to members with overdue accounts showing unpaid and part-paid invoices, finance charges to date and total amount due.
- b. Members may request a more detailed statement showing all activity on their account over a specified date range.
- c. Account queries will only be considered if they relate to the current or previous financial year.

13. Payments

- a. Payments are recorded as they appear in the co-operative's bank statements.
- b. Members must clearly identify themselves **using the invoice payment reference** when making payments on-line or at a bank branch.
- c. Finance charges from overdue invoices will be deducted from the payment upon receipt??
- d. Payment is applied to invoices with the earliest due dates i.e. most overdue.
- e. It is recommended to send payment details to the Treasurer by email or SMS.
- f. Unidentified payments can be claimed by providing the precise date and amount of the payment.
- g. Receipts are normally sent within 48 hours of appearing in the Co-operative bank account.
- h. Membership account payments are not accepted at meetings in any form. It is the responsibility of individual members to ensure that payments appear and are cleared in the Co-operative bank account before 5pm on the business day before the General Meeting. This applies whether payments are made on-line or by depositing cash or cheques at a bank branch.

14. Incidental charges

Incidental charges are invoiced as they arise with 30-day payment terms e.g. slashing a member's share, fines.

15. Overdue Payments

Failure to pay the quarterly Membership invoice by the due date will result in;

- a. an overdue charge of 1.5% per month, and

- b. inactive membership (Rule 10b), and
- c. loss of voting rights at General Meetings (Rule 42a), and
- d. referral to a debt collection agency when accounts become more than one year overdue, with all collection and legal fees payable by the member, and
- e. eventual cancellation of membership and forfeiture of **share/s if the member is not presently active and has not been active within the meaning of rule 10 b in the past 2 years** (Rules 26 and 27).

16. Unidentified Receipts

- a. The Co-operative retains liability for unidentified receipts only for the current and previous financial year.
- b. Older claims for a refund will not be accepted.

17. Member Expense Reimbursements

- a. Members are reimbursed for expenses incurred on behalf of the Co-operative e.g. postage, stationery, fuel, spare parts, building materials.
- b. Expense claims must be accompanied by receipts where possible. It is acceptable to photograph the receipts and submit by email.
- c. Claims must be submitted within 3 months of the date of expense.
- d. Reimbursements of amounts under \$100 may be accumulated and paid in a single transaction.
 - i. Claims must include an itemised list with the following:
 - ii. Who to reimburse
 - iii. Date of purchase
 - iv. Name of supplier
 - v. Description of item
 - vi. Approved budget (if any)
 - vii. Cost of item (including GST)
 - viii. If no receipt available, a comment indicating 'no receipt'
 - ix. Whether the reimbursement is to be paid **by cheque or into a bank account**, or applied to levies
 - x. Postal address for cheque or bank account details for EFT
 - xi. Expense reimbursements may be claimed by email (with scanned copies of receipts attached), or on paper to the Treasurer or Secretary
 - xii. Total amount being claimed

18. Purchase Orders

- a. Community purchases over \$1000 require a purchase order number (issued by the Treasurer) to ensure funds are available.
- b. Without a purchase order number, payment remains the personal responsibility of the member making the purchase.