



LEFFERTS COMMUNITY FOOD COOP
MEMBER
HANDBOOK

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Special thanks to those who edited this handbook and made it happen!

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SECTION 1. MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of Lefferts Community Food Co-op is to sell sustainable and nutritious food at the best value possible, to encourage healthy food practices and to foster environmentally responsible activities through democratic cooperation. Lefferts Community Food Co-op focuses on serving residents of Flatbush, Prospect Lefferts Gardens, and Crown Heights, as well as the larger New York City metropolitan area.

Lefferts Community Food Co-op adheres to the principles outlined by the International Cooperative Alliance. Our objectives are to:

1. Sell high-quality, sustainable, and culturally relevant food and products that are easily accessible to the communities we serve at the lowest price possible through cooperative work;
2. Address issues and provide solutions and resources relating to the nutrition disparity experienced by our residents;
3. Educate members and residents of our community about the benefits of healthy eating and living;
4. Foster sustainable partnerships with local farmers, CSAs, Farmers Markets, producer and consumer cooperatives, and community, health and educational institutions;
5. Engage local businesses in promoting access to healthy food; and
6. Become a role model for the wider community in demonstrating the benefits of cooperative association.

The Lefferts Community Food Co-op finds strength in the diversity of the community around us and commits to selecting and promoting healthy foods. We believe in the values of cooperative work, honesty, openness, and social responsibility, and we oppose discrimination in any form. We happily welcome all who agree with our objectives and who are willing to participate in the enrichment of the community around them.

SECTION 2. WHAT DO WE MEAN BY COOPERATION?

Member-worker co-ops like LCFC are able to reduce overhead costs significantly because members contribute their time to running the store, producing the lowest prices possible for all members. This is an arrangement in which we help each other and our community as a whole.

Participating in shared work also builds personal connections, which develops into community. Equality is important, too: LCFC has chosen not to divide our community into different classes of members with different economic “deals.” Through shared work, you as the member have an opportunity to meet other people, have a hands-on experience, step outside your everyday routine, and feel a connection to the space and how it is run.

As a cooperative, LCFC adheres to several essential principles. These include voluntary and open membership, member economic participation, organizational independence, democratic member control, concern for the community, and cooperation among cooperatives. (Please see the International Cooperative Alliance Statement of Cooperative Identity on page 25).

SECTION 3.

MEMBERSHIP

Membership in the Co-op is open to anyone regardless of race, color, religion (creed), gender, gender expression, national origin (ancestry), disability, marital status, sexual orientation, or military status, in any of its activities or operations. These activities include, but are not limited to, hiring and firing of staff, selection of volunteers and vendors, and provision of services. We are committed to providing an inclusive and welcoming environment to all members.

Because members must work in the store, members must be 16 or older. Non-members may not work in the store.

3.1 FOUR STEPS TO BECOMING A MEMBER

1. FILL OUT THE MEMBERSHIP FORM

LCFC is a co-op made up of **individual members**. Every individual over 16 must join the Co-op.

Membership forms can be found online at www.leffertsfoodcoop.org and in the store. You can also call the store at 718-771-0500 and request an application, or stop by during our open hours (Thursdays 4-8:30 pm, Sundays 11 am-6 pm).

2. PAY FEE AND INVESTMENT

The **refundable investment** is \$100, plus there is a one-time non-refundable \$25 joining fee, which covers administrative costs. Reduced fees are available; see next page for details. Payments can be made in the store, online, or via postal mail. When you join and pay an investment, you may shop in the store.

3. ATTEND AN ORIENTATION

When you join the Co-op, within two (2) weeks you will receive a welcome email. At this time, you will be offered dates to attend an orientation. You may continue to shop up until your orientation date.

We have found orientation to be helpful to engaging and educating new members about how the Co-op works while getting some important work

done at the Co-op. Orientations will usually be on a Sunday once a month. There will be a 1-hour presentation (with Q&A) and then new members (you!) will assist with doing work in the store such as inventory or cleaning. Orientation will also count as your first shift. At orientation, you will also join a regular committee. See page 10 for more details on this.

4. JOIN A COMMITTEE

To continue shopping and stay a fully active member, once you complete an orientation you must continue to work shifts by joining a regular committee. Regular committees keep the store running! Committees include: Receiving, Buying, Inventory, Pricing, Stocking, Shopping, Maintenance, Building, Finance, Office, Attendance, Membership, Tech, Board, Communications, and Special Projects. See page 22 for committees and descriptions. Not every committee will have openings. You can switch committees at any time (see page 12). You will be required to work once every four weeks for 2.75 hours each time (13 times a year) to stay active.

5. SHOP AND WORK!

You're a member! As long as you work your shifts every 4 weeks, you can shop. Working helps keep the store operational and shopping keeps the store in business. Shopping at the Co-op helps keep items in stock and allows us to expand our offerings!

3.2 EXPECTATIONS & BENEFITS OF CO-OP MEMBERSHIP

BENEFITS

- **You are the owner.** This means you share control over **all** aspects of the types of goods we carry, from types of products to where we buy from and our pricing structure. There is transparency in the business because we are all owners.
- **You are the worker.** So you know how the business is run and handled.
- **You are the shopper.** We do not generate a profit—all income goes back into the business—so our overhead is lower and we benefit directly from this by keeping the cost of food as low as possible. All savings get passed back to you.

EXPECTATIONS

YOU SUPPORT YOUR CO-OP ECONOMICALLY WITH YOUR BUSINESS

- You invest \$100 to give the Co-op some capital to keep running or purchase new things.
- You shop for your food! You will benefit by having access to high quality, organic, local and natural foods at the lowest price possible.
- Your membership also gets you discounts at other businesses! See the list in store for more information.

YOU CONTRIBUTE WORK

- Members complete one workshift every four weeks (the year is divided up into A, B, C, and D weeks). Each shift is two hours and 45 minutes, and members work a total of 13 shifts per year.

YOU PARTICIPATE

- **Your work** on committees keeps the Co-op running.
- Attend General Meetings on the third Wednesday of each month. The board meets at 6:30 p.m. and the full committee leadership meets at 7 p.m.
- Leadership: Leading a committee helps us work out better processes, logistics, and communications. You can get involved in overall Co-op strategy and growth by joining or working with the Board.
- Communicate and take action on ways to make your Co-op run better. We are a constantly evolving business.

YOUR WORD

- You do not steal or borrow from or otherwise jeopardize or endanger your fellow members or the Co-op itself.
- You tell your friends and neighbors about the Co-op!

3.3 BECOMING A MEMBER

The Co-op is a business that is owned by its members.

This means members invest money into the business to help it grow. Every dollar of your investment works for the Co-op.

MEMBER INVESTMENTS

The full refundable investment is \$100. If you receive one of the following types of income-based assistance, the investment will be reduced to \$25 for the duration of your receipt of the benefit or subsidy: Food stamps (SNAP), Supplemental Security Income (SSI), Medicaid, WIC, or a Section 8 or other government-sponsored housing subsidy. Once a year the Co-op will ask all members with reduced investment to confirm they still receive income-based assistance. If you no longer have income-based assistance, you will be asked to invest the full amount.

The non-refundable joining fee is \$25. If you receive one of the types of income-based assistance listed above, the joining fee will be waived.

To receive the lowered amount, please present documentation of the income-based benefit with your membership form to the Co-op Membership Committee at membership@leffertsfoodcoop.org or leave a note in the store's office in the back. If you have a benefit card, a photocopy of the card is acceptable. If you do not have a benefit card, a copy of an award letter will be accepted.

Requests for fee waivers must be made at time of joining or within four weeks of joining. Requests for reduced investments can be made at any point during membership.

Once a member provides documentation of the income-based assistance, investment payments made in excess of the required \$25 can be refunded at the member's request.

If you choose to pay in installments, you must make an initial payment of \$25 when joining. Notices will be sent out quarterly to remind you of payments (in \$25 increments). You will have one year from your join date to pay the full investment.

HOW AND WHERE TO MAKE PAYMENTS

All initial payments must be made at the time you submit your membership form, which can be done in store, online or via mail. Other payments should be made in store during business hours.

It is recommended that you save your receipt every time you make a payment in case of any discrepancy.

If you are on the payment plan, the Finance Committee will send you a request for payment every quarter. If your payment is overdue, you will be put on alert, and if a payment or a request for an extension is not made within a month of the due date, you will be suspended. Please contact the Finance Coordinator at finance@leffertsfoodcoop.org to request an extension if you are having difficulty making a payment on time.

Please provide your member number when you make a payment. You will receive a receipt in store each time you make a payment.

WHAT TO DO ABOUT A DISCREPANCY

Your receipt is essential in helping us clear up any confusion and straighten out errors should a discrepancy arise. To avoid problems down the line, check your receipt immediately upon paying to ensure that your payment was credited to the correct member number. If there is a mistake, contact the Finance Committee (finance@leffertsfoodcoop.org) as soon as possible.

IF YOU LEAVE THE CO-OP

We understand that life changes like moving make it hard for people to maintain Co-op membership. If you choose to leave the Co-op entirely, we request that you leave your investment with us to help us succeed. If you do not want to donate your investment, you may request its return upon canceling your membership. You must request this in writing to Membership (membership@leffertsfoodcoop.org) and provide a current address. Please be aware that a refund requires a minimum of six months to process.

3.4 MEMBERSHIP CARDS

Membership cards will be available at your orientation. If you do not receive one, please check in the store at the register and also follow up with Membership. We will ensure you receive one.

3.5 SHOPPING

You can shop upon joining but you must sign up for orientation within four weeks of joining. You will not be able to shop after that until you complete orientation, join a committee and are assigned a shift.

We realize that sometimes members will come to shop or work without their membership cards. If you lose your membership card, please contact the Membership Office. It may take two to four weeks to replace your card. There is a \$1.50 card replacement fee per card.

Members may shop without a membership card only in the following cases:

- They joined recently and have not yet received their card. Upon joining, your name will be put on the “List of People Who Can Shop Without a Card.” When you come to shop, give the entrance desk worker your last name so your information can be looked up.
- They tell the cashier their member number and confirm their identity by providing some identification with their name on it.

SECTION 4. WORKING SHIFTS

4.1 ORIENTATION

You have four weeks from joining to attend and complete orientation. Unless you contact and make other arrangements with Membership, if you do not complete orientation within that time, your membership will be put on hold until you complete orientation.

Orientation is a way for members to familiarize themselves with the philosophy and workings of the Co-op. Because the Co-op does not work within a traditional business model, we realize that education is key to members feeling connected and engaged in a business that belongs to them.

Orientation will act as your first shift. At orientation, there will be a short presentation on how the Co-op works and this handbook will be distributed, followed by a question and answer period. After that, members will work with Inventory to do a physical count of the products in the store. By participating in these activities, members will get a solid understanding of how the store runs and where we can grow.

4.2 COMMITTEES

Every committee at the Co-op helps keep the store running. Numerous committees offer workshifts at regular intervals. See Appendix A on page 22 for a list of current committees.

New committees are added as the Co-op grows. See Appendix A for current committees and contact info.

4.3 SHIFTS

Members of a committee work together on shifts throughout the year, establishing ongoing relationships and learning to do the job as a team. This relationship and collective experience is vital to all shifts so that responsibility and accountability can be maintained. Thus, the same

members working consistently and good attendance **are essential to the health and growth of our Co-op**. As with any job, your time and experience play a role in smooth operations, and your continued attendance helps us spend less time constantly training new members for shifts.

The Co-op works on a four-week work cycle: “A, B, C, and D.” Each lettered week starts on a MONDAY. All members are expected to work one shift every cycle for 2.75 hours.

At orientation you will choose a committee and a shift on a particular week and time in a cycle. Not all shifts will be open so you will have to choose based on what is available. Most shifts are done in the store and some are done remotely. Your committee leader will be responsible for making sure your attendance is recorded each cycle.

The shift week calendar can be found in the store, online at www.leffertsfoodcoop.org and at https://calendar.google.com/calendar/embed?src=865fujlth3k2iiqurlguimmo00@group.calendar.google.com&ctz=America/New_York

Examples:

The week of November 16 is Week C. The following week of November 23 (starting on a Monday) is Week D.

You are assigned to Shopping Committee on:

Thursday, A Week, 3:45 p.m. to 6:30 p.m.

This means that your shift is every four weeks, on A week.

COMMITTEE LEADERS

Leaders also are members who work one shift every four weeks. All committees have at least one leader who will be responsible for:

- Organizing and managing the committee’s schedules (swaps, open slots, etc.)
- Working with Membership to fill open slots
- Keeping track of committee members’ attendance and reporting this to the Attendance Committee
- Introducing new members to the committee
- Communicating changes in procedure and training members

accordingly

- Bringing up and discussing any problems that have arisen at the General Meeting and within the committee

If a member has any issues that arise with their committee (such as missing a work shift), **they are responsible for communicating it FIRST with their committee leader.**

See Appendix A for a list of current committees and contact information.

4.4 SHIFT REQUIREMENTS AND EXPECTATIONS

Before you start your first shift, you must attend an orientation, which will count as your first shift. When the Membership Committee helps you choose a work shift, you will be told who to contact and when and where to meet for your first shift. The committee leader will also be notified and will make contact with you. Make sure you contact your committee leader before you attend your Committee shift.

Again, to be an active member, you agree to work one 2.75 hour shift every four weeks at a specific time, on a particular day, during a particular work week. **Only current members can work shifts.**

TRACKING ATTENDANCE

1. Once you sign up for a shift at orientation, Membership will connect you with the committee leader. It is the committee leader's responsibility to contact the member, train and stay in contact with them. If you have not heard from or cannot reach a leader within 2 weeks of attending an orientation and signing up for a committee, please inform Membership.
2. Committee leaders will keep track of all members within their committee and their attendance. Time worked is stored as full shifts (2.75 hours). Attendance is taken weekly and is recorded by leaders by the following Mondays. You should keep track of times you have worked as well in case there is a discrepancy.

Your committee leader will also keep track of your attendance so check in with them if you have any questions.

3. On the second week of each month, the Attendance Committee will look at all attendance and update the master attendance list, report shifts for credit to Park Slope Food Coop for members, and adjust members' statuses (Active, Alert, or Suspended).

WHEN YOU CAN'T WORK YOUR SHIFT

Don't miss your shift and leave the Co-op hanging! While we appreciate **any and all** work members contribute, the Co-op cannot run without **regular scheduled** member work. Especially with a co-op of our size, if you don't show up without finding coverage for your shift, the store can't open, orders can't be received, and the Co-op is left vulnerable.

If you know in advance that you can't attend a shift, it is **your** responsibility to get coverage either by trading shifts with someone or by having someone work for you (see "How to Arrange a Swap" below). If you are unsuccessful at trading, please call your committee leader before the shift you are missing and clarify that you attempted to arrange coverage for yourself so that they can assist. You should always let your committee leader know what is happening.

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN YOU MISS YOUR SHIFT?

When you are recorded as missing a shift—either because you just did not show up or you did not find coverage—you will be put on "**ALERT.**"

- You have until your next scheduled shift (in four weeks) to do one makeup shift on your committee.
- If you show up to your next scheduled shift but you have not made up the owed shift, you will owe **two** shifts.
- If you **miss two shifts**, you will be "SUSPENDED" and will owe **three** shifts. You will lose your work shift slot and will not be able to shop until you make up those three shifts. If you are suspended, you must contact Membership as soon as possible to sign up for a new committee and make up your shifts.

If you can't make your shift, **YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR FINDING COVERAGE or making up your missed shift before your next regularly scheduled shift.**

SHIFT STATUSES: A QUICK GUIDE

ACTIVE: *Regularly attending your assigned workshift. Can shop.*

Every new member who completes orientation will be ACTIVE. If you show up to your regularly scheduled shifts, you are in good standing and ACTIVE.

ALERT: *Missed an assigned shift and owe one shift before your next workshift. Can shop.*

If you can't find a replacement and you do not show up for your shift, the first time you miss, you will owe a makeup before your next shift. If you miss your makeup before your next shift and you show up to your next shift, you will owe **two** makeups and will still be on ALERT. You have until your next shift (another four weeks) to make up the two shifts. If you do not make up your two shifts in that time, you will be SUSPENDED.

SUSPENDED: *Missed two assigned shifts and will owe three shifts. CANNOT shop.*

If you miss two regularly scheduled shifts, without any makeups, you will be **SUSPENDED**. Your regular shift will be assigned to another member and you will need to contact Membership to join another committee. To get back to Alert or Active status, you must make up ALL shifts owed. If you miss two or more scheduled shifts, **you will owe three makeups total**. Contact membership and your committee leader to work out how to make up shifts. Don't get behind!

SWITCHING COMMITTEES

If you need a new work slot or want to switch committees, you must contact your committee leader AND the Membership Committee (membership@leffertsfoodcoop.org). Please give as much notice as possible. Do NOT do this the week or day before your scheduled shift!

Unless it is an emergency, you must continue to show up for your shift until Membership and the committee leader confirm your switch. Do not assume that you have switched until this occurs! This will ensure that we aren't left short-handed.

Note: You cannot join a committee that is full. You can ask Membership to be added to a wait list but you must work on another committee until there is space.

HOW TO ARRANGE A COVERAGE FOR A PLANNED MISSED SHIFT

There are two ways to arrange coverage for a shift you are *going* to miss:

1. Swap with another member. To arrange a shift swap, post to your committee's LCFC Google Group. It is usually [lcfc-\[committee\]@googlegroups.com](mailto:lcfc-[committee]@googlegroups.com). See Appendix A for contact information for specific committees. Swapping is a great way to avoid owing makeups, and it helps the Co-op ensure that enough members show up for work when they are expected.

Swap within your own committees. This ensures that people know what to do. For example, Shopping Committee members should only swap with other Shopping Committee members. Be aware that when you arrange a swap with someone, you are not receiving makeup credit and neither are they; you are both just switching your regular shifts. When signing in for the swapped shift, the person working should sign their name in the attendance book next to the name of the person for whom they are substituting (the regular member of that squad). When you arrange a shift swap with another member, be sure to write down and keep their name and member number. If something goes awry, you'll need it.

2. Have a member work for you. A member can work a shift and assign credit for you. Please note in the attendance form that you are giving your shift credit to another member. Only members can do make-ups for other members and you cannot pay someone to work for you!

WHEN SWAPS GO WRONG

If you arrange a shift swap with a member who fails to show up, contact Membership to transfer any makeups owed from the absence to that member. Membership cannot do this unless you provide the name and/or member number of the person with whom you arranged the swap. That is why it is important for you to get and keep this information.

BANKING SHIFTS

If you do extra work, either picking up shifts for another person or contributing to a special project that has a deadline, you can bank shifts

to later apply to your workshift requirement. Please report shifts to your committee leader for approval and they will submit it. You may use these banked shifts if you are a member in good standing for 13 cycles.

4.5. ONCE YOU'VE MISSED YOUR SHIFT

HOW TO DO A MAKE-UP

Make-ups can only be done within your regular committee unless that committee does not need the help. In that case, you may do a shift with Inventory Committee, which works on Sunday of Week A from 6 to 8:45.

It's a good idea to keep track of all your shifts in case a clerical error occurs with Attendance.

ATTENDING GENERAL MEETINGS

Each member may receive two extra workshift credits per calendar year for attending General Meetings. To receive credit, you must be sure to sign the attendance sheet at the end of the meeting.

OTHER MEMBER WORK OPPORTUNITIES

The Co-op uses member labor in a variety of ways beyond the main committees. We often have special projects. This is a great way to do a make-up if you are not needed in your committee.

4.6. NO WORKSHIFTS FOR PAY

The Co-op prohibits members from paying other members to do their Co-op shifts.

SECTION 5. EXCEPTIONS TO THE WORK REQUIREMENT

5.1 DISABILITY/ILLNESS AND CARING FOR A DISABLED/ILL PERSON

The Co-op welcomes people of differing abilities and strives to remain in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act. There are many types of work at the Co-op, and we are happy to assist members in finding workslots to accommodate unique needs. If you have a specific requirement, please make sure that Membership helps you to select or change your workslot to meet your needs. You can be exempt from working at the Co-op if you are permanently or temporarily unable to work because of a serious physical, psychological, or emotional condition, or if you are caring for someone who is ill or disabled. In order to be exempted from the work requirement for one of the above reasons, the Co-op requires proof of "disability" or "caregiver" status from a health practitioner. Once you have requested "disability" or "caretaker-caregiver" status in the Membership Office, you will be removed from your squad, placed on "alert" for work, and sent a form that needs to be completed by your doctor or healthcare provider within four weeks. Once we have received and accepted the form, you will still have "active" work status for the duration of your disability, even if you owe makeups.

5.2 PARENTAL LEAVE

New parents get six months of parental leave from their workslot(s) due to the birth or adoption of a child (six months per child, not per parent). If twins come into your life, your household will get 12 months of parental leave. Parents can decide to split the leave between them, or one parent can take it all. Parental leave can begin during pregnancy or at the child's arrival. For existing members, parental leave is calculated from the child's birth/arrival date or the due date, according to the member's preference. For new members joining with a child who is less than one year old, parental leave will be prorated based on the child's arrival date if requested.

5.3 BEREAVEMENT

There is one exception to the Co-op's standard makeup policy. If a

member misses one workslot as a result of a death in the immediate family or of a close friend, they will not owe any makeups for that absence. Squad leaders can communicate absences of this kind in the “Notes...” section of the attendance book. This exception covers only one workslot.

However, if following the death of an immediate family member or close friend the member has responsibilities pertaining to the deceased, or simply needs more time to absorb the loss and will miss additional workslots, a Bereavement Work Exemption can be requested. Please contact Membership to inquire.

5.4. AUTHORIZED SHOPPERS FOR ILL/DISABLED MEMBERS OR MEMBERS ON PARENTAL LEAVE

If you are ill or disabled and if you are unable to shop and live alone, or if you have just begun a parental leave, we suggest that you ask another Co-op member to shop for you. Any Co-op member in good standing can shop for another Co-op member in good standing; no arrangements need to be made in advance. If you do not know another Co-op member who can shop for you, the Co-op can temporarily authorize a surrogate non-member shopper of your choosing. To authorize a non-member shopper, contact the Membership Committee either by emailing membership@leffertsfoodcoop.org or by coming to the Co-op during store hours. New parents can have an authorized shopper for up to two months from the start of the parental leave.

SECTION 6. GOING ON LEAVE

6.1 LEAVING TEMPORARILY (12 WEEKS OR MORE)

If you need to leave the Co-op for twelve weeks or more, you may request a temporary leave of absence from your Co-op work. During this time your membership will be put on hold, meaning that you will not be able to shop or work until you return. During your leave you will not owe shifts. You must contact the Membership Office to arrange a leave. If you have a definite return date, in most cases you will be able to return to your same work shift if you wish. If you do not know exactly when you will be returning, we will not be able to hold your workshift for you and you will have to choose a new workshift upon your return. Leaves of absence cannot be applied retroactively to missed shifts. If you owe shifts before you leave, you will need to make them up to become active again.

6.2 ENDING YOUR CO-OP MEMBERSHIP

If you are leaving the Co-op permanently, contact Membership. Per page 8, the Co-op can return your member investment (this takes at least six months) or hold it for you in case you plan to return, or you may choose to donate it to the Co-op. If one member of a household is leaving the Co-op permanently, we will need a new address and phone number for this person to process the leave and return the investment. A member may rejoin in the future by contacting the Membership Office (see “Rejoining the Co-op”).

6.3 REJOINING THE CO-OP

If you have been Suspended, please contact the Membership Committee to rejoin the Co-op and be ready to sign up for a shift. If you have not attended Orientation, you must do so first. If you were refunded the investment when you left the Co-op, you will have to invest

again, but you will not be required to repay the joining fee. You can request a payment plan if you need one.

If you still have your membership card, please use it. If not, the Membership Office can replace it for you. You will be charged a \$1.50 fee to replace your ID.

If you left the Co-op less than one year ago, owing makeups, you will need to make up three shifts upon rejoining.

If you would like to rejoin the Co-op after being away for one year or more you are welcome to resume your membership without owing makeups, but if you were refunded the investment, you will need to pay the investment once more.

SECTION 7. THE DECISION-MAKING PROCESS

7.1 GENERAL MEETINGS

The monthly General Meeting (GM) has been the decision-making body of the Co-op since the Co-op was incorporated. We are legally required to have a Board of Directors, but the Board's role doesn't overshadow or replace member initiative, discussion and decision-making—that is the purpose of the GM. All members are welcome to attend the GM. Meetings are held on the third Monday of every month at 7 p.m. at the Co-op (324 Empire Boulevard). The GM is chaired by a board member.

HOW TO SUBMIT AN AGENDA ITEM

Any member can submit an agenda item for consideration at a GM by emailing info@leffertsfoodcoop.org. The Board will attempt to place your item on the agenda of the meeting you requested whenever possible, but in general agenda items are scheduled in the order in which they're received. You can request that the item be presented at a particular meeting, subject to availability. You are expected to present your own item at the GM for which you are scheduled.

In order for your proposal to receive the consideration it deserves, we strongly recommend following these guidelines:

1. Check the language of your proposal or discussion item for clarity.
2. Do your homework; talk to the leaders(s) responsible for the area of Co-op operation that your proposal addresses. Find out if a similar proposal has already come before the GM. This can save a substantial amount of time at a meeting and allow more time for discussion of the merits of your item. The General Coordinators welcome your questions and can direct you to appropriate sources and resources.
3. Find out if the subject of your proposal has already been, or is being, addressed by the paid staff.
4. Research the ramifications of your proposal and be prepared to explain and discuss them.
5. Try to anticipate questions people will ask and prepare answers.

REPORTING TO YOUR COMMITTEE

When you attend a GM, consider making a report to your squad about the meeting. You can help inform members about current Co-op issues and the GM in general by making a brief report about your GM experience.

7.2 REFERENDA

While most major decisions are made at General Meetings, from time to time the GM determines that a decision should be made by referendum, or Co-op-wide vote.

7.3 THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The Co-op is a non-stock membership cooperative governed by the Cooperative Cooperation Law and the Not-for-Profit Corporation Law (NPCL). The procedures that it must follow are set out by its bylaws and the NPCL. Like all membership cooperatives, the Co-op has members, officers and a Board of Directors. (The term “member” in a non-stock cooperative means the same thing as the term “shareholder” in a corporation.)

Board members must be Co-op members and are elected for terms of three years on a staggered schedule. Elections are held once a year at our Annual Meeting, which is held in June. Members can vote for Board of Director candidates in person at this meeting.

The Directors are persons who were elected to the Board by the members at the Annual Meeting. Directors’ decisions will generally be based on the advice received at the GM. Directors are not required to ratify decisions made by the GM; however, they are legally bound to use their business judgment and act in the best interests of the corporation, and if they believe that a decision of the GM is illegal or irresponsible, they should not ratify it.

The Co-op’s bylaws, in accordance with the NPCL, also require the aforementioned Annual Meeting of the membership. This is analogous to the annual meeting of the shareholders of a corporation. The bylaws provide the requirement for a quorum for such “meetings of the

membership.” The GM is not, and was never intended to be, a formal “meeting of the membership”; the only “meeting of the membership” regularly held by the Co-op is the Annual Meeting. The bylaws do not provide for any other meetings of the membership. It is possible to hold an additional (“special”) meeting of the membership, but the procedure under the law is cumbersome.

SECTION 8. PAID STAFF

At the time of this publication, the Co-op has no full-time staff and is run entirely on volunteer labor. The exceptions to this occur if and when we need to hire licensed or insured consultants for work due to legal requirements. If this is the case and the cost is greater than \$750, the Board of Directors will bring this up as an agenda item at the General Meeting with a vote by the membership and ratification by the Board.

SECTION 9. PARK SLOPE FOOD COOP MEMBERS WORKSHIFT PROGRAM

If you are working shifts for Park Slope Food Coop (PSFC), **you may work your shifts here at LCFC and receive credit at PSFC** and maintain ACTIVE status at both co-ops. **You must be a Park Slope Food Coop member who has been in good standing for 13 shifts.** You **must** notify Membership that you want to join this program. You can join at any time, but you **cannot** retroactively report completed shifts.

You should bank two to three shifts with LCFC before switching, and then switch to the Future Time Off Program (FTOP) at PSFC. There is a lag between when we report shifts and when they are recorded at PSFC.

Your committee leader will report your shifts on the Attendance form and LCFC will report them to PSFC every 4 weeks on C week. Keep track of your shifts worked in case there are any issues. Email shifts@leffertsfoodcoop.org if you have specific questions about shifts that have or have not been reported to PSFC.

The Attendance Committee is available to help members and answer questions. Email attendance@leffertsfoodcoop.com.

SECTION 10. SHOPPING AT THE CO-OP

10.1 DOS & DON'TS OF SHOPPING AT THE CO-OP

All members contribute to a civil and cooperative environment at the Co-op. Please respect one another by observing our Co-op's shopping rules

DO...

- *Shop at the Co-op only if you are an ACTIVE member.* Active co-op members are the only people who may shop at the Co-op. Guests and visitors are welcome and encouraged to take a guided look around but may not shop. If you are on Active or Alert status, you are active. (If you are Suspended, you may not shop until you have made up your shifts owed.)
- *Check in with a shopping shift member/sign sign-in sheet before shopping.*
- *Complete your shopping before you get on the checkout line.*
- *Give your membership card to the checkout worker.* Stating your number is not enough.

DON'T...

- *Shop at the Co-op for non-members.* Please note that members may purchase groceries only for other members if all parties' shopping privileges are current.
- *Allow yourself to be checked out by household or family members.* This will prevent the appearance of impropriety. Also, do not wait for a particular checkout worker, unless you are doing so to avoid the station of a household or family member.
- *Bring purchased items back onto the shopping floor.* You may leave your purchased items beyond the register, but for a short time only.
- *Eat food before paying for it.* This includes snacking in the produce and bulk aisles.

If you are a member and your name is not on the Member Shopper List, it is because you have not attended orientation, we made an error or you owe shifts and are Suspended. It is your responsibility to contact

Membership. If you are Suspended, you will not be able to shop until you have made up any owed shifts. If you have not completed orientation, you will be on the active Member Shopper List once you have completed it.

10.2 MERCHANDISE RETURNS

The Co-op accepts returns on many items. The following items may only be returned if they are spoiled: opened products, refrigerated items, perishables, meat, chicken, fish, frozen and bulk. Returns made must be made **within seven days of purchase**. Bulk items may be returned only if they are spoiled, the bag labels or the bulk bins were mislabeled. All other Co-op items that are completely sealed and demonstrably undamaged may be returned. **Items over \$5 must be presented with the checkout receipt, and the checkout receipt must be dated within 14 days of the day you return the item.** We cannot process a refund without a receipt. Produce is never returnable. The return policy is subject to change.

10.3 SPECIAL ORDERS / PRODUCT SUGGESTIONS

If you want to order large amounts of an item we carry, or if you'd like to special order an item that the Co-op doesn't normally stock, please contact the Buying Committee at least two weeks before you need the item (buying@leffertsfoodcoop.org). Special orders are not refundable.

If you would like to suggest that the Co-op carry a certain item, please contact the **Sourcing Committee** (sourcing@leffertsfoodcoop.org). The more details you provide the easier it will be for us to understand your request. Please realize there are many considerations that go into whether we can carry a product.

10.4 SECURITY / THEFT / SAFETY

It is hard to believe that some Co-op members would steal from a store they co-own. Sadly, it does happen. We ask that all members take responsibility for the well-being of the Co-op by reporting suspicions of

theft immediately to Board Members. We actively discourage members from confronting one another with suspicions of theft. All reports are investigated. When making a report of suspected theft, a written report with details such as date/time/location are appreciated. Your own name and member number are also helpful. When you're in the Co-op it's always a good idea to keep valuables on your person, and never to leave your bag or coat in an unattended shopping cart. To many members the Co-op feels like a safe space, but it's important to remember that we are still part of a big city and theft does occur.

If your safety is an issue, call 911.

SECTION XI. PROCEDURE FOR FEEDBACK

If something happens either in or outside of the store while you are working a shift at LCFC, please report it to info@leffertsfoodcoop.org.

Direct feedback about the store itself should be sent to your committee leader, who can then address it to the committees as a whole.

11.1 COMPLAINTS AGAINST ANOTHER CO-OP MEMBER

If you feel you have been mistreated by another Co-op member and would like to register a complaint, you may report the issue to a Board Member. Reports can be mailed or emailed to the Co-op and should include as much information as possible, including your name, member number and phone number.

Reporting to a Board Member will be the most effective way to address complaints. Board members can give you guidance, advice and information on Co-op policy and history, and may be able to intervene to alleviate the situation.

CURRENT 2015-16 BOARD MEMBERS (as of June 21, 2016)

Deborah Brinkley (deebrinkley@gmail.com)
Dany Nelson (bowler180max@hotmail.com)
Karen Oh (Karen@houseofcakes.com)
Cheryl Sealey (ccsealee@yahoo.com)
Laura Stadler (laurafstadler@gmail.com)

APPENDIX A: LCFC COMMITTEES & DIRECTORY

All Committee Leaders Group: lcfc-committees@googlegroups.com
Board Group: lcfc-board@googlegroups.com

ATTENDANCE COMMITTEE

Leader: David Stadler

Email: attendance@leffertsfoodcoop.org,
shifts@leffertsfoodcoop.org (for PSFC reporting only)

The Attendance Committee is the member work status committee. Working very closely with the Membership Committee on current and new members, they gather weekly attendance from Committee Leaders, keep track of shifts worked and member status (Suspended, Active, Alert) and forward member lists with statuses to Shopping for check-in. Finally, they report PSFC FTOP shifts for PSFC-LCFC members every four weeks.

BUILDING & MAINTENANCE COMMITTEE

Leaders: Mary Salig and John Rossiello

Email: building@leffertsfoodcoop.org

Google: [lcfc-building@googlegroups.com](https://www.google.com/groups?ik=lcfc-building)

The Building Committee works to improve and maintain the physical aspects of the store. This includes design, planning and construction, and joining the committee requires previous experience. The committee works to maintain the appearance of the store, performs repairs in the store and of small equipment, manages vendors who do work on the store that the committee can't do themselves, and manages furniture and large equipment.

Email: maintenance@leffertsfoodcoop.org

Google: [lcfc-maintenance@googlegroups.com](https://www.google.com/groups?ik=lcfc-maintenance)

The Maintenance Committee is responsible for in-store cleanliness. They clean all areas of the store: floors, shelves, tables, bathroom, etc. They take out the trash, consolidate boxes and organize areas.

BUYING COMMITTEE

Leader: Emily Kimler, Laura Stadler

Email: buying@leffertsfoodcoop.org

Google: lcfc-buying@googlegroups.com

Buying Committees work individually with vendors to place weekly orders and confirm that orders are accurate and the store is stocked.

COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE

Leader: Karen Oh

Email: info@leffertsfoodcoop.org

Google: lcfc-communications@googlegroups.com

The Communications Committee works to further advance the visibility of the Co-op to the general public in order to increase membership, promote our mission and values, educate the public on food and nutrition, and increase the selling capacity of the Co-op. The Communications Committee ensures that editorial and visual messaging about the Co-op are relayed in a clear and strategic way to internal and external audiences. The committee is comprised of designers who design all materials for the Co-op including flyers, signage, and our website as well as editors who write and edit content for those materials and, with the Membership Committee, manage copy for the handbook. Committee members also manage social media accounts on Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram.

FINANCE COMMITTEE

Leader: Margo Galpin

Email: finance@leffertsfoodcoop.org

Google: lcfc-finance@googlegroups.com

The Finance Committee keeps track of day-to-day income and expenses from vendors and members. They reconcile invoices and income, track membership investments, and manage financial reporting needed for board decisions, funding processes and tax purposes. The finance committee is also responsible for ensuring taxes are paid and that standard accounting documentation procedures are upheld.

INVENTORY COMMITTEE

Leader: Jan Rigsby (through July 2016)

Email: inventory@leffertsfoodcoop.org

Google: lcfc-inventory@googlegroups.com

Inventory is responsible for the physical count of products in the store. They reconcile what has been bought and sold with what is physically in the store every four weeks. They troubleshoot and identify issues with product quantities.

MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE

Leaders: Ashar Foley

Email: membership@leffertsfoodcoop.org

The Membership Committee's primary responsibility is keeping track of member data and shift scheduling. With Committee Leaders, they maintain work committee shifts and descriptions. They provide the Finance Committee with information on initial investments and work with and help keeps both Finance and Attendance Committee updated on members who leave or wish to suspend their memberships. They also manage contact files/info and demographics and the member handbook.

OFFICE COMMITTEE

Leaders: Addie Smock and Jessica Williams

Email: office@leffertsfoodcoop.org

The Office Committee provides administrative support for the store. They manage all operational vendors such as insurance, electrical, phone and trash. They support the Finance Committee by scanning and logging invoices and they order supplies for the store. They keep track of store-wide statistics like spoilage and shopper attendance. They facilitate store-wide communication between committees and institute sustainability initiatives such as composting.

OUTREACH

Leader: Colin Kinniburg

Email: outreach@leffertsfoodcoop.org

Google: lcfc-outreach@googlegroups.com

The Outreach Committee's role is to inform as many residents as possible about the Co-op. They plan open houses, present at health fairs and community events, and work to increase awareness about the Co-op and bring potential members into the store.

PRICING COMMITTEE

Leader: Julia Martin, Diana Liss

Email: pricing@leffertsfoodcoop.org

Google: [lcfc-pricing@googlegroups.com](https://www.google.com/groups?ikfc-pricing@googlegroups.com)

Pricing Committee is responsible for inventory entries into LCFC's point of sale system (ShopKeep) and retail pricing. They coordinate between Buying and Receiving to ensure that what was ordered is in the system with correct pricing by the time the store opens for shopping.

RECEIVING COMMITTEE

Leader: Julie Tarrab

Email: receiving@leffertsfoodcoop.org

Google: [lcfc-receiving@googlegroups.com](https://www.google.com/groups?ikfc-receiving@googlegroups.com)

The Receiving Committee receives all physical inventory into store. Members check invoices against what was ordered and make notes if inventory was short, missing or changed, and provide detailed information on inventory received for Pricing and Buying Committees. Members stock and organize items on shelves in store and keep back stock organized.

SHOPPING COMMITTEE

Leaders: Michael LoFaso, Emily Sperber, Thomas Baldwin, Maddelena DeBeni, and Lisa Burdige

Email: shopping@leffertsfoodcoop.org

Google Group: [lcfc-shopping@googlegroups.com](https://www.google.com/groups?ikfc-shopping@googlegroups.com), [lcfc-shoplead@googlegroups.com](https://www.google.com/groups?ikfc-shoplead@googlegroups.com) (for leaders only)

Shopping Committee are the members who work during open shopping hours of the store. They are the cashiers and stockers who keep the store running and clean for shoppers, and can answer any questions about products and membership.

SOURCING COMMITTEE

Leader: OPEN

Email: sourcing@leffertsfoodcoop.org

Google: [lcfc-sourcing@googlegroups.com](https://www.google.com/groups?ikfc-sourcing@googlegroups.com)

Sourcing Committee is the main committee that brings new products to the store. The committee chooses products based on store standards,

vendor logistics and availability. They work closely with Buying, Pricing, Receiving, and Financing.

STOCKING COMMITTEE

Leader: OPEN

Stocking Committee is responsible for store organization and in-store labeling. The committee supports Receiving by organizing and putting stock on shelves, rotating stock and organizing back stock. They are responsible for barcodes and printing and keeping price labels and other labeling up to date.

TECH COMMITTEE

Leader: OPEN

Email: tech@leffertsfoodcoop.org

The Tech Committee's goal is to support the Co-op's mission, goals and programs, as well as to fulfill the objectives of planning and implementation through technology solutions. They manage all computer equipment and online services and troubleshoot issues. The committee also manages software and email accounts.

APPENDIX B: GLOSSARY OF IMPORTANT CO-OP TERMS

ABCD workslot: a shift that meets at the same day and time every four weeks

“Active” for work: owing zero makeups and allowed to shop; members on work-exempt Committees like Temporary Disability and Parental leave may be active even when owing makeups

“Alert” for work: owing makeups but still allowed to shop

Authorized Shopper: a non-member temporarily designated to shop for a Co-op member who is unable to shop due to a disability or illness

Bereavement Leave: time off from one’s workslot due to the death of an immediate family member or close friend

Committee: the broadest category of work a member does at the Co-op, such as Shopping, Receiving and Stocking, etc.

Cooperative: an organization collectively owned by and operated specifically for the benefit of its members

Entrance Desk: the front desk where members must check in every time they enter the shopping floor to work or to shop

FTOP: Future Time-Off Program, which allows members to work on a flexible schedule, making it possible to bank any number of work shifts for future use

General Meeting: monthly meetings at which members discuss and vote on Co-op policy

Joining Fee: a one-time, nonrefundable fee required of all members unless they receive certain types of income-based assistance

Makeups: owed work shifts accrued by a member for not attending their regularly scheduled ABCD workslot

Member Investment: an investment required of each member, refundable by request upon leaving the Co-op

Membership Card: Co-op-issued ID needed for entrance to the Co-op

Membership Committee: the Co-op department responsible for assisting members with questions and concerns regarding membership

Membership Coordinator: A member-worker who manages the Membership Office and performs other administrative tasks

Orientation/Informational Meeting: an organized introduction to the Co-op for new members; attendance is required of all members

Parental Leave: the privilege of being exempt from a workslot for a specific period of time due to the birth or adoption of a child

Permanently Disabled: a member who is exempt from working at the Co-op due to a permanent disability

Permanent Leave: when a member contacts the Membership Office to leave the Co-op. The member may arrange to have their investment refunded if they wish. Permanent leaves can be reversed with a call to the Membership Office

“Suspended” for work: what happens any time a member owes any number of makeups for more than four weeks. Being suspended means you will be unable to shop due to failure to complete makeups

Temporarily Disabled: a member who is exempt from working at the Co-op for a temporary period of time due to a physical or psychological disability

Temporary Leave of Absence: when a member requests to put their membership on hold for a temporary period of time, with a minimum of twelve weeks

APPENDIX C: THE INTERNATIONAL COOPERATIVE ALLIANCE STATEMENT OF COOPERATIVE IDENTITY

The Statement of Cooperative Identity has its origins in a published set of “practices” of the Rochdale Society of Equitable Pioneers of 1844 and later became known as the Rochdale Principles. It was eventually renamed and has been periodically updated by the International Cooperative Alliance, most recently in 1995.

DEFINITION A cooperative is an autonomous association of persons united voluntarily to meet their common economic, social, and cultural needs and aspirations through a jointly owned and democratically controlled enterprise.

VALUES Cooperatives are based on the values of self-help, self-responsibility, democracy, equality, equity, and solidarity. In the tradition of their founders, cooperative members believe in the ethical values of honesty, openness, social responsibility and caring for others.

PRINCIPLES The cooperative principles are guidelines by which cooperatives put their values into practice.

First Principle: Voluntary and Open Membership

Cooperatives are voluntary organizations, open to all persons able to use their services and willing to accept the responsibility of membership, without gender, social, racial, political or religious discrimination.

Second Principle: Democratic Member Control

Cooperatives are democratic organizations controlled by their members, who actively participate in setting their policies and making decisions. Individuals serving as elected representatives are accountable to the membership. In primary cooperatives members have equal voting rights (one member, one vote) and cooperatives at other levels are organized in a democratic manner.

Third Principle: Member Economic Participation

Members contribute equitably to, and democratically control, the capital of the cooperative. At least part of that capital is usually common property of the cooperative. They usually receive limited compensation, if any, on capital subscribed as a condition of membership. Members allocate surpluses for any or all of the following purposes: developing the cooperative, possibly by setting up reserves, part of which at least would be indivisible, benefiting members in proportion to their transactions with the cooperative, and supporting other activities as approved by the membership.

Fourth Principle: Autonomy and Independence

Cooperatives are autonomous self-help organizations controlled by their members. If they enter into agreements with other organizations, including governments, or raise capital from external sources, they do so on terms that ensure democratic control by their members and maintain their cooperative autonomy.

Fifth Principle: Education, Training and Information

Cooperatives provide education and training for their members, elected representatives, managers, and employees so they can contribute to the development of their cooperatives. They inform the general public, particularly young people and opinion leaders, about the nature of benefits of cooperation.

Sixth Principle: Cooperation Among Cooperatives

Cooperatives serve their members most effectively and strengthen the cooperative movement by working together through local, national, regional and international structures.

Seventh Principle: Concern for the Community

While focusing on member needs, cooperatives work for the sustainable development of their communities through policies accepted by their members.