

# Woodsworth Housing Co-operative, Inc.

## Newsletter policies: Woodsworth Editorial Committee

*Updated February 2025*

*Approved by Woodsworth Board of Directors, August 2, 2022*

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## 1. General

The Weekly is the official publication of Woodsworth Housing Cooperative Inc. and Woodsworth is responsible for what gets published, and may be liable for any repercussions an article may cause. It follows that individual members do not have any absolute right to see whatever they submit to appear in print.

The Editorial Committee uses the following policies for guidance in implementing the Newsletter by-law, approved by members in 1999. These policies, developed by Editorial Committee and its predecessor, the Advisory Council, flesh out the Newsletter By-Law.

Weekly publication:

The Weekly will be published weekly (except for long weekends).

*[Advisory Council: June 17, 1998]*. The date on the masthead is Sunday.

Committee decision making process:

The Editorial Committee works by a process of consensus.

*[Editorial Committee: May 24, 2004]*

Only editors, the production team and the Board liaison will be part of the online group or discussion forum for the Editorial Committee.

*[March 2022]*

## 2. Restrictions on content of the newsletter

While members are encouraged to submit their thoughts and opinions to the Weekly for publication, Woodsworth Co-op is ultimately responsible for the content. In order to ensure civil debate and avoid legal problems, Woodsworth imposes a few reasonable restrictions on content. For legal reasons, each issue must contain two legal statements, see 9 (b).

The Editorial Committee reserves the right to refuse an article or to end a discussion that in the opinion of the Committee or the Board of Directors could jeopardize the co-op or the community. Members can appeal to the Editorial Committee or to the Board in writing if they think the decision is unfair.

It is expected that members who are criticizing the Board, a committee or Management have contacted them to voice their concerns. The article should make it clear that the member has tried the obvious paths to a solution before submitting an article for publication.

### (A) Libellous Material

The Newsletter bylaw, Section 5.2 says:

An Editor must reject a submission or require changes if:

(a) the submission appears to be defamatory and could expose the Co-operative to a lawsuit for libel; or

(b) the submission is harmful to another member, staff, the Co-operative or the Co-operative movement.

For more, see Newsletter By-law, Content *[Advisory Council: November 19, 1998]*

## **(B) Human Rights**

A submission must be rejected or require changes if it violates the Ontario Human Rights Code or exposes the co-op to potential human rights or related legal problems.

*[Editorial Committee, September 2021]*

## **(C) Personal Attacks**

The Newsletter By-law requires rejection of submissions that are libellous or harmful. The following guidelines may be used in deciding if a submission is harmful:

- (1) submissions may criticize decisions of the board, committees and staff;
- (2) submissions may disagree with the opinion of another member;
- (3) criticism should focus on the substance of the decision or opinion rather than the person or people who made the decision or expressed the opinion;
- (4) criticism should focus on substance rather than motives or personalities; and
- (5) criticism may be harsh but should not be insulting.

(6) prohibited grounds of discrimination for housing in Ontario human rights are race, colour, ancestry, creed (religion), place of origin, ethnic origin, citizenship, sex (including pregnancy, gender identity), sexual orientation, age, marital status, family status, disability, and receipt of public assistance.

*[Editorial Committee: May 6, 1999; (6) added September 2021]*

## **More about personal attacks - human rights, repeated or frequent complaints**

Submissions will not be published if they include personal attacks against any identifiable individual or group. This applies especially to attacks against employees of Woodsworth, or against volunteers serving Woodsworth in any capacity.

A submission will not be published if it includes any language even remotely hinting at bias against any ethnic, racial, religious, gender or marginalized group. And it very definitely applies to veiled or indirect attacks. If the Editorial Committee can detect a human rights attack, no matter how subtle, the submission will be rejected.

Repeated or frequent complaints against a particular person or group or about the same issue by one member will be seen as harassment and will not be published.

Submissions must be polite. Even when there is no attack as outlined in clause 5 of the Newsletter bylaw, inflammatory language, provocative statements, or any language verging on rudeness is not allowed. If its main aim seems to be to anger a member, to raise anyone's blood pressure, a submission will be rejected.

## **(D) Confidentiality - breaching confidentiality including the writer's own**

Submissions must not violate confidentiality. This would include revealing matters explicitly covered by confidentiality agreements, such as the one signed by Board directors or committee members. (See Organizational Bylaw) It would also include violations of a more

personal nature, such as repeating a conversation or revealing a private email without agreement of all parties. If your submission includes anything that should stay private, it will be rejected.

Members may breach their own privacy but should take care not to breach other people's at the same time. Editors are not responsible for writers breaching their own privacy. However editors will take due diligence to ensure that the author is aware of their breach, such as confirming that the article was for publication.

Submissions cannot discuss matters which are legally sensitive. If someone wants to accuse someone of a crime, The Weekly is emphatically not a platform to use. If a writer reveals or discusses matters involving criminal or civil law - other than in the broadest theoretical terms - the submission will be rejected.

### **3. Anonymous Letters and Name Withheld**

#### **Anonymous letters from members**

Anonymous letters are not accepted. Every submission to The Weekly must identify the member or staff person submitting the item. No articles will be published in The Weekly unless it is signed by the author of the submission.

**Name Withheld:** Names of those submitting articles may be withheld by the editor at the request of the author **only in the following circumstances:**

- + where the article contains confidential information about the author (e.g., income status, state of health) which directly relates to the topic of the article or letter
- + when an unidentified item is received, an Editor has a discretion to reject it or become the submitter of the item.

#### **Anonymous letters from the Board, Committees and delegates**

A personal name (~~must~~) should be included in submissions from the Board of Directors and committees, e.g., "Joe Blow on behalf of the Board of Directors" or "Jenny Jones for the Membership Committee.

If no individual name is included, the email must be sent from an official email account of the Board, committee or Management.

*[Advisory Council: November 19, 1998; Editorial Committee: June 17, 1999; Editorial Committee: May 8, 2003; December 2017]*

### **4. Accuracy is the writer's job**

Submissions must be factual. The more controversial the point the author wants to make, the more airtight the facts need to be. Deliberate distortions or omissions, when detected by the Editorial committee, will result in a submission being rejected.

However, the Editorial Committee does not have the resources or the authority to fact-check every word that's submitted. Members are therefore wholly responsible for the content of their submissions.

Editors may add this notification to submissions if it seems desirable.

"Editors do not fact-check articles. Writers are wholly responsible for the content of their submissions."

## **5. Dealing with submissions that don't comply with bylaw and policies**

### **Overview:**

Decisions about suitability of submissions for publication are made routinely by the Editorial Committee.

The editor or editorial committee chair will attempt to get an author to rework a submission to bring it into compliance with the newsletter bylaw and policies.

The editor does not have to rework the submission to comply with the bylaws, but could point out the problem areas or type of problem.

The editor will give a deadline to the author. If not met, the article will be kept for the next issue before reconsidering the revised submission for publication.

In cases of doubt, the committee may forward submissions to the Board of Directors or the Board liaison for an opinion or decision.

Members who feel their submission has been blocked improperly are free under Woodsworth bylaws to take the matter to the Board, which is empowered to make binding decisions on behalf of the membership.

The member may be encouraged to write to the Board of Directors about the issue or to try other remedies, such as requesting that the topic be placed on a GMM agenda for discussion. (See Organizational Bylaw, article 4.1 (d).)

### **(A) Consulting the Editorial Committee**

The editor can ask for feedback on submissions from the Editorial committee or forward the email to the committee. It is recommended that the author's name be deleted/suppressed during this consultation.

### **(B) Contacting the writer, the Board or others about a submission**

It is recommended that editors use the Weekly or the Editorial Committee email account to contact the writer rather than their own personal email account. It makes any email interchange available for lawyers in case that this becomes necessary.

If something is being held over or a dispute about content is not resolved, please make sure that the next editor is alerted to the issue in the Weekly email account. The editor can flag submissions, drag sent mail into the Inbox and/or send an email to the Weekly email account to update the next editor.

## **(C) Rejected Submissions**

When a submission is rejected for any of the above causes, the submitter is free to rewrite and re-submit. In our experience, even the most toxic submission can usually be rewritten to make any legitimate points without violating our rules. Use polite language, don't stretch the truth, don't blab things you were told in confidence, and stick to academic discussion of legal matters, and you can communicate just about anything through the Weekly.

Members are encouraged to think of their submissions as if they were being delivered verbally, directly to any person or persons being criticized. If you can't imagine saying it out loud without causing hurt or offence, or exposing yourself to legal consequences, it won't be accepted for The Weekly.

Whenever a submission is rejected by an Editor, the Chair of the Editorial Committee shall receive a copy of the submission and a copy of the letter of rejection.

*[Editorial Committee: May 6, 1999]*

## **(D) Board and Management role**

The Board will assign a Board member as liaison for the Editorial Committee. The liaison may participate in discussions.

If the committee is uncertain about publishing a submission, the article should be forwarded to the Board through the committee liaison for review before being accepted for publication.

The editors may also choose to inform the Board or Board liaison, a named committee or Management about a submission if the committee feels that a response in the same Weekly issue would be beneficial. Any published response must also conform to the Newsletter and other bylaws.

A submission that the Editorial Committee has refused to publish because it violates section 5.2 of the Newsletter Bylaw #48 should be forwarded to the Board via the liaison.

*[Editorial Committee and Board of Directors, October 2017; March 2022]*

## **6. Submission info for members: deadline, maximum length, how to submit, editor's personal submissions**

### **(A) Deadline**

The deadline for submissions is 7:00 p.m. on Tuesday.

The deadline for submissions is Tuesday at 7:00 p.m. although exceptions may be accommodated on a case by case basis, at the discretion of the Editor for that issue.

See 7. Late Submissions.

Since the Board normally meets on the second Tuesday of every month, the Board and Management can make arrangements with the editor for a late submission.

See 7. Late Submissions.

## **(B) Length of Submissions:**

The maximum length for an individual article is 1000 words.

*[Editorial Committee: April 1 2005]*

See also 8. Other submitted content: ads, politics, fillers, etc.

## **(C) How to Submit to the Weekly:**

Submissions may be submitted by email (preferred) or on paper through the Weekly mailbox on the second floor.

Email: [weekly@woodsworthcoop.ca](mailto:weekly@woodsworthcoop.ca)

### **(I) Submitting by email:**

The Weekly prefers text in the body of an email, rather than attachments.

This ensures that software incompatibility won't stop the editor from opening an article. It also means that editors won't risk a virus from clicking on a link in an email.

Members can also attach a copy if you wish, but it may not be opened.

To help make sure the editor doesn't overlook a submission for publication, members are requested to put "Please publish" or "for the Weekly" with the headline in the Subject line of the email. A distinctive subject line is especially useful if someone is sending more than one article – editors won't overlook a second article from the same sender.

### **(II) Submitting on paper:**

The Weekly will continue to welcome handwritten articles. There is a metal locked box on the second floor near the elevator.

Getting submissions in our email inbox means that editors don't have to copy-type. If members don't have access to a computer at home or work, they may use the member computer on the second floor or the free WiFi in the Penthouse and 2nd floor meeting room with their own device.

If a member submits a document ready for photocopying, please make it single-sided so it works with the photocopy program.

*[Editorial Committee, October 2017]*

## **(C) Editors submissions - general**

Members have complained about the lack of diversity issues in the Weekly. Editors can publish a list of days of significance for the month or the upcoming issue. Or solicit articles of diversity interest.

Editors should add reminders about GMMs and other co-op events.

Editors may publish fillers or community events notices when there is available space in the issue. See also 8 (i).

## **(D) Editors' personal submissions**

Editors cannot publish their own opinion pieces about co-op issues about co-op matters in their own issue without submitting it for approval to the Editorial committee. The author's name must be listed as usual. The editor is free to submit opinion articles for other issues of the Weekly.

## **7. Late submissions**

### **(A) From Board and Management**

Board and Management may submit late-breaking items until Wednesday night, provided they provide advance warning to the Weekly via the submission email address by late Tuesday night (i.e. soon after the Board meeting ends).

Unless the notification happens, the editor will not automatically check for late submissions from the Board or Management. Editors are expected to check the email account for this notification.

### **(B) From Members and committees**

Members and committees are expected to honour the submission deadline of Tuesday at 7pm.

If a member cannot submit by the deadline, they need to make a special request to the editor of the issue to see whether a late submission can be accommodated. Unless notified, editors will not automatically check for late submissions.

The decision to accept a late submission from members and committees is completely at the editor's discretion. If it is not accepted, the writer must wait for the next issue.

**Also:** If editing is needed in order to comply with Woodsworth's Newsletter bylaw and these policies, the editor will give a deadline to the author. If not met, the article will be kept for the next issue. (Section 4)

*[Editorial Committee: January 19, 2004; April 2018; March 2022]*

The editor will inform the upcoming editor.

## **8. Other submitted content: ads, politics, fillers, etc.**

Apart from restrictions in Section 2, 3, 4 and 6 (B) Length of Submission, these are specific rules about types of submissions.

### **(A) Advertisements**

An ad means an item for sale, swap, giveaway, service or announcement of an event.

All ads must have a submitting member's name associated with them, just as other content in the Weekly.

Board, committee and management reports, surveys, or co-op forms do not count as advertisements. Non-commercial event announcements judged to be of community interest run at the discretion of the Editorial committee do not count as advertisements.

Member opinion pieces or articles are not advertisements. They may endorse or recommend products or services, within reason, as long as these are relevant to the Woodsworth community.

The Weekly accepts announcements and advertisements that are deemed by the Editorial committee to be of significant social or community interest. Submissions may be any size, but may be edited, re-formatted or re-sized to fit space requirements.

This guideline covers when a full page attachment is permitted and when only column content (article format) is permitted.

## **(B) Members' / residents' personal ads**

Members / residents may submit personal ads for their own items or services.

- **Events:**

Members may submit one display ad (full-sized) per event. After that, the ads must be column-sized ads (article format), no more than 300 words or about 1 ½ columns.

- **For sale items:**

Advertisements can only be in column/article format, not as an attached page, and no more than 300 words (about 1 ½ columns).

Each item for sale is normally repeated just once. Members must resubmit the text of the personal ads if they wish them repeated.

Repeat ads for the same item must also be column-sized ads (article format).

### **Photos for personal sales ads:**

Each new advertisement can include one photo or image per item.

Only the first time a particular item is advertised will a photo be published.

There can be no more than 3 photos or images per Weekly issue from one member.

If there are more than three sale items submitted by the same person for that issue, only the first three items can have photos.

It is up to the member to submit appropriate photos and in the correct format.

Final layout, including size, is at the discretion of the editor, and subject to the space constraints of the individual issue.

## **(C) Committees**

Committees are encouraged to submit ads or notices for events.

Full page ads are accepted for the first announcement of an event if the committee submits a display ad.

A repeat committee ad should be in article format (columns) and submitted by the committee. Exception: special event such as the co-op anniversary party can have more full page displays submitted by the organizers. If requested, the repeat can be rolled over for several issues if requested by the committee. Ads may repeat for up to four issues.

Committees in particular should note that they cannot add submissions or flyers to The Weekly after the editor hands it over to the Production Team. Attachments must be submitted in the usual way.

### **(D) Board and Management**

Board and Management can submit full page ads when necessary.

### **(E) Commercial or business advertising**

The Weekly does not accept commercial or business advertising. However, member submissions may recommend merchants or services in an article format. Such submissions are subject to the general rules regarding editorial submissions. They may include images, background information and personal endorsements, as well as web or email addresses. They do not repeat, and may be reformatted or resized as required.

### **(F) CHFT and CHFC**

Information to encourage participation in member events or member education events can be published as requested in the Weekly, even if they take several full pages.

### **(G) Community groups**

Community groups, other co-ops or our delegates may submit ads or articles about events of interest to Woodsworth members, such as Jamii, SLNA, etc.

The editor may edit submissions from community groups when necessary for space or keep them for the next issue if time permits and including it requires a new page or means that the Weekly will have an uneven number of double-sided pages.

### **(H) Political submissions**

Material submitted in relation to a political issue (municipal, provincial, federal or international) shall not be printed anonymously. A submitter connected to the Co-operative must be identified. Articles written by members are acceptable, which may include endorsements. Full-page display ads will not be accepted.

### **(I) Fillers**

Editors may include fillers of interest to Woodsworth members to fill gaps in the issue. If the editor of the issue creates or chooses fillers, these need not be signed. Fillers submitted by others (i.e. not the editor of that issue) should have their name assigned to the item.

*[Editorial Committee: revised March 2022]*

See also 6 (d).

### **(J) Board Reports**

The board of directors will be asked to submit regular reports (at least once a month) to The Weekly.

*[Advisory Council: June 17, 1998]*

### **(K) GMM notices**

All GMM meetings for the year need not be run every issue but at regular intervals, such as monthly.

*[Editorial Committee: May 24, 2004]*

Editors are requested to move notices about GMMs and important co-op meetings or town hall sessions to the Weekly inbox (or forward it to the Weekly email account) for brief repeat notices in upcoming issues.

## **9. Layout and standard content**

### **(A) Identification of Editors:**

Each issue must include the name of the editor of that issue.

Additionally, each issue should include the name of the Editor for the next issue.

*[Advisory Council: October 15, 1998]*

### **(B) For legal reasons, each issue must contain these two statements:**

*The Weekly is a forum of communication for Woodsworth Housing Co-operative members. The views expressed in solicited and unsolicited articles are not necessarily the views of Woodsworth Housing Co-operative Incorporated.*

*Prop. & Pub. Woodsworth Housing Co-operative Inc. 133 Wilton Street,  
Unit 201, Toronto, On M5A 4A4*

### **(C) Additional template information**

Editors may create their own template, but it must be a two-column format.

A standard computer template for The Weekly shall be available for use by Editors.

*[Advisory Council: January 14, 1999; amended, Newsletter Committee: February 4, 1999]*

The template will include:

Co-op Office phone number  
Property Manager's Name, email address  
Woodsworth Admin email address  
Office hours  
On-Call  
Board of directors' email address  
GMM's  
Fire, emergency phone number, and city info number

Current editor, Next editor  
Submissions Deadline and email address and alternate submission point  
Weekly Production names  
Distribution organized by block reps & volunteers  
Co-op website address  
Editorial Committee email address

These may change from time to time by agreement by the committee.

#### **(D) Author name - submissions**

It should appear just below the title of each article, not at the end of the article.

#### **(E) Body Type**

The font size for body type may remain at 10 point. *[Advisory Council: June 17, 1998]*

### **10. Production and publishing**

#### **(A) Production Co-ordination:**

The Production Team take charge of the reproducing and distribution of the print copy of the Weekly.

The Editor should advise Production Team organizer on Thursday night of the status of the issue. The masters should be placed in a consistent place, such as a box in the cupboard in the copier room.

*[Advisory Council: November 19, 1998]*

#### **(B) Colour of paper:**

The first page may be on coloured paper.

If there are photos on the pages one and two, the Production Team member should opt for white paper.

Low contrast colours such as lilac should not be used routinely.

Yellow paper should not be used as it is reserved for confidential Board use.

### **11. Delivery to members**

Since the co-op corresponds with members through the Weekly, it is essential that a member receives the Weekly and has an opportunity to read each issue of the Weekly.

The Weekly is published in print and online. Privacy controls are used for the online version.

#### **(A) Deadline and Distribution**

Each issue must be published and distributed by Sunday, although distribution by Friday is encouraged where possible.

*[Advisory Council: October 15, 1998]*

The Weekly is normally published online around 6pm on Fridays.  
*[Editorial Committee 2022]*

**(B) No paper copy for those who choose to read online**

A member may request that no paper copy of the Weekly be dropped at their unit. The Editorial Committee will comply, but only if the member subscribes to an alert for new content on the website. The co-op's responsibility for the member reading the Weekly ends when the member subscribes to the alert.

*[Editorial Committee: September 2020]*