



Membership Policy *draft*

In accordance with Part 3 of the Co-operative Rules, By-laws *and community decisions*

1.1 PURPOSE

This policy outlines the procedures for obtaining membership in the Goolawah Co-operative. It includes the responsibilities of all involved parties, the steps for becoming a member, the formal requirements related to share transfer and ratification, and the process for selling sites.

1.2 ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS

Document Name	Purpose
Expression of Interest (EOI)	Initial expression of interest in joining the Co-op
Questionnaire for Prospective Members (PM)	Provides information about the PM after their visit
Membership Application	Formal request to become a member
Membership Process Checklist	Tracks steps and progress through the membership process
Share Transfer Form	Used to transfer shares between members
Application to be Ratified as a Member	Submitted for approval at a General Meeting
Notification Letter of Entry in Register of Members	Confirms official registration of the new member
Share Certificates	Documents verifying ownership of Co-op shares
“Who’s Who” – List of Resident Members	Directory of current resident members
Guest Policy and Guest Agreement	Outlines rules and expectations for guests. <i>Managed by the Board.</i>
Adult Child of a Member Agreement	Requires adult children (18+) who wish to keep living on the Co-op with their parents to sign a commitment to follow the Co-op’s By-laws and Code of Conduct. <i>Managed by the Board.</i>

1.3 SELLING SITES (EXISTING MEMBERS)

Members wishing to sell their share must email the Secretary at secretary.goolawah@gmail.com. The Secretary notifies the Board and Membership Committee (MC), and an announcement is made via the Phone Tree and Co-op website. *The MC notifies all Eligible Members (EMs) about the sale.*

Sellers may invite interested individuals to visit the Co-op for a tour, preferably with a Membership Guide present. If they are still interested, the seller asks the Secretary to email them an EOI.

Before organising a visit, the seller must:

- Explain the Co-op is collectively owned private property, and that the purchase of share capital grants the right to occupy a .5-hectare residential site, which is not owned individually.
- Direct the person to the public website <https://goolawah.org/> to read the Rules, By-laws, Code of Conduct, how the Co-op works, community life, costs, and the steps involved to join the Co-op.

1.4 MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE

The MC consists of seven members, appointed annually at the Annual General Meeting.

These members are referred to as Membership Guides (MGs). Each Prospective Member (PM) is assigned two MGs.

To be eligible to serve on the Membership Committee, members should:

- Have lived on-site full-time for at least two years.
- Understand the Co-op's Rules, By-Laws, policies, decision-making processes, and legal responsibilities.
- Be familiar with the Co-op's website.
- Be impartial.
- Act in good faith, with care and diligence, and avoid any conflicts of interest.
- Not take part in share transactions.
- Not have a prior personal relationship with the PM they are assigned to.

Communication and Meetings

- Communicate via Signal or email and attend MC meetings.
- A minimum of four members (quorum) is required for a MC meeting to proceed in person or on-line.
- The minute taker sends meeting minutes to the webmaster for posting on the Co-op website.
- Notify membership of MC meetings and PM progress meetings via the Phone Tree giving at least 5 days notice.
- Provide a report at each General Meeting.

Expressions of Interest (EOIs)

- Secretary emails EOIs for return via the Secretary, who sends to the MC and webmaster for posting on the website. Members should contact the MC within 7 days if they have any concerns or questions about the EOI.
- After 7 days the MG contacts the PM to discuss their EOI, understanding of co-operatives, invites them to visit the Co-op for a 2-hour tour, and notifies the membership via the Phone Tree.

Questionnaire and Community Feedback

- If the PM is still interested after the tour, their MG emails the Questionnaire, for return to the MG.
- The MG sends the Questionnaire to the webmaster for posting on the website at least 7 days before the next General Meeting (GM) for community review and voting, if required.

Supporting Prospective Members

- Advise PMs on whether they should proceed with a formal application.
- Guide PMs through the application process, including Co-op visits, stays, and engagement with members.
- Ensure PMs understand their responsibilities and complete all required steps.

Reporting and Oversight

- A PM has up to 24 months to complete the application process leading to the Membership Eligibility vote.
- MGs and members must raise any concerns about PMs with the MC and/or the Board as soon as possible.

Progress Meeting and General Meeting Review

- MGs submit all completed documentation to the Membership Portfolio Director at least 2 days before the Progress Meeting.
- If the Progress Meeting is successful, the MG advises the Board to include the General Meeting Review in the GM agenda, and submits all completed documentation to the Secretary at least 7 days prior to the GM.
- If the General Meeting Review is successful, the PM may proceed to the Membership Eligibility vote at the next GM.

1.5 MEMBERSHIP ELIGIBILITY

A 2/3 majority vote at a General Meeting is required to grant Membership Eligibility.

Note: Eligibility alone does not confer membership rights.

Full membership requires:

- Purchase of a share
- Approval via ratification vote
- Entry into the Register of Members

To maintain membership eligibility, the eligible member must:

- Remain in contact with their MG.
- Stay on the Co-op for at least one week each year.
- Attend one GM, one social event, and one working bee annually.
- If a suitable site has not been found within 5 years of becoming an eligible member, eligibility will be reviewed at a GM.

Note: Failure to meet these requirements may result in the expiration of membership eligibility.

1.6 MEMBERSHIP RATIFICATION AND SHARE TRANSFER

Membership Portfolio Director

Advise Treasurer of Eligible Member details – full name/s, postal address, email, phone number, site share number, seller's name.

Treasurer

Issues Invoice for:

Joining Fee: \$10,000

Site Share Capital: \$7,000

Infrastructure Share Capital: \$6,000

Refundable if member ratification and share transfer is unsuccessful.

Eligible Member Responsibilities

- Obtain independent legal and financial advice regarding the share purchase.

- Advise MG when a suitable site share is found.
- Negotiate site share price with the seller.
- Pay the Treasurer's invoice in full (\$23,000) and receive receipt.
- Complete and sign the Application to be Ratified as a Member.
- Complete and sign the Share Transfer form.

Ratification and Share Transfer Procedure

- Membership portfolio director submits completed Application to be Ratified as a Member Share Transfer, Identity Check, and Membership Process Checklist to the Secretary at least 7 days prior to the GM.

A 2/3 majority vote at the GM is required to:

- Ratify the Eligible Member as a full member
- Approve share transfer

Note: *If a site share has been found in advance, the eligibility, ratification and share transfer vote may occur at the same GM.*

Secretary

- Respond to website enquiries, email EOIs and forward completed EOIs to MC and the webmaster for posting on the website.
- Finalise and file Share Transfer Form, Application to be Ratified as a Member, Identity Check and Membership Process Checklist.
- Return other Membership Application documents to the applicant.
- Record new member's details in the Register of Members – name, share number/s, date of allocation, other relevant details.
- Provide written notification to the new member confirming their formal entry into the Register of Members and their entitlement to full membership rights and issue the corresponding Share Certificates.