



FirstService
RESIDENTIAL

HOA Guide:

How to Create a Committee Charter

In our 2019 Board Effectiveness Survey, about 50% of HOA board members with committees said they ***don't have a committee charter, don't need one or don't know what it is***. The truth is, committee charters empower members to do what's right for the association and strengthen the community as a whole. Read on to learn how to create one for your association.



What's the secret to an HOA committee's success?

It starts with a charter.

A committee charter sets expectations and goals for committee members, so that group members are aligned and working on initiatives that will have a positive impact on your community. With the help of your management company, use the following guidelines to create a great charter:

Step 1:

Draft a mission statement.

Example: *With the goal of improving property values and enhancing the resident experience, the ABC Association Maintenance Committee will evaluate common areas and make recommendations to the board in the areas of...*

TIP: Just like your association's overall mission statement, it is critical to define why you need a committee and what its ultimate goal will be. Setting an objective helps ensure that the group doesn't go off the rails or create competing agendas. Don't worry about all the details yet; just make sure that the purpose of the group is clear.



Step 2:

Identify the type and composition of your committee.

Example: The board of directors at ABC Association have determined a need for a standing budget committee composed of resident volunteers with finance experience and...

AD HOC OR STANDING? An ad hoc committee is formed for a temporary purpose (e.g., capital improvement project, management selection, etc.), while a standing committee is one that is needed for the long term. Make sure that committee members are aware of the commitment required.

Step 3:

Determine the number of members.

Example: The ABC Association Budget Committee should have a minimum of 3 members and a maximum of 5 members at all times. The association Treasurer will be assigned as a committee chair.

BIGGER /ISN'T BETTER: While getting multiple volunteers for a committee may seem like a good idea, having more individuals involved means it may be harder for them to align on issues and provide the guidance you need.



Step 4:

Set a timeframe for when meetings should take place.

Example: The ABC Association Maintenance Committee will meet once per month, on a date when the board chair and majority of committee chair members can attend.

REMEMBER: Just like board members, committee members are volunteers, and their time should be respected. The primary chairperson (selected by the committee) should work with individual schedules and set time limits on meetings as needed.



Step 5:

Outline committee roles and responsibilities.

Example: The ABC Association Maintenance Committee will be responsible for the following:

1. Evaluate common areas for potential improvements or enhancements.
2. Meet with management company engineer to determine maintenance needs.
3. Make recommendations to board of directors on...

TO-DO LIST? Work with your management company to identify 5 to 10 key responsibilities for the committee. Make sure that these responsibilities are aligned with your association's vision and follow your governing documents.

Step 6:

Determine the committee's action items.

Example: After each committee meeting, the chair will submit the minutes to the ABC Association Board of Directors. The committee will also present its findings and recommendations during the monthly board meeting, including...

TWO-WAY STREET: Thank committee members for their recommendations and time, and give them the support they need throughout the process. Provide them with records, documents and supplies so that they can make informed recommendations.



Step 7:

Evaluate the committee on a regular basis.

Example: The ABC Association Board of Directors will work with ABC Association Communications Committee and 123 Management Company to perform an annual review and ensure that the group's actions are helping raise resident sentiment and increase volunteer numbers.

REMEMBER: Associations change, and that may mean a committee may no longer be relevant. Review your committees yearly and speak to committee members to get their feedback.

Great Job!

By creating a comprehensive committee charter with the help of your management company, you will empower members and help support your association's vision. For more best practices, go here:

www.fsresidential.com/california



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