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## LCCH Corporate Values: A Guide for Behavioural Expectations

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Limestone City Co-operative Housing (LCCH) is built on the belief that thriving communities begin with shared values. These values guide how we live, work, relate to one another, and lead together. They support our mission to provide secure, sustainable, inclusive, and co-operative housing nourished by urban farming. They also ensure we are building a culture of care, accountability, and flourishing that will serve us now and for generations to come.

Our values are more than words. They are practical expectations. They set the tone for our everyday interactions and define the behaviours that support a safe, just, and resilient community. They apply equally to new members and long-time residents. Living by these values is how we build trust, reduce conflict, and enable all members to grow into their fullest potential.

We organize our values into four core domains of co-op life. Each domain expresses the distinct behaviours expected in different kinds of co-op engagement.

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### **1. Volunteering (on the Farm and Elsewhere)**

Goal: Foster reliability, respect, and collective productivity in shared efforts.

#### **Mindful Dedication**

Members are expected to approach their tasks with focus, care, and presence. Whether harvesting greens or leading a work party, your attention and effort matter. This value discourages rushed or distracted work and encourages taking pride in a job well done. It includes competence, timeliness, and a thoughtful approach to each task. It also reflects our belief that there is joy and purpose in contributing meaningfully.

#### **Team Spirit**

We succeed together. This value emphasizes collaboration, generosity, and a willingness to support your teammates. Being a team player means more than just doing your part—it means communicating clearly, sharing credit, and stepping up when help is needed. A positive attitude is contagious and helps create the trust and flow we need in shared work.

#### **Respect for Process**

Following agreed procedures, listening to experienced members, and prioritizing safety are vital to the smooth functioning of our co-op. Respect for process includes a willingness to take direction and trust the roles or expertise others hold—especially when handling food, tools, or complex systems. It ensures shared standards and minimizes confusion or risk.

## **Problem Awareness**

Good volunteers don't just finish tasks; they notice what's not working. Members are expected to be observant and communicative—to raise concerns about safety, workflow, or team dynamics early and respectfully. This proactive mindset strengthens our systems and relationships before issues escalate.

## **Positive Energy**

Work is more than getting things done. Members are expected to bring warmth, encouragement, and a spirit of goodwill to shared tasks. Personal conflicts should be left aside during volunteer time, and members should help create a welcoming environment for all skill levels and personalities.

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## **2. Living One's Own Life in the Co-op**

Goal: Create peace, privacy, and personal dignity within a shared living environment.

### **Respect for Privacy**

Everyone has the right to solitude, to disengage, and to be left alone. In a high-density co-op, this means knocking before entering, keeping unsolicited visits to a minimum, and not pressuring others to socialize. This value supports boundaries and quiet, while recognizing that withdrawal is a valid and healthy need.

### **Peacefulness**

Members should help maintain a calm, low-impact environment. Noise, emotional volatility, or aggression can affect others even through walls. This value promotes non-violence, conflict de-escalation, and being mindful of how your presence or habits shape others' experience of home.

### **Self-Responsibility**

Living in community requires awareness of your own needs and how you express them. Members should be direct but kind, self-aware without being self-centered. This value includes self-advocacy and being willing to own your impact—even when unintended.

### **Safe Sanctuary**

Your home should be a refuge. Every unit should be a space where members feel emotionally and physically safe. This includes freedom from harassment, threats, coercion, or any violation of autonomy. This value affirms that safety is not a privilege—it's a right.

## 3. Engaging with Others in the Co-op

Goal: Nurture dignity, connection, and the social fabric of the community.

### Mutual Respect

Every person is of equal worth. Differences in age, identity, education, neurotype, and worldview should be honored. At the same time, respecting others includes valuing their expertise and lived experience. For example, a trained farmer's advice should carry more weight in agricultural matters—not because they are more important, but because respecting skill is part of mutual respect. All voices matter. All people are valuable. But not all opinions are interchangeable.

### Warm Cooperation

Members should offer help, include others, and build relationships that go beyond transactions. This value encourages friendliness, small acts of care, and approaching challenges with curiosity and openness. Cooperation is not just compliance—it's connection.

### Honest Kindness

Tell the truth—but always with empathy. Members should avoid gossip, sarcasm, and critique that tears others down. Speak clearly, especially in disagreement, but do so in a way that protects dignity and invites growth. We critique ideas, not people.

### Community Building

Our daily interactions are the glue of our community. Whether you're hosting a potluck, smiling in the hallway, or helping someone move a box, you are building culture. This value reinforces that community is not a structure—it's a practice, and every member helps create it.

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## 4. Governance and Leadership

Goal: Cultivate thoughtful, ethical, and long-term stewardship of the co-op.

### Growth & Learning

Leadership starts with curiosity and commitment to growth. Members are expected to deepen their knowledge of governance, sustainability, and community care. Whether reading co-op policies or learning how to facilitate meetings, everyone should be preparing to lead—if not now, then in the future.

### Systemic Thinking

# Limestone City Co-Operative Housing

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Good decisions consider long-term effects, not just immediate needs. Members should think in systems, not silos. This means understanding how budgets, rules, and interpersonal dynamics affect one another. Governance should reflect our values across time, not just in the moment.

## Ethical Stewardship

Our leaders are stewards of trust. Members in governance roles should act with honesty, confidentiality, and commitment to the common good—not personal convenience. Decisions should reflect compassion, transparency, and accountability.

## Service-Oriented Leadership

Leadership is not about control. It's about service. Leaders should mentor others, uplift quiet voices, and create systems that empower more members to step into shared responsibility. Every decision should ask: how does this serve the whole?

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## Living Our Values

These values are not rules to memorize, but behaviours to practice. They are the norms we co-create and reinforce through stories, mentoring, and example. Whether you're new or have been here for years, these values are your invitation to shape a co-op that works—for everyone.

Let's hold each other to these standards with compassion and keep refining them together as we grow.