

How Do I Start a Neighbourhood Association?



What is a neighbourhood association?

A neighbourhood association is a group of residents from a certain area who speak for the people who live there. It includes residents on neighbouring streets or blocks. The association meets regularly to chat about issues and opportunities such as:

- 📍 social & recreational activities
- 📍 community events
- 📍 neighbourhood beautification projects/clean-ups/improvements
- 📍 crime prevention ideas
- 📍 parks & playgrounds
- 📍 sharing of information on neighbourhood projects
- 📍 volunteer activities
- 📍 traffic issues

No matter how big or small your project is, you can form an association and have it last for as long as you need it to. For example, an association can be set up if a community simply wants to rally for a cause.

How do I get involved?

Forming a neighbourhood association can be a great way to get to know your neighbours, share ideas, learn new skills and speak with one voice regarding neighbourhood improvements. The first step to getting started is to talk to your neighbours and organize a meeting. Remember that it is important to include all people in your community so you can benefit from the different skills and talents each will have to offer. It is important for an association to define its own goals and objectives and to make them realistic and attainable. Don't forget to have fun!

In the case where there is already an existing association in your neighbourhood, there may be opportunities to build upon what's been established.

Who are all the participants in a neighbourhood association?

A neighbourhood association may be big or small, formal or informal. A more formal association elects board members* at an annual general meeting. They adopt written rules (By-laws & constitution) to guide its operations. Board meetings usually occur once a month. The following elected positions may be part of its structure:

- Chair - conducts the meetings fairly and efficiently and sees that tasks are being completed
- Vice Chair - fills in for the chair when not available; assists Chair with any/all tasks
- Treasurer - responsible for the association's finances
- Secretary - keeps people informed through taking meeting minutes

**Detailed job descriptions should be developed for each position. For more information on job descriptions, contact the HRM Volunteer Management Resource and Training Centre at 490-4599.*

Are there other positions or committees?

A neighbourhood association may want to form other positions or committees from the overall association. This way the smaller groups can each focus on a specific part of the overall project making it easier to coordinate all aspects. You can meet as often as you like. These meetings would normally happen around a specific project. Committees report back on



their activities at the regular board meetings. Some committees operate on an ongoing basis and others may be created to address short-term issues. Here are a few examples:

- 🗨️ communications (newsletter/website)
- 🗨️ fund raising
- 🗨️ community/social events
- 🗨️ seniors
- 🗨️ membership coordinator

Insurance

Resources that offer useful information:

- 🗨️ General Liability Insurance is offered to members of Recreation Nova Scotia. This program is suitable for volunteer recreation groups. Please note that organizations looking for “Special Events Insurance” are encouraged to contact their local insurance company as this coverage is no longer offered. For more information call (902) 425-1128 or visit www.recreationns.ns.ca/insurance.
- 🗨️ Volunteer Canada offers an insurance program for volunteers:
<http://new.volunteer.ca/en/membership/benefits/generalliability> or call 1-800-670-0401
- 🗨️ Insurance Bureau of Canada offers information on how to manage risk. For more information call (902) 429-2730 or visit <http://www.ibc.ca>
- 🗨️ Volunteer Protection Act:
http://www.gov.ns.ca/legislature/legc/bills/58th_2nd/3rd_read/b098.htm

Benefits of registering as a Non-Profit Society

Associations may wish to register as a Non-Profit Society. Certain grant-funding agencies may require groups to be registered. For more information visit Service Nova Scotia (Registry of Joint Stocks) at <http://www.gov.ns.ca/snsmr/rjsc/needs.asp>.

Contact your Community Developer

If you have any questions about starting a neighbourhood association or if you have some questions about your existing association, you can contact the Volunteer Management Resource and Training Centre at 490-4599.

Information provided in the Good Neighbours Great Neighbourhoods Tool Kit is accurate as of the date of printing. For the most current information on these and many other HRM programs, please visit www.myhrm.ca or www.halifax.ca

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