

Bylaws of the Alliance of Cambridge Tenants (ACT)

as amended, February 9, 2019

Article I. Name and Address

The name of this organization is the Alliance of Cambridge Tenants (ACT). Currently and until changed by ACT's officers, ACT's office shall be located in the basement of 135 Prospect Street, Cambridge, MA 02139; its mailing address shall be Post Office Box 391078, Cambridge, MA 02139; its telephone number shall be (617) 499-7031; its email address shall be tenants@earthlink.net; and its website shall be www.actcambridge.org

Article II. Purposes

A. The mission of ACT is to support the interests of low income tenants, particularly in Cambridge, Massachusetts. Specific purposes include but are not limited to the following:

- (1) Share information amongst tenants affected by policies of the Cambridge Housing Authority (CHA) and other agencies;
- (2) Review and seek appropriate revisions to CHA policies and programs;
- (3) Participate in the development of new CHA policies and programs; and
- (4) Support and strengthen existing tenant associations; provided that ACT shall not diminish the authority of any tenant association both recognized by the respective management entity and functioning democratically.

B. ACT is an organization of lower income tenants. Therefore, ACT shall

- (1) Work for the wider interests of lower income people and the rights of tenants in general;
 - (2) Strive for inclusion of lower income tenants from all communities, but especially those in communities currently underrepresented in the work of ACT;
 - (3) Work to empower those who are disempowered, whether because of gender, ethnic, racial, religious, economic, or family status; and
 - (4) Work to develop participation and leadership of lower income people, especially tenants, in the social and political life of their communities.
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Article III. Membership

The head of household (of any age) and every adult (age 18 years or older) who is currently listed on a CHA public housing lease or who is a CHA voucher tenant shall be considered to be a member of ACT. Membership automatically terminates when the person is no longer a CHA public housing or voucher tenant.

Exception A: Any CHA public housing or voucher tenant who continues to reside in a building that is converted to a different subsidy type and is therefore no longer a CHA tenant. That tenant may opt to remain a full member of ACT.

Exception B: Residents of Expiring Use Preservation Projects outside of Cambridge, with project-based vouchers administered in whole or in part by CHA. At least until January 1, 2020, these tenants shall not be considered to be ACT members. After that date, the ACT Board may opt to accept any or all of these tenants as members of ACT.

Article IV. Governing Board [“the Board”]

A. Definition The Board is responsible for overseeing all the affairs of the organization, which includes

- (1) making major policies for ACT
- (2) electing its executive officers from among its members.
- (3) consulting and informing members

B. Composition The Governing Board of ACT shall consist of up to thirty (30) members, of which no more than fifteen (15) shall be CHA public housing tenants and no more than fifteen (15) shall be CHA voucher tenants.

C. Duties

- (1) Represent the interests of all low income tenants.
- (2) Represent the interests of all CHA public housing and voucher tenants.
- (3) Attend regularly scheduled meetings as well as any special meetings of the Board.
- (4) Board members are strongly encouraged to participate in the life of their community; to conduct outreach, particularly to low income tenants; and to increase awareness of ACT.

D. Term The term for the Board shall be three (3) years, except for the 2019-2022 Board whose term shall be two and one-half years (October 21, 2019 - April 21, 2022).

E. Resignation A Board member may resign at any time by delivering a written resignation letter to the co-chairpersons. The resignation may also be emailed to the ACT office. If a resignation is communicated in a voice mail message, then the ACT co-chairpersons shall write a letter to the resigning Board member asking him/her to confirm in writing the resignation in two weeks' time and if no written confirmation is timely received, he/she will be deemed to have resigned effective as of the date of the voice mail message.

F. Suspension

(1) Board members may be suspended by a majority vote of the sitting officers for repeated and/or substantial violations of the Board norms (Attachment A) that impede the work of the organization. Unless the Executive Committee decides otherwise, suspension is defined as the cessation (for a specified period of time which is generally at least a month) of a member's rights to attend and speak at ACT Board and ACT Committee meetings; vote on appointments, policy positions and other issues that come before the Board; volunteer in the ACT office; participate in ACT trainings, workshops, and other events; and act as a representative of the organization.

(2) The suspended Board member has the option to appeal the suspension to either (a) the full Board or (b) a special (temporary) committee. Such temporary committee shall be comprised of three Board members (who have volunteered to serve on such committees) chosen by a blind drawing conducted by an ACT member who is not on the Board. Executive officers shall not serve on any such committee charged with reviewing a suspension. Whatever body is selected by the appealing Board member is the final appeal. After providing the suspended member the opportunity to present relevant information, the Board or special committee (whichever was chosen by the appealing Board member) may affirm, reverse, or modify the decision of the officers or may consider alternative resolutions (such as requiring the Board member to apologize or make reparation).

G. Removal

- (1) The Board shall remove a Board member who is no longer an ACT member as defined in Article III.
- (2) The Board, by majority vote of those present at a regular meeting, may remove a Board member for cause who
 - (a) substantially fails to perform their duties as a Board member;
 - (b) acts contrary to any order voted and passed at a Board meeting;

- (c) severely abuses their power or otherwise engages in serious malfeasance;
- (d) acts in serious contravention of ACT Bylaws; and/or
- (e) fails to attend three consecutive meetings of ACT without good cause

(3) In any motion to remove a Board member for cause, the Executive Committee shall send all Board members at least two weeks written notice that a Board meeting will include a hearing to consider such removal. Only Board members shall receive such notice. The notice shall specify the reasons and facts for the proposed removal and shall inform the affected Board member of the right to attend and present information at the hearing. The Board shall be in executive session for this hearing. Whether or not the Board member attends the hearing, the Board may still vote on removal.

H. Vacancies

(1) If a Board member resigns or is removed for cause, the Board may appoint an alternate public housing or voucher tenant, as the case may be, to complete the term of the Board member who resigned or was removed.

(2) Alternates will be considered first from among candidates in the last election who indicated they would be willing to fill a vacancy [Article IV. B (3)]. The Executive Committee shall call on them in descending order of the votes they received in the last Board election.

(3) If this does not result in any appointments, then the Board shall solicit suggestions first from attendees of the citywide tenant leaders meetings and then from affected constituencies (public housing or voucher tenants) for appointments to take the vacant seat; and, in conducting such process, the Executive shall seek out the most qualified people who can best serve ACT at the time, with consideration to skills, experience, and representation of underrepresented communities [Article II B]. At least one half of the sitting Board members must approve the appointment.

I. Change in Status

If an elected Board member transfers from CHA public housing to the CHA's voucher programs or vice versa, the Board member shall continue to be eligible to finish his or her term.

Article V. Election of the Governing Board

A. **eligibility** Every head of household (of any age) and every adult (age 18 or older) who is currently a member of ACT (as defined above in Article III.) is eligible to sit on the Board and vote in ACT Board elections; except that full-time employees of CHA are not eligible to sit on the Board.

B. **Election Committee** The Election Committee shall be activated at least nine months before a scheduled Board election. The Committee shall solicit nominations, organize and supervise the elections, produce and distribute ballots, conduct publicity and outreach, develop guidelines and logistics, and secure whatever outside participation may be necessary for an open and democratic election process. The Election Committee may include persons who are not CHA tenants who can provide legal and/or technical advice. Current board members and non-board members of ACT who are candidates may participate in the Election Committee but only for the purposes of helping to get the word out about the election, developing written information about ACT, and distributing/posting fliers. The Election Committee shall comply with the outreach activities listed in Attachment B so as to encourage as broad and democratic election as possible.

C. **candidates night** The Election Committee shall plan an open house/informational/candidates night

D. **voting** Eligible voters may cast their votes in person by secret written ballot on election day or by mail by secret written ballot to the ACT post office box. Write-in nominations are permitted.

E. **Collection and counting of ballots** shall be handled, or overseen, by an independent third party. Upon request, said third party shall provide a certificate attesting to the fairness of the election.

F. **resolving ties** In the case of ties, the independent third party shall randomly draw the names of the candidates receiving the same number of votes one by one to sequentially develop a list of potential Board members and any position filled from this list, shall be filled sequentially starting with the first name randomly drawn. Thereafter, the Election Committee shall ensure that the potential Board members meet the minimum qualifications as set forth in Article III.

G. **Recall Election**: A recall election shall be held if at least 10% of the ACT membership sign a petition requesting such a recall election (and upon the Board's receipt of this petition, the Board members last elected are removed from the Board and a new election for those seats shall be held). The recall election shall be supervised by an independent third party with experience in supervising elections.

Article VI. Executive Committee (Officers)

A. **Composition**: At its first meeting the new Board shall elect from among its members

- (1) two chairpersons (one public housing and one voucher tenant)
- (2) two treasurers (one public housing and one voucher tenant)
- (3) two secretaries (one public housing and one voucher tenant)

No two officers may be close relatives (parent, sibling, or child) or live in the same household.

B. Principal Duties

(1) the Co-Chairpersons shall be the chief executive officers of ACT and shall preside over meetings of ACT and its officers. They or their designees shall act as contact persons with the CHA, the public, and media; oversee the other officers' performance of duties; oversee the officer manager; and meet with other organizations as needed.

(2) The Co-Treasurers shall be the custodians of all funds (including petty cash if available) of ACT; shall be responsible for making deposits, writing checks, and balancing bank accounts; shall prepare and present monthly reports for ACT; shall prepare any necessary financial reports.

(3) The Co-Secretaries shall carry out the duties of recording secretary and corresponding secretary. The recording secretary shall take attendance at meetings, prepare minutes of meetings for review and approval at the next meeting; and be the only person authorized to record (by tape recorder, cell phone, or otherwise) at the meetings. If the recording secretary is not present at any meeting, a co-chairperson shall appoint a designee. The corresponding secretary shall be considered the clerk of ACT; maintain files (including minutes, attendance records, committee reports, by-laws, budgets, meeting announcements and agendas, and correspondence); and in consultation with the other officers, answer correspondence addressed to ACT.

C. Additional Duties

(1) At least one co-chairperson or their designee shall attend CHA Board of Commissioners' meetings.

(2) At least one officer shall be a member of each of the standing committees.

(3) The Executive Committee shall act as a liaison with the CHA for the purpose of nominating tenant representatives to serve on the CHA's hearing panels, including the Grievance Panel, the Conference Panel, and the Hardship Review Committee. These duties shall include establishing the requirements for tenants to be included in the pool of tenant panelists and ensuring that the process for selection for and service on the panels operates fairly.

(4) The Executive Committee shall have the power to act for the organization and make urgent decisions between meetings of the Governing Board when such decisions are necessary. All such decisions shall be reported to the next meeting of the Governing Board.

D. **Term**: Officers shall serve three-year terms concurrent with the Board that elects them.

E. **Resignation**: An officer may resign at any time by delivering a written resignation to one of the co-chairpersons. The resignation may also be emailed to the ACT office. If a resignation is communicated in a voice mail message, then the ACT office shall write a letter to the resigning officer member asking him/her to confirm in writing the resignation in two weeks' time and if no written confirmation is timely received, he/she will be deemed to have resigned effective as of the date of the voice mail message.

F. **Suspension and Removal of Officers**:

(1) The Executive Committee may suspend any Officer for acting contrary to decisions of the Executive Committee or Governing Board. The votes of four officers shall be necessary to suspend or to restore an officer suspended for such cause. Votes to suspend shall be reported to the next meeting of the Governing Board for approval. The Board may restore the officer, sustain the officer's suspension, or consider the suspension as a cause for removal under Section VI (F)

(2) The Board, by a majority vote, may remove an officer if (a) the officer does not attend three consecutive meetings of ACT without good cause; (b) the officer substantially fails to perform his/her duties as an officer; (c) the officer acts contrary to any order voted and passed at a Board meeting; (d) the officer severely abuses his/her power or otherwise engages in serious malfeasance; or (e) the member acts in serious contravention of ACT's by-laws (including but not limited to Articles XI and XII of these Bylaws; and shall remove an officer if (f) the officer is no longer a CHA public housing or voucher tenant.

(3) In any motion to remove an officer for cause, one of the co-chairpersons or the ACT office shall send all Board members at least two weeks written notice that a Board meeting will include a hearing to consider such removal. Only Board members shall receive such notice. The notice shall specify the reasons and facts for the proposed removal and shall inform the affected officer of the right to attend and present information at the hearing. The Board shall be in executive session for this hearing. Whether or not the officer attends the hearing, the Board may still vote on removal.

G. **Vacancies**: If an officer resigns or is removed for cause, the Board shall promptly appoint, by a majority vote of its members, another Board member to complete the term of the officer who resigned or was removed; provided that if the vacancy was created by resignation or removal of a voucher tenant, then the appointment shall be from among the voucher Board members and if the vacancy was created by resignation or removal of a public housing tenant, then the appointment shall be from among the public housing Board members.

Article VII. Standing Committees

A. **General rules for standing committees** Membership is open to any CHA public housing or voucher tenant. However, Standing Committees shall have the right to require specific commitments from their members, to exclude those who do not make such commitments, and in general organize themselves in ways appropriate to their mission. There shall be at least one ACT Board member on each Standing Committee. Each Standing Committee shall be responsible for doing outreach to ACT members whose primary language is not English. Each Standing Committee shall report its activities at the meetings of ACT Board on a regular basis. Standing Committees are not limited to those listed below. The Board may create (an) additional Standing Committee(s) by 2/3 majority vote of those present at a regular Board meeting, provided advance written notice is given with the agenda for that Board meeting.

B. **Policy Advocacy Committee**: The Committee shall review, analyze, and comment on the CHA's existing and proposed policies including but not limited to the CHA's Moving to Work (MTW) activities in the Annual MTW Plan/Report; engage tenants in advocating for changes in policies; participate in working groups with the CHA staff revising policy documents and developing new programs.

C. **Tenant Assistance and Outreach Committee:** This Committee shall be available to assist existing public housing tenant organizations, those persons seeking to establish a public housing tenant organization, a group of voucher tenants residing in the same development, and where there is no local tenant organization or upon request, individual tenants with disputes with CHA and/or their management company. This Committee shall have at least one member who will act as a liaison to the non-English language communities represented by CHA tenants.

D. **Election Committee:** This Committee is a standing committee even though it is only active in the run-up to Board elections. The Committee's work is described in Article V above and Attachment B below.

E. **Executive Committee:** The ACT officers Executive Committee is a standing committee to carry out the duties described in Article VI and Article XIII. The Executive Committee may establish a **Finance Subcommittee**.

F. **Office Committee:** The Board may appoint an ACT member as Office Manager to coordinate work in the ACT Office. The Office Manager may establish an Office Committee to assist in staffing and keeping records. If an Office Committee is established it shall be subject to the general rules governing standing committees.

Article VIII. Ad Hoc Committees

The officers or Board shall establish such Ad Hoc committees as appropriate, provided that notice of any proposed committee is included in the agenda for the upcoming meeting. Ad Hoc committees shall be temporary committees dedicated to a single purpose, which may include reviewing and making recommendations for Bylaws revisions; conducting special outreach projects; and making connections with community organizations representing persons for whom English is not their first language. There shall be at least one ACT Board member on each Ad Hoc Committee.

Article IX: Tenant Leadership meetings

(1) ACT, through the Tenant Assistance and Outreach (A&O) Committee, shall sponsor citywide leadership meetings, to meet on a regular basis, monthly where feasible. There may be separate meetings for public housing tenants and voucher tenants; and/or meetings in which both public housing and voucher tenants participate.

(2) ACT shall work through the leaders meetings to connect, establish, and support appropriate organizations in buildings and housing developments where lower-income people reside.

(3) ACT shall not seek to incorporate the leaders meetings into its own governance structure.

Article X. ACT Meetings

A. Board Meetings:

(1) The ACT Board shall meet on a regular basis, at least four (4) times annually and more often as needed. Generally, the Board will not meet in July and August. The ACT Board shall hold meetings at a consistent and accessible location. Special meetings may be called by a majority of the Board or the officers. All CHA public housing and voucher tenants may attend any meeting and will have a reasonable opportunity to make known their views on matters of common interest. Persons who are not CHA tenants (including CHA staff) may attend only by invitation of one of the ACT Board co-chairpersons. Attachment A sets forth the current norms for Board meetings.

(2) **Voting:** Each Board member shall have one vote. Members of the Board may vote only in person. Votes cast by proxy are not permitted. Except as otherwise provided, all decisions shall be made by a majority of those present at the meeting provided that there is a quorum.

(3) **Quorum:** For Board meetings a quorum shall consist of twenty (20) percent of the sitting members so long as there are at least two (2) officers present if there are three sitting officers and three (3) if there are six sitting officers.

B. Executive Committee (officers) Meetings: Generally, the Executive Committee shall meet monthly and more often as needed. All CHA public housing and voucher tenants may attend any meeting of the Executive Committee. Non-CHA tenants (including CHA staff) may attend only by invitation of one of the ACT Board co-chairpersons. The time and place of Executive Committee shall be posted on the ACT website calendar. For meetings of the officers, a quorum shall consist of three (3) officers if there are four, and four (4) officers if there are six.

C. Committee Meetings: Standing and Ad Hoc Committees shall meet as needed. All CHA tenants may attend any committee meeting unless the committee has adopted restrictions approved by the Board [see Article VI. A].

D. Notice: Unless there is an emergency, at least three (3) days advance written notice of all regular and special meetings of the ACT Board, officers, and committees shall be provided to each Board member of ACT and any other CHA tenant who has requested such advance notice by notifying the ACT office. Said notice shall contain the date, time, location and, where available, the proposed agenda or topics for discussion.

E. Electronic recording: No one except the recording secretary shall be permitted to electronically record any meeting without permission of the chairperson or other person presiding over the meeting.

F. Executive (Private) Session: The Board and the officers may meet privately only if the meeting was first convened in open session, the presiding officer cites the purpose for an executive session, a majority of the Board members present have voted to go into executive session, and the presiding officer has stated before the executive session begins whether the public meeting will resume after the executive session. Executive sessions may be held only for the following limited purposes: (1) to discuss ACT personnel matters; (2) to discuss strategy concerning negotiations with the CHA or litigation if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the negotiations or litigation; (3) to investigate charges of criminal misconduct or discuss the filing of criminal complaints; (4) to consider and interview applicants for employment with ACT or CHA if an open meeting will have a detrimental effect on obtaining qualified applicants; and (5) to meet with a mediator provided that the decision to participate in mediation shall be made in an open meeting session.

Article XI. Sexual Harassment Policy

A. Attachment C is incorporated by reference. It shall apply to ACT Board members, ACT members, and invitees. It shall apply at ACT meetings, events, or activities; in connection with any ACT-related business; and between ACT board members, ACT committee members, and ACT office volunteers that affect an ACT member's participation in ACT.

B. Any ACT member who has been found to have committed an act of sexual harassment or retaliation will be subject to disciplinary action, which may include suspension or removal in accordance with the procedures set forth in Article IV, Sections F and G and Article VI, Section F of the ACT By-Laws.

C. Any non-member of ACT who has been found to have committed an act of sexual harassment may be removed from ACT's premises and proceedings and may have any contract with ACT terminated.

Article XII. Non-Discrimination

ACT shall not discriminate against any individual on the basis of class, source of income, race, color, ethnic or national origin, language, immigration status, religious status, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, disability, education, political beliefs, or housing status/tenure.

Article XIII. Expenditures

A. The officers shall draft a proposed annual budget for ACT based on actual or anticipated expenses of the ACT office, Board, and committees. The budget and any significant amendment shall be approved by the Board. Expenditures shall be made only in accordance with such approved budget or amendment.

B. All expenditures over \$100 must be approved, in advance, by the officers. The person requesting permission to make the expenditure shall provide a signed authorization form to the co-treasurer. Two officers' signatures are required on all checks over \$100 except for regular expenditures that have been approved by the officers (e.g. monthly internet bill).

Article XIV. Fiscal Year

The fiscal year shall be the calendar year (January 1 through December 31).

Article XV. Amendments

A. process to amend Bylaws

Except as provided in Article X (A) (regarding Board norms), these bylaws may be amended, added to, or repealed by the affirmative vote of two-thirds of the Board members present and voting at a duly noticed regular Board meeting of ACT. There shall be reasonable advance notice to ACT membership of any meeting (including the date, time, place, and purpose) at which votes may be taken to change the bylaws. The following actions, all completed at least ten calendar days prior to the meeting, shall constitute reasonable advance notice : (1) posting notice of the meeting and purpose in a public place at CHA's offices; (2) posting the proposed amendments, together with notice of the meeting, on ACT's website; and (3) sending (by mail, email, or otherwise) a copy of the proposed amendments together with notice of the meeting to all current Board members, any ACT member who regularly receives notice of Board meetings; and any ACT member who so requests in advance by notice to a co-chairperson, or the ACT office.

B. Policy decisions of the Board

(1) Policies established by the Board may be repealed by a simple majority of Board members in attendance provided notice of a motion to repeal has been included in the notice and agenda for the Board meeting. The Executive Committee may not repeal such policies and may override only in an emergency. The Secretaries and Office shall maintain a record of all such policy decisions and provide a comprehensive copy of such policies to any ACT member on request.

(2) Policy decisions internal to ACT made or approved by the Board shall remain valid indefinitely as though incorporated in the Bylaws.

(3) Policy decisions external to ACT or concerning its relationship to CHA must be renewed annually by the Board

Article XVI. Conflict

These bylaws and any duly adopted rule, procedure, or policy of the Board or any committee of the Board shall take precedence over Robert's Rules of Order or other parliamentary procedure guides. However, Robert's Rules of Order shall apply if there is any issue not resolved by reference to these bylaws or any such duly adopted rule, procedure, or policy of the Board or Committee.

definitions

voucher tenants CHA voucher tenants including participants in (i) the federal Section 8 housing choice voucher program, the Mass. Rental Voucher Program (MRVP), and the state Alternative Housing Voucher Program (AHVP); (ii) both tenant-based and project-based voucher programs. (iii) Voucher tenants include heads of household and all authorized household members, whether they reside in Cambridge or not.

public housing tenants CHA public housing tenants including those with Section 8 project-based or other assistance who live in CHA-managed developments, including RAD and others that were formerly State or Federal public housing.

regular meeting A scheduled meeting of the ACT Board for which members have received proper notice which is not called as a special purpose or emergency meeting.

sitting members/ officers Duly elected members of the Board or a Committee; members who are not present at a given meeting are sitting members but vacant positions are excluded. *example:* a twenty member Board with two vacancies has only eighteen *sitting members*. If only five of the eighteen are present at a given meeting, the Board still has eighteen sitting members.

Attachments
A: ACT Board Norms
B: Outreach Plan for ACT Governing Board Elections
C: Sexual Harassment Policy

Attachment A to the ACT Bylaws : ACT Board Norms

To preserve a safe place for ACT members to be heard, and to create the conditions for successfully carrying out the work of the organization, we will make our best effort to follow these norms at ACT board meetings.

1. Yelling is unacceptable.
2. We will arrive on time for meetings. We will be respectful of one another's time.
3. We will stay focused on the topic that is being discussed.
4. We will raise our hands and wait to be recognized by the chair before we speak.
5. We will not interrupt or speak over others.
6. We will not hold side conversations when someone has the floor.
7. Cell phones will be turned off or placed on vibrate during meetings.
8. We will practice active listening.
9. Personal attacks will not be allowed.
10. Threatening verbal or physical behavior will not be allowed. The chair will enforce this rule by requesting that the offender leave the room. If they do not leave the room voluntarily, the chair may assign a person or committee to escort the offender out of the room and the building. In the event that the offender refuses to leave, building security or the police will be called.
11. We will not disclose confidential information about other tenants.
12. We will not make false accusations against ACT members.
13. We will not disclose to the CHA any internal ACT business discussed at board meetings.
14. We understand that ACT meetings are not an appropriate setting for resolving personal problems.
15. ACT will try its best to provide reasonable accommodations to persons with disabilities.
16. ACT shall strive to have scent-free meetings and events in consideration of individuals with multiple chemical sensitivity and/or fragrance sensitivity. Board members are strongly encouraged to refrain from using chemical-based scented products.
17. Disciplinary action will be taken against ACT board members who are responsible for repeated and/or substantial violations of board norms that impede the work of the organization.

Attachment B to the ACT Bylaws : Outreach Plan for ACT Governing Board Elections

The Election Committee's outreach plan shall include:

- Developing written materials about the election and ACT, and translating all materials.
- Creating fliers to post/distribute at public housing, RAD/formerly public housing, and voucher developments, community organizations and agencies, and other locations.
- Posting election information on the ACT and CHA websites.
- Coordinating with CHA mailings: budget permitting, every CHA public housing or voucher household shall receive two mailings—one affording eligible persons the opportunity to become candidates; and one listing all candidates and including a mail-in ballot and instructions how to obtain additional ballots for eligible household members
- Appointing a person responsible for mailed ballots, including maintaining a log of requests for additional ballots, mailing such ballots, receiving all ballots returned to the ACT P.O. Box, and keeping returned ballots in a lock-box.
- Appointing a person responsible for responding to calls and emails received by the ACT office from tenants (or the public) with questions about the board election
- Holding an candidate open house/informational night.
- Sending emails to tenants and community groups and agencies to get the word out about the election.
- Using local media (print, web, CCTV) and social media to publicize the election.
- If possible, providing rides to voters on election day.

Attachment C to the ACT Bylaws: Sexual Harassment Policy

Purpose

ACT strives to maintain a cooperative and respectful working environment free from hostility and misconduct, including sexual harassment and retaliatory behavior prompted by an allegation of sexual harassment. Sexual harassment and retaliatory behavior will not be tolerated by ACT. The function of this policy is to define sexual harassment, describe ACT's reporting and investigation procedures, and to communicate the penalties and consequences of any violations of ACT's sexual harassment policy.

Scope

This policy shall apply to ACT board members, ACT members, and invitees. It shall apply at ACT meetings, events, or activities; in connection with any ACT-related business; and between ACT board members, ACT committee members, and ACT office volunteers that affect an ACT member's participation in ACT.

1. Definition of Sexual Harassment

1.1. Sexual harassment is defined as unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when:

- (a) submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implied as a term or condition of an individual's membership,
- (b) such advances, requests, or conduct have the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's membership performance by creating an intimidating, hostile, humiliating, or sexually offensive work environment.

1.2. Examples of behavior that ACT may consider as sexual harassment include, but are not limited to:

- Unwelcome sexual advances –whether they include physical touching or not;
- Sexual epithets, jokes, written or oral references to sexual conduct;
- Comments on an individual's body or appearance;
- Comments about an individual's sexual activity, deficiencies, or prowess;
- Showing or displaying sexually explicit graphics, cartoons, pictures, photographs, or objects;
- Unwelcome leering, whistling, brushing against the body, sexual gestures, suggestive or insulting comments;
- Inquiries into another's sexual experiences;
- Discussion of one's sexual activities;
- Statements or threats, which imply a link or could be reasonably construed to imply a link between a member's sexual conduct and his or her status or treatment within ACT.

2. Retaliation

2.1 All ACT members should take special note that retaliation against an individual who has complained about sexual harassment, and retaliation against individuals for cooperating with an investigation of a sexual harassment complaint is unlawful and will not be tolerated by ACT. Such retaliation will result in suspension or removal.

2.2 Retaliation is defined as threatening, intimidating, or harassing behavior directed at an individual who has complained about sexual harassment, or an individual who is cooperating with or facilitating an investigation of a sexual harassment complaint.

3. ACT Member Responsibilities

3.1. All ACT members are forbidden to engage in any form of sexual harassment or retaliatory behavior as defined in sections 1 and 2 above.

3.2. ACT board members will ensure that this policy is made known and accessible to all ACT members who regularly participate in ACT-related business including committee meetings and the ACT office.

4. Reporting and Investigation Procedures

4.1. Raising a Complaint of Sexual Harassment or Retaliation

4.1.1. Any ACT member who believes that they have been subject to any form of sexual harassment or retaliation has the right to file a complaint.

- A verbal or written complaint of sexual harassment or retaliation can be raised with the Reporting Members.
- The ACT officers shall select two Reporting Members and an Alternate to serve for two years' time. One of the Reporting Members will be a current board officer. The other Reporting Member and the Alternate may be a current or former board member or a member of a tenant organization affiliated with ACT. The Reporting Members will agree to follow the procedures outlined in ACT's Sexual Harassment Policy and to participate in required trainings.
- In the event that the complaint involves one of the Reporting Members, a verbal or written complaint may be submitted to the person designated the Alternate.

4.1.2. A written complaint of sexual harassment or retaliation may also be filed with the agency listed below. The use of ACT's complaint process does not preclude an ACT member from filing a complaint with this agency, nor does it toll the statute of limitations for filing with them.

- Cambridge Human Rights Commission, (617) 349-4396, 51 Inman Street 2nd Floor, Cambridge 02139

4.1.3. Unless the complainant requests in writing that no further action be taken following the complaint, complaints of sexual harassment or retaliation will be investigated within 30 days of the complaint by the Reporting Member of ACT, in conjunction with a member of the governing board who is designated for such investigations.

4.1.4. A complainant's written request to not proceed with an investigation will not preclude the complainant from pursuing the complaint at a later time.

4.1.5. To the extent possible, the confidentiality of the individual(s) submitting or named by the complaint shall be maintained. However, investigations of sexual harassment or retaliation may include interviews with witnesses or the individual charged, and may necessitate the submission of written statements by involved parties.

4.1.6. If the allegation of sexual harassment is unsubstantiated, the matter shall be closed and no disciplinary action will be taken against the alleged harasser or the complainant provided the complaint was made in good faith. Also see Board norm number 12.

5. Penalty for Violation of Sexual Harassment Policy

5.1. Any ACT member who has been found to have committed an act of sexual harassment or retaliation will be subject to disciplinary action, which may include suspension or removal in accordance with the procedure outlined in Article IV. Sections F and G and Article VI. Section F of the ACT Bylaws.

5.2. Any ACT member who hinders an investigation of a sexual harassment complaint may be disciplined.

5.3. If a member has been found to have engaged in any form of sexual harassment, a record of this finding shall be kept in a confidential file that will only be accessible to the Reporting Member, the ACT Executive Committee, and affected ACT members.

5.4. Any non-member of ACT who has been found to have committed an act of sexual harassment may be removed from ACT's premises and proceedings, and may have any contract with ACT terminated.