

# THE CO-OPERATIVE HOUSING PROGRAM INFLUENCE

## FACT SHEET 4 OF 4



The CEHL Board aims to achieve a truly 'Co-op Led Program'. It is committed to ensuring member co-ops have opportunities to engage in program discussions that have greatest influence on Program Direction and decisions. While all program participants views are heard, member co-ops take priority.

### How Program decisions are made

Routine Program decisions are made in accordance with the Program Principles and the Program Direction that has been established in consultation with member co-ops.

These documents are used to inform Program Policies which are regularly reviewed. Member co-ops are offered a chance to provide feedback on these policies on the [Have Your Say](#) section on the CEHL website.

Where more significant Program decisions are made or the Program Principles or Direction is reviewed, deeper and more direct consultation occurs.

Although final decisions rest with the CEHL Board, these decisions are made only after considering priorities and ideas put forward by member co-ops.

### HOW ARE MEMBER CO-OPS INCLUDED?

Member co-ops are offered:

- ✓ Information about the current Program Framework
- ✓ Resources to enable member co-ops to share Program information with their members
- ✓ Opportunities to seek clarification, provide feedback and raise issues about the Program Framework
- ✓ Opportunities to contribute to proposed changes to the Program Framework
- ✓ Resources to enable member co-ops to discuss proposed changes with their members

### Opportunities for influence

Member co-ops and program participants have numerous opportunities to influence Program decisions, they are:



Member co-ops nominate and elect co-op members to the CEHL Board. The CEHL Board is responsible for the strategic management and overall financial performance of the company.



Co-op members can nominate for a **Board Committee** focused on Policy and Program issues, or an **Advisory Group** to consult with program participants on important Program topics.



Member co-ops and program participants give feedback and contribute to consultations. See the [Have Your Say](#) section on the website for the latest consultations.

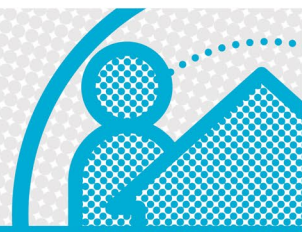


Be informed, attend co-op meetings, member forums and keep up-to-date via the **What's new** section on your member portal home page to learn more about Program activities and how to be involved.

### Engagement approach

The CEHL Co-op Housing Program is complex and often restricted by external requirements.

The CEHL Board respects the time and effort co-ops take to participate in Program consultations.



### Engagement approach continued . ....

The CEHL Board aim to assist co-ops to manage this by:

- Working with a panel of co-op members, the Co-op Program Committee, to plan engagement opportunities
- Offering co-ops engagement in discussions that have greatest influence on Program Direction
- Minimise requests for co-ops to engage in discussions with little room for influence
- Offer co-ops a variety of ways to participate
- Offer co-ops as much time as possible to respond

### Providing feedback or raising concerns

CEHL is working to offer additional opportunities for member co-ops to provide feedback and influence Program Direction and decisions. This includes establishing a regular Program Q & A Forum series and updating feedback opportunities available in the Portal.

All engagement processes will clearly highlight the window for co-op feedback and when the Board's decision will be made. The new Co-op Program Committee (CPC) will use this feedback to inform and prioritise review of the Program Framework.

If co-ops want to influence proposed recommendations to be made to the CEHL Board, it is vital that co-ops:

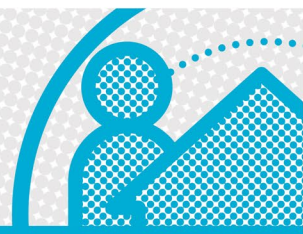
- Raise concerns before the board decision is made
- Offer other ideas that meet essential criteria and will work in the interests of all co-ops and the Program as a whole.

After a decision is made:

- Respect that many factors and points of view have been considered in making-a-decision and not everyone will agree with the outcome.

### HOW TO INFLUENCE THE PROGRAM

<b>1. Research</b>	Read through background papers and ask questions where needed
<b>2. Non-negotiables</b>	Set by the Board, these requirements make sure the outcome is legal, compliant and financially sound
<b>3. Discuss</b>	Talk with other co-op members and share your understanding
<b>4. Think big</b>	What is the long-term effect of this issue for all co-ops in the program?
<b>5. Pros and Cons</b>	List the good things that might happen, and any disadvantages.
<b>6. Options</b>	List other ideas you have that still meet the non-negotiables and overall Program needs.
<b>7. Help</b>	Do you need more info? Do you have ideas to reduce possible disadvantages?
<b>8. Decide and authorise.</b>	As a co-op, decide on the response you want to make and record it in your minutes.
<b>9. Respond</b>	Tell the CEHL board what you think – even if it is “we don’t really care”!
<b>10. Respect</b>	Offer feedback based on actual experience, respecting the needs and efforts of all.



### Providing feedback or raising concerns continued ...

- Offer feedback based on actual experience of changes made
- Ask for assistance if a change brings unexpected outcomes
- Participate in the next review

## Program Decision Reviews

The Co-op Housing Program is required to comply with a range of performance standards set by external statutory bodies such as the Victorian Housing Registrar, the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC) and Australian Securities and Investments Commission (ASIC).

Where a co-op has chosen to deliver a service, the same service standards apply to that co-op. Program Participants can use review and appeal mechanisms managed by these organisations if they believe that the Program has not met service requirements. CEHL risks losing its registration and ability to operate if these standards are not met.

There is no external organisation that has authority to determine appeals regarding Program processes. Decisions relating to structure of our Program and co-op engagement are entirely the responsibility of the CEHL Board in accordance with the CEHL Constitution.

CEHL is currently developing additional ways for member co-ops to understand and provide feedback on program issues, so that the Board can better hear and understand Member views. The new Co-op Program Committee will be a big part of making these improvements.

## IF CEHL WERE TO LOSE REGISTRATION

No other Housing Association in Victoria has a mandate to support housing co-operatives.

Loss of CEHL's registration would likely result in all properties being reallocated to another registered Housing Association under direct tenancy arrangements i.e. without consideration of the specific needs of co-ops.



### MORE INFORMATION

For a complete understanding of the CEHL Co-operative Housing Program also read the following Fact Sheets:

- + [Program Summary](#)
- + [Program Governance](#)
- + [Program Framework](#)