



Chapter 2

OPERATING STANDARDS

Roles and Responsibilities of BC Housing

BC Housing acts as a resource and monitoring agency for housing providers. We provide subsidies to ensure your organization has adequate financial resources to run your development. We also have a mandate to ensure public funds are spent prudently and responsibly.

BC Housing is responsible for reviewing the operation of your development to ensure the terms of the operating agreement are being met. In addition, we provide approvals, technical and financial advice and other services, so assistance is available when you need it.

We are committed to communicating in an atmosphere of mutual respect and resolving any differences constructively to serve the best interests of residents. Your organization can expect appropriate support from your Property Portfolio Manager (PPM) and other BC Housing staff, reasonable turnaround times for documentation and a timely response to inquiries.

Operating Standards for Housing Providers

Operating standards in the HOMES BC operating agreement describe a well functioning, affordable housing community, and can be used by your organization and BC Housing to assess your achievements. These operating standards provide:

- Best practices in non-profit and co-operative housing management.
- Benchmarks organizations can use to assess strengths and challenges.
- Guidelines for monitoring the achievement of goals and use of public funds.

The operating standards are organized into four categories: corporate organization, maintenance, finances and resident/member relations. The other guides in this series describe how you can achieve these standards, and appropriate references are listed below each set of standards.

a) THE OPERATING STANDARDS FOR CORPORATE ORGANIZATION ARE:

- 1) Establish a well-organized corporate structure and policies and procedures to ensure the development is well managed.
- 2) Recruit and maintain your Board of Directors and membership to ensure your continuing ability to manage effectively.



- 3) Conduct business in an ethical manner that does not permit personal gain by any director, officer, member or employee of the organization or any of their associates or family members.
- 4) Meet all statutory and corporate obligations, including obligations under all contracts you enter in connection with the development, and the requirements of any insurer of the development.
- 5) Comply with the lease for the land.
- 6) Maintain accurate and complete records of all aspects of your operations.

Refer to the *Governance Guide* for information on meeting your corporate responsibilities. See the Administration section of the *Operations Guide* for information on your legal obligations and records management.

b) THE OPERATING STANDARDS FOR MAINTENANCE ARE:

- 1) Maintain the development in a state of good repair for the benefit of the residents and the community where the development is located.
- 2) Establish maintenance procedures to maintain the value of the development and prolong the life of improvements on the land.
- 3) Ensure that necessary skills and tools are available to clean and maintain the development adequately.
- 4) Ensure the development complies with all applicable statutory health and safety standards.
- 5) Ensure fire regulations are observed, and have appropriate authorities carry out regular fire inspections.
- 6) Obtain sufficient insurance on the development.

Refer to the *Maintenance Guide* for information on establishing maintenance systems and practices. See the Emergency Preparedness section of the *Operations Guide* for information on fire safety and preparing for earthquakes, storms and other emergencies, and the Administration section for information on insurance requirements.

c) THE OPERATING STANDARDS FOR FINANCES ARE:

- 1) Establish policies and procedures for effective control of finances for the development:
 - Prepare an operating budget for the development for each fiscal year.
 - Regularly review the financial affairs of the development.



- 2) Ensure sound financial operating policies and procedures are in place, including:
 - Clearly defined spending authority.
 - Record keeping in accordance with generally accepted accounting practice.
 - Policies and procedures for arrears, purchasing and investment of reserve funds.

Refer to the *Financial Management Guide* for information on financial policies, procedures, systems and controls.

d) THE OPERATING STANDARDS FOR RESIDENT AND CO-OP MEMBER RELATIONS ARE:

- 1) Establish policies and procedures to select residents/ members in an open, fair, consistent and non-discriminatory way.
- 2) Serve residents/ members promptly and courteously, with clear and informative communication.
- 3) Develop opportunities for resident/ member participation in decision-making at the development.
- 4) Provide each resident/ member with access to any information you keep about that resident.
- 5) Protect the privacy of residents/ members.

Refer to the Resident Relations and Rent Calculation sections of the *Operations Guide* for information on working with residents. See the *Governance Guide* for information on resident involvement.
