



Constitution of the York South–Weston Tenant Union

1. Founding, Name and Location:

1. The Tenant Union was founded on February 1, 2020 by the organized tenants from several buildings: 1440, 1442 Lawrence Ave W; 2450, 2460 Weston Rd; 33 King St; 22 John St; 2180, 2190 Weston Rd; 338 Falstaff Ave; 2220, 2222 Weston Rd; 102 Trethewey Dr
2. The name of the organization is “York South–Weston Tenant Union”
3. We focus our work geographically in the City of Toronto in an area similar to the electoral district of York South–Weston and we generally limit our organizing work in this geographical area bound to the north by Highway 401, to the west by the Humber river, to the South by St. Clair Avenue W, and to the east by Caledonia Rd.

2. Constitution:

1. This constitution was introduced by the Executive Committee in October 2020, is provisionally approved in November 2020 and will receive final approval by the membership at large in the Annual General Meeting of 2021
2. Any instances of subsequent amendments to the constitution may be mentioned and dated in this section
3. The constitution may be amended at the Annual General Meeting (See 7.3)

3. Nature:

1. The Union is a non-incorporated, non-profit organization of tenants.



2. In the case that the organization gets incorporated, the Articles of Incorporation may be listed in this section

4. Mission Statement:

To organize as tenants so we can make collective demands of authorities and landlords that result in improvements to our quality of housing and our quality of life, and to engage in collective actions that stop landlords from impoverishing us through rent hikes, and from displacing us through evictions.

5. Guiding Principles and Methods of carrying out our mission:

1. Housing insecurity is directly linked to systems of oppression rooted in forms of discrimination including, but not limited to: classism, racism, sexism, homophobia, and ableism. As a result, we ground our work in the principles of social justice and anti-oppression and a commitment to fighting all forms of discrimination
2. We organize: in the sense of empowering tenants (especially those who share the same address, or same landlord) to work collectively with neighbours to face a collective challenge or to achieve a common goal
3. We assist organized tenants at building level to improve conditions and stop rent hikes
4. We stand in solidarity with fellow tenants in their struggles across the city and across the country, as well as with other groups engaged in fights for labour rights, and social justice. We collaborate with local organizations to make this solidarity as effective, direct, and material as possible
5. We disseminate knowledge of our rights as tenants under municipal by-laws, provincial tenancy laws, and human rights laws, and we use that knowledge to prevent evictions and rent hikes
6. We advocate, mobilize and organize to
 - a. reduce the cost of living for renters, including but not limited to housing costs
 - b. improve the quality of life for renters, both at home and in the neighbourhood
7. We advocate for legal reforms that benefit tenants; and challenge authorities that underperform on their existing mandate to protect tenants
8. We support each others' self-esteem and encourage each other while doing this important and difficult work. To this end we try to involve a large number of local residents to share the load and to diversify the approaches in the organizing work that we do, with a conscious goal of making this work long-lasting and sustainable
9. We initiate and participate in social events in the community
10. We schedule regular meetings of the Executive Committee and of meetings at building level, to constantly strategize and plan, and to follow up on previous work
11. We establish and maintain media contacts, as well as publish our own material to represent renters in a positive empowering light in news media and popular culture

6. Membership:



1. Individual membership in the Union is open to any person who lives in rental accommodation in the geography described in Section 1
2. Any tenants who are organized within their building into a Tenant Association or Building Committee can become members of the Union representing their Building, and Building representatives are welcome to join the Executive Committee
 - a. Any tenants organized at the building level who join the Union remain independent in regards to issues pertaining to their own building; the goal of the Executive Committee is to support not to dictate.

7. Annual General Meeting:

1. An Annual General Meeting must be scheduled by the Executive Committee and take place once every calendar year before the end of May
2. The date, time, location, and purpose of the Annual General Meeting must be communicated as much as possible to all renters in York South–Weston. This includes personal invitations to all existing members of the Union.
3. Minutes must be taken at the Annual General Meeting and they must include:
 - a. Any financial matters
 - b. Any items that were voted on
 - c. Any action to be taken
 - d. Any delegated authority
4. The Constitution may be amended during the Annual General Meeting
5. At the Annual General Meeting the membership elects the Executive Committee and names the officers on the Executive Committee

8. Executive Committee:

1. Role of the Executive Committee
 - a. Meet regularly to devise concrete actions that fulfill the Mission Statement and the methods listed in Section 5
 - b. Manage the finances of the Tenant Union
 - c. Enable cooperation between different Tenant Associations, Building Committees, and individual tenants
2. Membership of the Executive Committee
 - a. Includes all Building representatives who wish to participate
 - b. All those elected to the Executive Committee during the Annual General Meeting
 - c. If an officer elected at the Annual General Meeting resigns or is not longer able to fulfill responsibilities, the Executive Committee may appoint a provisional officer from within its ranks to fulfill that role until the next Annual General Meeting
 - d. If a repeat guest to the Executive Committee is also a person contributing substantially to the organizing effort, the Executive Committee can appoint them as provisional members of the Executive Committee until the next Annual General Meeting
3. Roles within the Executive Committee



- i. Members of the Executive Committee who are not Officers take on responsibilities as the need arises and can execute action items
 - ii. Officers of the Executive Committee are elected at the Annual General Meeting and they include
 1. Chairperson: responsible for chairing the meetings
 2. Secretary: responsible for taking minutes at meetings
 3. Treasurer: responsible for keeping the financial books
4. Scheduling and Format of the Executive Committee meetings
 - a. The Executive should meet at least 13 times in each calendar year
 - b. The Executive Committee should limit its discussions and actions on items that are in the spirit of the Mission Statement, and that follow the guiding principles outlined in this constitution
 - c. All actions approved at the meeting must include the names of the persons who are responsible they get completed and mentioned in the minutes
 - d. Every meeting must include a financial update
 - e. Every meeting must include the approval of the previous meeting's minutes
 5. Guests: the Chairperson may approve a guest to attend part of, or all of an Executive Committee Meeting

9. Financial:

1. Our fiscal year is the calendar year
2. The Union may open a bank account to be managed by three members of the Executive Committee of which at least one is an officer