

APPENDIX A: MANAGEMENT SURVEY

The most important step in improving your association's management is often simply asking the right questions. Before changing your management techniques, take a few minutes to be sure you understand the entire issue. For instance, you may plan to hire a lawyer to resolve your rent collection problems, but the real source of the trouble may lie in your lack of a written rent policy, or poor communication with tenants in arrears. This management survey enables you to ask all the right questions before deciding on a strategy to improve your association's management.

The survey is divided into categories that correspond to the chapters in this guide. If you answer "no" to some of the questions, refer to the appropriate chapter for guidance on how to solve the problem. If possible, do the survey with the assistance of the other officers or interested tenants—additional participants can help provide a comprehensive view of your management practices.

I. TENANT MANAGEMENT

1. Are you prepared to manage your building for ten, twenty, even thirty years after TIL?
2. Do you understand the organizational, financial and legal aspects of the TIL sales process?
3. Do you understand the difference between Housing Development Fund Corporations (HDFCs) and other cooperatives?
4. Do you know what resources are available to assist you once your building becomes a co-op?
5. Do you evaluate your association's management annually to prepare for long-term success?

II. TENANT OWNERSHIP

1. Do you see yourself and your neighbors as future owners of your building?
2. Do you have an understanding of the basic components of your tenant association?
3. Do you understand how to make democratic decisions through meetings, voting, and elections?
4. Do you understand the basic documents and policies that will guide you in managing your building?
5. Do you understand the basic responsibilities of TIL tenants, officers, and the association as a whole?

III. COLLECTING RENT AND ISSUING LEASES

1. Do you collect more than 90% of rent billed each month?
2. Have you contacted all tenants who are presently in arrears and begun appropriate action in each case?
3. Do you first try to establish a written payment agreement with tenants in arrears before proceeding with legal action?
4. Have you established a clear rent collection policy, including monthly due date, method of payment, regular collection days/hours, and steps to be taken if rent is not paid?
5. Have you completed an occupancy survey that lists who resides in each apartment?
6. Have you issued HPD-approved leases to all residential and commercial tenants in the building?
7. Do you have a separate bank account where you keep the security deposits of all tenants (commercial and residential) who have moved into the building since you began TIL?

II. RECORD-KEEPING AND COMPLIANCE WITH REGULATIONS

1. Do you have a well-organized, complete, and accessible filing system with all of your building's records?
2. Do you take minutes at every meeting, file and distribute them?
3. Do you complete financial reports correctly and mail them on time to HPD each month?
4. Do you know about the various rules, policies, and laws (everything from the by-laws to the federal laws) that govern your association's actions? Do you adhere to these rules?
5. If you have a super, do you withhold taxes and file quarterly payroll forms for him/her?
6. Does every tenant have a copy of the by-laws?
7. Does your association have written house rules that were approved at a general association meeting?
8. Does every tenant have a copy of the house rules?
9. Does every apartment have a smoke alarm?
10. Do the public halls and apartments with children have window guards?
11. Do the tenants know about the hazards of lead paint?
12. Do all fire exits open freely from the inside?

III. MEETINGS AND DECISION-MAKING

1. Do you have regular monthly association meetings?
2. Do the officers meet on a regular basis?
3. Are meetings announced/posted well in advance?
4. Do you usually stick to a pre-set agenda and keep your meetings to a reasonable length?
5. Do tenants speak and get a chance to vote in meetings?
6. Is a financial report given at every association meeting?
7. Are committee reports given at every association meeting?
8. Are minutes taken at every meeting?
9. Do the tenants receive copies of the minutes after each meeting?
10. Do you bring important issues to the whole association for discussion before making a decision?
11. Do you avoid occurrences of conflict of interest (when people who are making decisions are biased because they have a special interest in the decision)?

IV. COMMITTEES AND PARTICIPATION

1. Are there at least two functioning committees in your association (other than the executive committee)?
2. Do you have strong committee members who understand their role and responsibilities?
3. Do the officers on the executive committee divide work fairly among themselves so that no one person is doing everything?
4. Do you have a tenant selection committee that helps to select tenants for vacant apartments?
5. Do you have a tenant selection process that is fair and clearly understood by everyone?
6. Do you feel satisfied with the tenants you have picked in the past?
7. Do you have a repair and maintenance committee that prioritizes repairs in your building?
8. Do you have other committees in your building besides tenant selection and repair and maintenance?
9. Do the officers encourage participation from tenants?
10. Do tenants in your building understand how TIL works and what their responsibilities are?

11. Do you usually get a quorum (more than one-half of eligible members in attendance) at association meetings?

V. COMMUNICATION AND CONFLICTS

1. Do tenants speak freely in association meetings?
2. Are committee reports given and minutes distributed for each association meeting?
3. Do you know how to prevent personal conflicts between tenants or officers from interfering with the association conducting business?
4. Is your association able to overcome any factions which fight with each other, and still have effective management?
5. Is there a constant exchange of information within your association, so that officers, tenants and committees are all aware of what the others are doing?
6. Are you able to communicate effectively with outside agencies (like TIL and UHAB)?
7. Is there a well-developed spirit of cooperation in the tenant body? While differences of opinion are to be expected, does everyone at least recognize a common interest in the building's future?
8. Are you working to educate every tenant about self-management and TIL?

VI. LEGAL ACTIONS AND CASE-BUILDING

1. Do you communicate effectively with your lawyer so as to stay informed about cases in progress?
2. Do you understand the basic legal procedures which pertain to evictions, firing of employees, rent collection, apartment access, and suits?
3. Do you know how to create a "paper trail" that provides a documented history of all issues that might end up in court?
4. Have you designated tenants to represent the association in court?
5. Are you able to prove your case and win court cases regularly?

VII. BUDGETING AND RENT RESTRUCTURING

1. Do you plan your expenses over a period of time?
2. Do you prepare annual budgets?
3. Do you spend money within a budget (rather than simply spending whatever money comes in until your account is exhausted)?
4. Do you have a reserve fund in the bank that you add to regularly to protect your association from emergencies (at least \$500 per unit and growing)?
5. Is your rent level high enough to support your expenses?
6. Do you understand how budgeting works in TIL and know when to expect TIL to begin the rent restructuring process?

VIII. REPAIRS

1. Is there a procedure for reporting repairs in your building which all the tenants are aware of and understand?
2. Are all repair requests submitted by tenants in writing?
3. Do you have a repair committee that sticks to the repair priorities, bids out jobs, and checks contractor references?
4. Are repairs completed in a timely manner?

5. Do you supervise contractors while they are working in your building?
6. Are you generally satisfied with the work of contractors you hire?
7. Are you satisfied with the job performance of your super?
8. Does your super have a written contract with a clear job description?
9. Have you worked out a budget or timetable for completing repairs on the association side of the repair plan?
10. Is there any major building repair needed which is **not** in the repair plan? If so, have you brought this to the attention of your TIL coordinator?