

Elsworth House Constitution

Revised 9-5-00

Article I ~ Name

This Organization shall be known as the Elsworth Cooperative

Article II ~ Membership

1. Prospective members shall become members upon full payment of their dues and shares, and signing a membership agreement. Members must also become full members of the MSU-SHC, and agree to obey it's policies and procedures. A member is considered to be in good standing with the house as long as they are less than 30 days behind in their rent.
2. Any person wishing to become a member of Elsworth must first visit the house. No person shall be denied membership in the house on the groups of race, creed, gender, sexual orientation, or any State or Federal protected status.
3. No one may live in Elsworth without first signing a valid contract, except temporary guests of members of Elsworth, who must abide by the guest policy as outlined in Article IV of this document.
4. New members will be charged a membership fee and a house share. The share will be returned to a member in a timely manner after he/she no longer resides in the house. An account will be considered closed when all costs are paid, including fines, rent, room damages, phone bills and the member's room and/or house keys have been returned. Any outstanding debts will be subtracted from the house share.
5. Members are required to sign full MSU school year and/or summer contracts. Members who join after the beginning of the school year will pay the complete membership fee, but other charges will be made proportional to the amount of time left in the school year. A separate contract must be signed by members wishing to stay through the summer.
6. Members are required to:
 - a. understand and promote the purpose of the house as outlined in the SHC Articles of Incorporation.
 - b. take an active part in the affairs of the house.
 - c. attend house meetings.
 - d. maintain house facilities.
 - e. obey all rules and policies that the house sets.

Article III ~ EXPULSION

1. Expulsion should be treated as a last resort measure. Expulsion proceedings should be pursued only after the Vice-President of Membership has been notified and all other attempts to deal with the issue have failed.
2. Reasons for expulsion include such reasons as:
 - a. Continued nonperformance of house duties,
 - b. Malicious destruction of house or other's property.
 - c. Use of force or threats, including harassment, against house members or guests.
 - d. Nonpayment of money owed to Elsworth, or to SHC.
 - e. Continuous violation of house rules.
 - f. Discrimination against any person.
 - g. Violation of city, state or federal law.
3. The accused member shall be personally notified both orally and in writing of the charges citing appropriate grounds for expulsion and shall be given a chance to respond at a house meeting before an expulsion vote is cast. Both oral and written notification must be approved by a majority of house members.
4. An expulsion vote may only take place at a scheduled House meeting where a quorum is present, following the posting for one week of signed charges citing appropriate grounds for expulsion. These charges must include specific details of the alleged violations, along with the name of at least one witness.
5. A 2/3 majority of House members currently residing in the house is necessary to expel a member. This vote must be by signed petition with all charges against the member.
6. Upon passage of the motion to expel, the person expelled shall be given 24 hours to indicate when, within seven days, she/he will be leaving. If the person refuses to leave the house, the Membership officer shall ask the SHC Vice-President of Membership to initiate formal eviction proceedings in court.
7. During the eviction proceedings, the rights of the expelled member shall be scrupulously protected by the House members.

Article IV ~ Guest Policy

1. A guest may stay in a resident's room for up to one month. After one month, a guest must either move out or sign a membership contract.
2. A guest may stay in the study room, with approval of majority of the house mates. This can be accomplished by either a vote at a house meeting, or a sign-up sheet in the common room.

Article V ~ House Officer Work Manager

1. The work manager is elected at the first meeting at the beginning of fall semester for the school year, and at the first meeting of the summer for the summer semester .
2. The work manager proposes a work schedule to the house at the first house meeting of each semester. The schedule should take into account the number of members present in the house for that semester. The schedule should be considerate of people's class and work schedules.
3. The work manager insures that everyone is properly trained in performing their house jobs.
4. The work manager is responsible for issuing warnings and fines to members who fail to perform jobs or perform jobs poorly.
5. The work manager works with the maintenance officer/s to organize work holidays and fines all members who fail to complete it.

Meeting Facilitator

1. The meeting facilitator is elected at the first meeting of each semester.
2. The meeting facilitator is responsible for calling and facilitating house meetings in accordance with this document. The meeting facilitator is to post an agenda at least 72 hours in advance of regularly scheduled meetings. In the case of an unscheduled emergency meeting, the agenda must be posted at least 24 hours in advance. Members can add items to the agenda as needed.
3. House meetings will be run according to a simplified Robert's Rules of Order. The meeting facilitator should attempt to encourage relevant discussion, facilitate organized problem solving, and demand that disputes be settled with civility.
4. If the meeting facilitator cannot attend a house meeting, the work manager will chair the meeting.
5. Quorum is $1/2 + 1$ of current house membership. If quorum is not achieved in a regularly scheduled meeting, the meeting facilitator may reschedule a new meeting within one week.
6. Unless there is a yes vote by $2/3$ of all participants in a house meeting, house meeting length cannot exceed 1.5 hours.

Board of Directors Representative

1. The Board of Director's Representative shall be elected for the entire school year, from the beginning of fall semester until the end of the spring, insofar as possible. For summer semester, a BOD rep will be elected for the semester.

2. The Board Rep will represent Elsworth House at the Board of Directors meetings of the SHC, and is charged to act in the best interest of the house and the corporation.
3. The Board Rep will post a copy of the report from each Board meeting in a common area of the house in a timely fashion, for review by house members.
4. The Board Rep will report on Board meetings affairs at house meetings, and obtain the vote or opinion of house members on issues that will require the representative's vote.
5. The Board rep will fulfill any other job duties proscribed by the SHC Articles of Incorporation.

Maintenance Officer

The Maintenance officer will/is:

1. Be elected at the beginning of each semester.
2. Be responsible for seeing that all house duties which involve maintenance are done in a proper fashion.
3. Keep track of all house work and repairs and reports any irregularities to the work manager or SHC maintenance coordinator.
4. Report at house meetings on work accomplished and any problems with the house structure.
5. Attend all SHC Physical Development committee meetings. Any fines assessed to the house due to non-attendance at these meetings will be charged to the Maintenance officer's account.
6. Notify that SHC maintenance coordinator of any maintenance problems which house is unable to solve within it's own budget and skill pool.
7. Consult with the house treasurer to determine the size of each semester's maintenance budget.
8. Prepare, with the work manager, a work holiday list of general improvement tasks to the house by the second house meeting of each semester, and setting a time table for their completion. If a job must be completed by a specified time, the maintenance officer must justify this date.
9. Responsible for house tools, (loaning them out, collection, etc). The maintenance officer must take an inventory of all House tools at the beginning and end of each semester.
10. Keep a maintenance log that records all of the work done and repairs made to the house.
11. Inspect and taking an inventory of every room's condition between occupancy.

12. Any other job duties assigned by the Physical Development Committee, the SHC Articles of Incorporation, or the Executive Vice President.

Membership Officer

1. The membership will be elected at the beginning of each semester.
2. The membership officer will strive to maintain the house at full capacity. During those times of the year when many contracts expire, this may require advertising and extensive correspondence with out-of-town prospective members. This will require cooperation with the SHC officers.
3. The membership officer will see that prospective members meet the qualifications for membership and understand costs and responsibilities. This includes checking at least two credit references, (family, banks, employees, etc.) Phone expenses will be paid by the house, but every attempt should be made to call from the SHC office.
4. The membership officer will organize a new member orientation packet for new members within one week of their arrival, which shall include the Elsworth constitution, MSU.SHC Code of Operations, a list of house duties, and info/welcome sheet.
5. The membership officer will coordinate room changes among members.
6. The Membership officer will attend all SHC Membership Committee meetings. This person is responsible for any fines that incur upon the house due to negligence in attendance.
7. The membership officer will report back to the house what happened at the SHC Membership Committee meetings at the house meetings. They are also to get the house's input on decisions being made at the membership meetings.
8. The membership will make certain that all members have room and house keys. This person must keep a complete and easily identifiable duplicate set of keys.
9. The membership will be responsible for any other job duties assigned by either the membership committee, the SHC Articles of Incorporation, or the Vice President of Membership.

Education Officer

1. The Education Officer will be elected at the first house meeting of each semester.
2. The Education Officer is responsible for representing the house at the Education committee, and reporting back to the house any information.

3. The education officer is responsible for reviewing and updating the house constitution, as needed.
4. The education officer is responsible for writing articles for the SHC newsletter.
5. The education officer is responsible for any other duties assigned by the Education Committee, the Articles of Incorporation, and the vice-president of Education.

House Secretary

1. The Secretary shall be elected at the first house meeting of each semester.
2. The Secretary shall record the minutes of all house meetings and post them in the dining room. These are to be read and initialed by any members who did not attend the meetings. Any correction to these minutes will be corrected at the next house meeting.
3. The Secretary shall keep the minutes in a three ring binder to ensure that a history of house minutes is kept. This three ring binder will be kept on file.

Kitchen Steward

1. The kitchen steward will be elected at the first meeting of the all semester for the remainder of the school year.
2. The kitchen steward will take inventory of food and related supplies as necessary, and procuring sufficient quantities so that semesters may begin and end with reasonable meals and minimum rancor.
3. The kitchen steward will work with the cooks to arrange for appropriate menus for meals with due consideration for dietary foibles and preferences of the membership.
4. The kitchen steward will order the food and work with the purchasing agents to arrange smooth pick and delivery of supplies. This requires knowledge of the current inventory of food and leftovers.
5. Work with the house treasurer to set up a budget for food and supplies.
6. Prepare a shopping list for the house purchaser, of both food and supplies.

Interim Coordinator

1. The Interim Coordinator for the summer semester will begin on the day of the last house meeting of Spring semester and will end on the day of the first house meeting of Summer Semester. The interim coordinator for fall semester will begin on the day of the last house meeting of Summer

semester, and will end on the day of the first house meeting of fall semester. The interim coordinator will collect all house and room keys from leaving house members and keep track of all keys not turned in. The interim coordinator will turn into the house treasurer a list of all house members who have not turned in their keys so that they can be charged.

2. The interim coordinator will be responsible to give house and room keys to all new house members.
3. The interim coordinator will set the agenda, and facilitate the first house meeting of the summer, and the first house meeting of the fall.

Article V ~ Financial Obligations and Member Responsibilities

1. Each member shall be assessed a proportional amount of the house expenses each term. Expenses include, but are not limited to food, rent, operating expenses, and repairs.
2. It is mandatory for each member to have paid one-third of their room and board by the first week of every month. Those who present valid reasons for not paying may be exempted by the treasurer. Those who neither pay nor present valid reasons may be evicted from the house.
3. No rebate will be given for missed meals unless approved by the house.
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5. Any member who does damage to the house as a result of gross negligence shall reimburse the house for the expense of the repair.
6. Every member is expected to read posted items.
7. All pets must be voted on before they are allowed to stay in the house, with the exception of fish or caged small pets.
8. Fines for late payment of fines and fees will be \$10 per week (late being defined as one week after the due date). Fine for late payment may not exceed \$25.

Article VI ~ seniority

1. Seniority in the house is determined by the date a member contract is signed.
2. All SHC seniority rules will be applied to the seniority list for Elsworth Co-op.

Articles VII ~ Rooms

Assignment of rooms from fall to spring shall be made on the basis of seniority at the end of every term prior to the time period in question. A member correctly assigned to a room shall have right of occupancy to that room until the end of the next spring term. Room sign-up for the summer term shall be arranged by the membership officer, subject to seniority.

Article VIII ~ Work Duties

1. Before the work schedule is made up, the duties of each job are to be posted and remain posted throughout the term.
2. The manner in which the work is distributed must ensure that each member does approximately the same amount of hours of work.
3. Each member of the house must accomplish five hours of general improvement work per semester.
4. Officer positions will be filled by a majority house vote.

Article IX ~ Harassment Policy

Harassment is any kind of behavior towards a person which impairs the members and employees full enjoyment of benefits, climate, or opportunities of MSU-SHC.

This includes, but is not limited to sexual harassment.

Harassment may include (but is not limited to) the following

- a. Malicious remarks or behavior toward another person. This is to include:
 - 1) Discriminatory behavior-for example, when harassment is in an active form such as pinching, caressing, touching, vandalism, etc.
 - 2) Verbal or written insults including, but not limited to discriminatory, offensive, or obscene remarks. For example, the writing or speaking of derogatory names or comments that refer to an individual's race, creed, ethnic origin, gender, sexual orientation, etc.
- b. Explicit verbal threats, as to when an individual's personal safety is put in jeopardy by the language of another. For example, "I will hit you if you..." "You had better listen or else", "If you do not do what I say, I will hurt you".
- c. Physical intimidation, including manipulative or otherwise inappropriate behavior. Intimidation includes offensive advances (e.g., sexual proposition) or inappropriate behavior (e. g., touching, kissing, caressing). This includes action with or without the threat of punishment for non-compliance and with or without the promise of reward for compliance.
- d. Unreasonable invasion of a person's privacy.
- e. Any act of vandalism towards a person.
- f. Assault-including any type of physical violence.

2. Any member, guest, or employee who feels that he or she is being harassed by another member of MSU-SHC has the option to utilize the following procedures to ameliorate the situation.
3. The alleged victim can choose one or more of the following three options.
4. The alleged victim may bring the harassment to the meeting facilitator and have a meeting, including the parties of the facilitator, the alleged victim and the alleged perpetrator.
5. The alleged victim may approach the alleged perpetrator and discuss the problem with that individual.
6. The two parties may choose a mediator, of which both approve, to facilitate a meeting between the alleged victim and the alleged accused. If this is not possible, then the MSU-SHC Membership officer will mediate or appoint an individual. This can include a mediator outside of MSU-SHC.
7. The allegation is documented with the MSU-SHC Membership officer. This documentation is to be confidential and the MSU-SHC Membership officer is the only person having access to the files. This person will grant access to the files to the alleged victim, the alleged perpetrator, and the MSU-SHC Vice President of Education only.
8. The alleged harasser is to be given a period of time to adjust his or her behavior. The time is to be determined by the parties that attend the meetings that are discussed above.
9. If the alleged perpetrator adjusts his or her behavior within the allotted time, with the satisfaction of the alleged victim, then the case is closed but the documentation is to remain on file.
10. If the alleged perpetrator does not adjust his or her behavior within the allotted time, according to the alleged victim, then the alleged victim may utilize one or more of the next three options.
11. The alleged victim may bring the alleged harassment to the house president and have a meeting, including the parties or facilitator, alleged victim and alleged perpetrator.
12. The alleged victim may approach the alleged perpetrator and discuss the problem.
13. The alleged victim and the alleged perpetrator are to agree on a mediator to facilitate a meeting between the alleged victim and the alleged perpetrator.
14. The action if the accused is documented a second time with the MSU-SHC Membership officer. This documentation is to be confidential and only the MSU-SHC Membership officer has access to the files. This person will permit access to this documentation to the alleged victim, alleged perpetrator, and the Vice President of Education.

15. After the second allegation, the house in which the alleged crime occurred is required to have a house meeting within one week, with the option of inviting the MSU-SHC Membership officer to facilitate.
16. Both the accuser and the accused have the option to appeal to the MSU-SHC Membership Committee.
17. Sanctions against the alleged perpetrator will be either fines or evictions, taking into consideration the outcome of the house meetings or the MSU-SHC Membership Committee meeting.

Article X ~ Amendments

Amendments to this document will need a 2/3 approval of the total house membership.