Membership Policy

PREAMBLE

The Nova Scotia Community Living Organizations (NSCLO) represents a group of professionals, bound to one another through exposure to a common class of problems, common pursuit of solutions, and a commitment to uphold the rights of all people that we support. The development of an association, like NSCLO, is a way of developing social capital, nurturing new knowledge, stimulating innovation, projecting our collective voice, and sharing knowledge. Associations knit people together with peers and their outputs can include leading practices, guidelines, knowledge repositories, technical problem and solution discussions, working papers, and strategies.

NSCLO adheres to the philosophy that in a community, **everyone belongs**. The Association, through its membership, works together to provide continual opportunities for growth, community experience, and inclusion of choice for the persons with whom we provide our services.

Meeting attendance is a vital way that we, as an association, connect, learn, innovate, and ensure best practices are used across our membership and in the sector. Every member, regardless of length of service, has a voice and enriches the Association. These connections and learning opportunities support members to perform their jobs to the best of their ability. Because of this, we ask that members find ways to prioritize meeting attendance. All members are needed not just to meet quorum, but so that we maintain diversity and vitality in our perspectives and conversations. If you are struggling to attend meetings regularly, reach out to the NSCLO Executive Director or Board Executives as we will make every effort to assist and accommodate you (ex: assistance with travel expenses).

PURPOSE

To outline both the benefits and the expectations of each tier of membership offered by NSCLO

To outline NSCLO membership application and evaluation processes

DEFINITIONS

Voting Member tier of membership is defined in NSCLO's by laws as a voting Member in good standing and adhering to all voting membership requirements with the Association. Voting Members have access to all NSCLO membership benefits (outlined below).

Subscription Member tier of membership is defined in NSCLO's by laws as a *non-voting* Member in good standing and adhering to all subscription membership requirements with the Association. Subscription Members have access to many, but not all, NSCLO membership benefits (outlined below).

PROCEDURE

MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS

NSCLO benefits **all** members by:

- reducing the time and cost to retrieve information
- enhancing coordination, standardization, and cooperation across all organizations
- improving knowledge sharing and distribution
- reducing learning curves for new leaders
- creating a collective voice for all province wide issues
- building more community partnerships

A. Voting Members have access to all NSCLO membership benefits including, but not limited to, the following:
    a. Annual AGM and four additional business meetings per year
    b. Lobbying, negotiations, and discussions on sector related issues with DCS and DSP staff on member identified and sector related issues
    c. Regular communication with the NSCLO Executive Director including sector news, updates, and resource sharing
    d. Four regional meetings per year
    e. Community education and profile building
    f. RICK training with access to receive "Train the Trainer" instruction
    g. Networking and mentorship for new and developing leaders
    h. Annual conference at discounted rate
    i. May run for any position on NSCLO's Board of Directors
    j. Training and Professional Development opportunities

B. Subscription Members have access to the following NSCLO membership benefits:
    a. Annual AGM
    b. Regular communication with the NSCLO Executive Director including sector news, updates, and resource sharing
    c. Four regional meetings per year
    d. Community education and profile building
    e. RICK training with access to receive "Train the Trainer" instruction
    f. Networking and mentorship for new and developing leaders
    g. Annual conference at regular rate
    h. Training and Professional Development opportunities
    i. Attendance at sector-wide meetings at a discounted rate

MEMBERSHIP EXPECTATIONS

All NSCLO members should:

- share challenges, lessons learned, and resources with one another
- foster an environment of collaboration and support
- participate in meetings and discussions, sharing their thoughts and perspectives
- contribute to an atmosphere of problem solving
- be committed and adhere to the values and principles of RICK
- maintain a high level of professionalism and trust during all meetings and discussions
- when joining a meeting virtually, attendees must either join with their name displayed and/or their

camera on to be admitted; people joining without their name displayed may not be let into a meeting to maintain privacy and security of the meeting

A. Voting Membership Requirements also include:
    a. Completion of Voting Member Application and an interview process. New members are approved via a consensus of voting members.
    b. Agency is a non-profit approved by the Disability Support Program (DSP) to provide community-based support to people with physical disabilities, intellectual disabilities, or mental health support needs to live and participate in community.
    c. At all times, must act in accordance with NSCLO's by-laws, mission, and values
    d. At all times, member organizations must be in compliance with all policies and procedures outlined by the Department of Community Services and DSP
    e. Member organizations must be in compliance with all federal and provincial laws, legislation, and regulations governing the services they offer.
    f. Member organizations must maintain the principles and philosophy of RICK training in the services that they provide. Best practice is for each organization to have their own RICK trainers who can train their staff teams
    g. Attendance at a minimum of one business meeting and one regional meeting per calendar year is encouraged of members. Business meetings are held in January, March, September & November and are offered as hybrid meetings. Regional meetings are typically held in February, April, and October with each region having an in-person meeting once and the rest are virtual.
    h. Signing a Confidentiality Agreement (Appendix D)
    i. The Board of Directors may evaluate and discuss a member's membership status with them if they are unable to meet any of the above mentioned membership standards. Every effort shall be taken, as mentioned in the preamble, to support member organizations with any membership issues.

B. Subscription Membership Requirements include:
    a. Completion of Subscription Member Application and an interview process. New members are approved via a consensus of voting members.
    b. Agency is approved by the Disability Support Program (DSP) to provide community-based support to people with physical disabilities, intellectual disabilities, or mental health support needs to live and participate in community.
    c. At all times, must act in accordance with NSCLO's by-laws, mission, and values
    d. At all times, member organizations must be in compliance with all policies and procedures outlined by the Department of Community Services and DSP
    e. Members organizations must be in compliance with all federal and provincial laws, legislation, and regulations governing the services they offer.
    f. Member organizations must maintain the principles and philosophy of RICK training in the services that they provide.
    g. Signing a Confidentiality Agreement (Appendix D)
    h. The Board of Directors may evaluate and discuss a member's membership status with them if they are unable to meet any of the above mentioned membership standards. Every effort shall be taken, as mentioned in the preamble, to support member organizations with any membership issues.

APPLICATION PROCESS

All new applicants to NSCLO must complete the application for their respective tier of membership. Once an application is received, NSCLO's membership committee will review and reach out to the applicant to let them know whether their application has been denied or whether they will advance in the process to an interview and review of their organization and services. This may include the NSCLO membership committee or Executive Director visiting their organization. The Membership Committee will bring applications to the voting membership at a business meeting. Approval to membership is based on a consensus of the voting members present at the meeting. See Appendix A for the new membership application.

In addition to the application for new members, all members from both tiers of membership will be required to submit an annual renewal application along with their annual dues. This annual application may change from year to year and will include demographics questions, request for policies, and other information NSCLO deems important for the association. Research involving NSCLO membership will include adequate provisions to maintain the confidentiality of research data. Maintaining confidentiality requires safeguarding the information that an NSCLO organization has disclosed in a relationship of trust and with the expectation that it will not be disclosed to others without permission, except in ways that are consistent with the original disclosure. Information may be shared with stakeholders in ways that are general and non-identifying to a particular organization.

MEMBERSHIP DUES

NSCLO's by-laws set forth expectations for membership dues payments. See Appendix B for current membership dues amounts and payment information.

MEMBERSHIP REVIEW PROCESS

NSCLO is committed to a fair and transparent process for reviewing membership expectation concerns.

Any serious complaint or concern will be promptly evaluated, thoroughly examined, and possible action, including expulsion from the NSCLO, will be taken into consideration. See Appendix C and NSCLO by-laws for further information on changes to membership status procedures.

When the actions, mission, philosophy, beliefs or standards of practice of any member, from either tier of membership, conflict with NSCLO's or could endanger the association's reputation or standing in the community, NSCLO reserves the right to terminate their membership.

Please see the Membership Expectations Procedure outlined in Appendix C for further details.

MEETING ATTENDANCE

As stated above, meeting attendance is highly encouraged and NSCLO can support members in a variety of ways to ensure that they are able to attend, virtually or in person. To support meeting attendance and participation, the Executive Director will, after the first two business meetings of the fiscal year, send the names of those who have not yet attended a meeting to the membership committee. Committee members will then reach out to those members to connect and offer support.

For Business Meetings:
Only Voting Members are able to attend business meetings. Additionally, attendance at these meetings is limited to the designated, organizational representative. If that designated representative is unable to attend, they can submit a request to the board to have a substitute attend in their place. This approved substitute is able to vote in place of the organizational representative.
This is to maintain the confidentiality of the group, facilitate meaningful relationship building, and uphold the integrity of the meetings and voting processes.

For sector-wide meetings:
All members and community partners are able to attend. Voting Members can send one person at no charge. Subscription members can attend at a discounted rate per person and community partners can attend at the regular rate per person. Virtual attendance is free for all tiers of membership.

For regional meetings:
These are open to all tiers of NSCLO membership. Attendance at these meetings is limited to the designated organizational representative. If that designated representative is unable to attend, they can submit a request to the board to have a substitute attend in their place. This is to maintain the confidentiality of the group, facilitate meaningful relationship building, and uphold the integrity of the meetings.

AGM:
The AGM is open to all members as well as community members at no charge to attend.

All other meetings/training:
For any other meetings or training offered, guidelines for attendance will be made clear to the membership. In many cases, Members can choose who attends much of the training and Pro-D offered by NSCLO.

Appendix A – NSCLO Application for Membership

Name of Organization:

Mailing Address:

Phone #:

Fax #:

Applicant Email:

Name of Senior Staff (applicant):

Title of senior staff:

Tier of Membership you are applying to (see attached for membership requirements before selecting):

- ☐ Full Voting Membership (non-profit organizations)
- ☐ Subscription Membership (open to all organizations)

1. Primary diagnoses of people supported (check all that apply):

   ☐ Intellectual disability

   ☐ Physical disability

   ☐ Mental Health Support needs

   ☐ Other (please describe): _____

2. Are all individuals supported 19 or over? ☐ Yes ☐ No

   If no, how many individuals do you support in adult services? _____

3. Is your organization a non-profit? ☐ Yes ☐ No

4. Is your agency incorporated? ☐ Yes ☐ No

   If yes, what is your registration number and date of registration?

   Registration # _____ Date registered _____

5. Do you have a volunteer Board of Directors? ☐ Yes ☐ No

   If yes, how many board members do you have? _____

   Name of board chairperson: _____

6. Type of supported living services your organization provides (check all that apply):

☐ Group Homes	# of homes		# of individuals	
☐ Small Option Homes	# of homes		# of individuals	
☐ Developmental Homes	# of homes		# of individuals	
☐ ILS/ILS+			# of individuals	
☐ Associate Families	# of families		# of individuals	
☐ Home Share	# of families		# of individuals	
☐ Respite Care	# of beds			
☐ Supervised Apartments	# apartments		# of individuals	
☐ Shared Services	# apartments		# of individuals	

☐ Other, please explain:

7. While NSCLO membership requires that member organizations provide community-based housing supports, we are interested to know what else your agency offers. Please tell us about other services your organization offers:

8. How many employees do you have? ☐

   What percentage of them are unionized? ☐

   If you are unionized, what union(s) are your staff members of? ☐

9. Do you provide a benefit plan to your staff? ☐ Yes ☐ No

10. Do you provide a pension plan to your staff? ☐ Yes ☐ No

11. What is your organization's mission statement?

    ☐

NSCLO has developed a training program called RICK. RICK stands for: Respect, Integrity, Caring, & Knowledge. This training is based on the Prime Directive - "I am deliberate in my interactions. Everything will be done with respect, integrity, caring & knowledge." NSCLO offers "Train the Trainer" sessions so that all organizations can implement this internally.

12. Will you be willing to implement this training program within your organization?

    ☐ Yes ☐ No

13. Please explain your organization's philosophy of care and how it might relate to RICK and our prime directive:

    ☐

Current Membership dues are listed in Appendix B of the NSCLO Membership Policy. You can request current dues amounts any time from the NSCLO Membership Committee or Executive Director.

Membership dues are payable at the time of acceptance into membership and at the beginning of each fiscal year thereafter. Payment will be a pro-rated annual amount if an applicant is accepted to their respective tier of membership during the fiscal year. Payment is required before membership is finalized.

In applying for membership in the Nova Scotia Residential Agencies Association (NSCLO), I acknowledge that I have received and reviewed the Membership Requirements addendum to this application and the Memorandum of Association of NSCLO and agree to abide by and support the purpose and objectives of the society contained therein.

Date of Application:

Signature

Applications must be submitted to:

Lora Church
NSCLO Executive Director
ed@NSCLO.ca

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY			
Date received:		Signature of recipient	
Date Forwarded to Admissions Committee:		Signature of Admissions Chair	
Date of Interview (if applicable):		Signature of interviewer	
Date of decision:		Signature of board president	
Was this application approved?		Yes	No

Notes (optional)

Appendix B – Membership Dues

As stated in the Membership Policy, NSCLO's by-laws set forth expectations for membership dues payments. Please review these prior to submitting your renewal application and annual dues.

Dues are based on an organization's DSP funded organizational operating budget. If you have any questions about this, you can reach out to the membership committee or NSCLO executive director.

Dues rates are as follows:

DSP Funded Organizational Operating Budget	2026 - 2027 Membership rates
< 500k	$300
500k - 1.2 million	$500
Over 1.2 million – 3.5 million	$800
Over 3.5 million – 5 million	$1000
Over 5 million – 10 million	$1300
Over 10 million	$1800
Subscription	$250

Appendix C - Membership Expectations Procedure

Complaints/Concerns of a serious nature

Any known allegations of a serious nature involving the actions, procedures, or violations of membership expectations by an NSCLO member must be reported to the Board President. Examples of allegations of a serious nature include, but are not limited to, removal of residential license, removal of joint stocks registration, DCS audit of fraud, etc. The President will then inform the Executive, including forwarding all known documentation, and they will determine how to move forward. Some examples may include:

- meeting with the member to discuss the allegations
- performing a cursory query or analysis and/or waiting on results from other outside parties' findings
- temporarily suspending the organization's membership status, pending the results of any outstanding inquiries

Depending on the determination of the validity and seriousness of the allegation, the Executive may provide a report on findings to the full voting membership to vote on their membership status. Throughout this process, all NSCLO by-laws, policies, and procedures will be consulted and followed.

When the actions, mission, philosophy, beliefs or standards of practice of any member, from either tier of membership, conflict with NSCLO's or could endanger the association's reputation or standing in the community, NSCLO reserves the right to terminate their membership.

Appendix D - Confidentiality Agreement

As a member of The Nova Scotia Community Living Organizations (NSCLO), it is important to maintain a high level of professionalism and trust during all meetings and discussions. By attending these meetings, you agree to the following confidentiality expectations:

1. **Confidentiality of Discussions**: All discussions, materials, and information shared during association meetings, whether in person or through electronic means, are considered confidential. Members must not disclose or discuss any information learned in the course of these meetings outside of the official meeting setting unless otherwise authorized by the member sharing the information.
2. **Sensitive Information**: Any sensitive, proprietary, or personal information shared by members, staff, or third parties must be treated with the utmost discretion. This includes, but is not limited to, business strategies, financial matters, membership details, and any other information that could be considered confidential or privileged.
3. **Non-Disclosure of Meeting Content**: Members are expected to refrain from discussing or circulating meeting content to non-NSCLO members, unless that content is already public or specifically designated for wider distribution.
4. **Protection of Privacy**: Members must respect the privacy of individuals discussed during meetings and refrain from sharing personal or confidential information about other members or non-members without consent.
5. **Enforcement**: Violations of this confidentiality agreement are a concern of a serious nature. Please see Appendix C for more information on how NSCLO addresses concerns.

By participating in association meetings, you affirm your understanding of and commitment to maintaining the confidentiality of all information discussed. We appreciate your cooperation in ensuring a respectful and secure environment for all members.

_____ _____

Print Name Date

_____

Signature