

TARGETED MEMBER SELECTION PROGRAM POLICY

Policy number	PPOL029	Version	v1.0
Drafted by	Program Development Coordinator	Approved by Board on	30 March 2021
Responsible person	Program Development Coordinator	Scheduled review date	30 March 2026

1. PURPOSE

1.1. The purpose of this policy is to:

- a. define the circumstances under which a co-op may select an applicant based on specific attributes and/or interests to meet the co-op's goals.
- b. describe the assistance CEHL will offer to co-ops seeking to recruit new members with specific attributes or interests, while meeting vacancy timelines.

2. POLICY CONTEXT

The CEHL Program and its member co-ops operate in accordance with the International Co-operative Principles, specifically *Voluntary and Open Membership* which states that Co-operatives are voluntary organisations, open to all persons able to use their services and willing to accept the responsibilities of membership, without gender, social, racial, political or religious discrimination. The Program is also bound by the Equal Opportunity Act 2010 which requires that member selection be non-discriminatory.

It is acknowledged that each co-op is unique with regard to their goals and ambitions within their community. Responsibilities of membership will require new members to act in accordance with the values, practices and priorities of the co-op. Co-ops may wish to focus their activities to meet the needs or interests of particular groups within their community. It is therefore relevant for co-ops to adopt selection criteria that will help to identify applicants that are most likely to contribute to the co-operative's goals.

In order to meet Program requirements, including obligations as a Housing Association and social housing provider, it is important that measures to accommodate co-op member selection preferences are flexible, and minimise the potential for extended vacancies.

In order to meet requirements relating to equal opportunity and anti-discrimination law it is essential that recruitment of new members complies with legal and statutory obligations.

3. POLICY STATEMENT AND PRINCIPLES

3.1 STATEMENT

- a. The targeted member selection process will conform to the Member Selection Policy Program Policy and Procedure.
- b. The targeted member selection process will enable co-ops to recruit members that are most likely to contribute to the co-o's goals, while meeting vacancy timelines in line with Program requirements, and in compliance with equal opportunity and anti-discrimination statutes.

3.2 PRINCIPLES

- a. A member co-op may prioritise selection of new members based on clearly described values and member selection criteria. These criteria must be clearly articulated and documented by the co-op. The Future Directions Project (FDP) process is the simplest method to do this.
- b. CEHL will collaborate with co-ops to inform and identify applicants with specific attributes or interests by:
 - i developing publicity material to be distributed by co-ops to relevant communities
 - ii co-hosting Information Sessions with relevant co-ops
 - iii maintaining registers to identify VHR registered applicants with particular interest in joining a co-op with a specific community focus
 - iv screening general applicants to identify their willingness to work within the co-op's stated values, where insufficient applicants expressing an interest in a specific community are registered.
- c. Where a co-op is unable to identify an applicant that meets their minimum selection criteria within the within a reasonable timeframe consistent with Program requirements, they will be asked to:
 - i Broaden their selection criteria, OR
 - ii Consider applicants from outside their stated target group, OR
 - iii Handback the vacant property to be utilised elsewhere in the Program.
- d. Co-ops are encouraged to review their community focus, values and member selection priorities on a regular basis and when repeated challenges are experienced to identify relevant applicants.
 - iv Considerations should include the impact of current member selection criteria on the viability of the co-op and the Program.
 - v Where a co-op chooses to maintain specific criteria that results in a low demand, the co-op should acknowledge and plan for gradual decrease of the co-op membership and portfolio.
- e. A member co-op may only exclusively offer membership to people with protected characteristics, attributes or interests if it has first obtained an Equal Opportunity Exemption from VCAT.

4. SCOPE

4.1 This policy applies to CEHL and all member co-operatives within the CEHL Program.

5. DEFINITIONS

- 5.1. A Program Participant is:
 - an individual or joint member of a Member co-op who holds a CEHL approved tenancy of a CEHL Program property or has a CEHL approved temporary housing arrangement; or
 - a person who is not a member of a Member co-op but entered the Program through a CEHL approved referral process, who holds a CEHL approved tenancy of a CEHL Program property or has a CEHL approved temporary housing arrangement."
- 5.2. Protected characteristics are those qualities, traits or characteristics that, by law, cannot be discriminated against.
- 5.3. For all definitions relating to this policy, please refer to the Program Glossary.

6. LEGAL AND OTHER REQUIREMENTS

- a. [Equal Opportunity Act 2010 \(Vic\)](#)
- b. [International Co-op Principles](#)
- c. [Performance Standards and evidence guidelines](#)

4. AUTHORISATION

Approved by	<u>Heidi Lee</u>	Date of approval	30 / 03 / 2021
Position	CEHLChair		