

# ENTERPRISE RESIDENT MANUAL

## A HOW-TO ON TAILORING THE TEMPLATE TO YOUR PROJECT'S NEEDS

### *Kicking Off the Process:*

In the transition from the design/construction of the building to the operations phase, information and details can slip through the cracks. Many times, the building's features and systems are not used optimally due to lack of occupant knowledge / training or poor design assumptions of how building users will interact with the space. For these reasons, it is ideal to invite building occupants into the design process and the development of the building manuals.

Throughout the design process, keep in mind how your stakeholders (such as: maintenance staff, property management, resident services, development staff and residents) will be interacting with the space and what the needs of each of these stakeholders are. Ideally, you will have representatives from each of these stakeholder groups included throughout the design as part of the integrative design process. Recognizing and recording the needs of each of these user groups will help inform the Resident Manual – both the information that management wants to relay to residents and the information that residents need to receive in order to positively relate with their home and community.

After construction begins, find a time to sit down with these same stakeholder groups and go through the manual page by page, discussing what information is useful, what is irrelevant, and what is missing for your particular building or community. Getting their feedback will make the manual as effective and useful as possible; it also provides a great opportunity to “train” these stakeholder groups on the intention of the design, the features of the building, and how to optimize their use. The development of the manuals requires an integrative process and someone to champion its development. This can be someone from the design team, the sustainability consultant, on-site management, and/or the developer.

By working in this manner, these documents will be informed by the design process and completed by the time the project is ready for occupancy.

### *The intention of the Manual:*

The intention of the Resident Manual is to provide a guide for homeowners and renters that explains the intent, benefits, use and maintenance of their home's green features and practices. The Resident Manual should encourage green and healthy activities as well as provide education on the operations and maintenance of the home. This information will allow residents to fully realize the environmental, health and economic benefits that green housing offers. Please refer to the 2015 Enterprise Green Communities Criteria Reference Guide credit 8.3 for specifics on the requirements.

The Resident Manual should be seen as **a resource for residents and on-site staff rather than a rule book** as it does not replace the lease. The manual provides guidelines and tips that residents can reference and helps to showcase their opportunities and choices while living in green housing. It is also a great opportunity to highlight the efforts that management makes to be “green” and provide housing that truly does improve the quality of people's lives.

### ***How to use the Template:***

The purpose of this document is to provide a template for Enterprise Green Communities projects to utilize as a roadmap for developing their resident manuals.

As the manual is an editable document, all pages and information can and should be reviewed and adapted to your project's needs. Especially note any text in **red** – these places specifically require tailoring and/or further input.

In addition to the **red** text, the “Notes” section of the manual provides guidelines on how to further modify each of the pages to your project's needs and recommendations on who you should get input from to make the slide most useful. The notes section can be seen at the bottom of each slide.

**If you decide to add or remove any of the pages, be sure to update the table of contents so that the page numbers and topics properly reflect the document.**

Prior to finalizing and printing, have appropriate project stakeholders review and provide any input – grammatically or contextually to ensure it is as beneficial as possible. If your resident population features residents who speak multiple languages, consider working with residents to translate your manual into other languages. This is a great way to involve the community, get buy-in, and create a more useful resident engagement resource.

When printing the manual, it is strongly recommended that you convert (not print) the file into a pdf and then print.

Associated with the Resident Manual, management is required to host resident orientation(s) with each of the tenants. The Resident Manual can assist in the development and delivery of those orientations. For more information on the intent of the resident orientation, reference credit 8.4 of the 2015 Enterprise Green Communities criteria. For a sample 90-minute orientation agenda that accompanies the outline of this manual as well as signs, logos, and prompts you can use throughout your project, check out [www.enterprisecommunity.org/resources](http://www.enterprisecommunity.org/resources).

