



TITLE: Constitution of the Residence Society
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CONTACT: ResSoc President
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APPROVED BY: **General Assembly**

CONSTITUTION OF THE RESIDENCE SOCIETY

Preamble and Object of the Society

We, the students, in residence at Queen's University herein establish a self-governing Society to represent and promote the general welfare of its members, deliver programs and services in collective benefit of all members, and to work in cooperation with the staff and administration of Queen's University Residences to generally facilitate the integration of its members into the academic and social life of the Queen's and Kingston communities. Further instructions for elements of this Constitution can be found in ResSoc Bylaws and Policy manuals.

The objective of the Society is to:

- a) Promote the interests of the students in accordance with ResSoc Constitution, Bylaws and Policy Manual, and with the policies of Queen's University;
- b) Serve as a body of communication between the members of Housing and Ancillary Services, Queen's University administrative bodies, the Alma Mater Society, other student governments, and other students;
- c) Be responsible for the organization of inclusive social programs and operations of services that will benefit the members;
- d) Facilitate the integration of members into the academic and social environment of Queen's University and the Kingston communities;
- e) Promote a residence community that is safe, comfortable, enjoyable, and that represents the diversity of its members to allow for the personal growth and educational development of those who live there;
- f) Advise members on the conduct process and the procedures involved;
- g) Operate in an efficient and financially transparent manner in accordance with Accounting Standards for Private Enterprise.

Article 1 | Name

1.01 The name of organization formed by this Constitution shall be the Residence Society of Queen's University at Kingston, Ontario, Canada, hereinafter referred to as ResSoc or "the Society".

1.02 The short name for the Society shall be the Residence Society, or ResSoc.

Article 2 | Membership and Funds

2.01 Membership in the ResSoc is mandatory for all students living in a Queen's University residence and becomes effective upon taking up official residence in one of the recognized houses. If a student should not continue to reside in a residence, membership in the Society shall expire on the official date of withdrawal from residence, once the student confirms with Residence Admissions.

2.02 All residents who maintain their status as registered students in residence shall be members of the ResSoc and are entitled to vote in every election and referendum held by the ResSoc subject to any restrictions which may be found in the Constitution of the Society and its Bylaws.

2.03 All members of the ResSoc are subject to membership dues, as determined by the General Assembly, for the purposes of carrying out the objectives of the Society as outlined herein and to the rules as set forth in this Constitution, its Bylaws and Policy Manuals as well as rules outlined in the Queen's University Code of Conduct.

2.04 No money shall be drawn from any Society account except as arises from an expense incurred

- (i) for the purposes of maintaining the administration or carrying out the purposes of the Society; and
- (ii) in accordance with appropriations made by the General Assembly, who also serve as the Board of Directors of the Corporation.

2.05 A regular statement and account of the revenues and expenses of all Society funds shall be published in the final month of each academic term, excluding the summer term.

2.06 Funds of the Society shall be classified either as operating or restricted. The operating fund shall consist of all membership dues and all monies received and not allocated to the restricted funds. The restricted fund shall consist of all monies received or allocated subject to specific restrictions precluding their use as operating funds. Restricted funds may be used for no other purpose than that for which they were allocated except by resolution of the General Assembly passed by a three-quarters majority where notice of the motion has been given at a previous meeting.

2.07 In the event of termination or dissolution of the Society, the General Assembly shall distribute the remaining assets of the Society to the Alma Mater Society of Queen's University, unless the dissolution is part of a creation of a new residence society or societies. In such a case, the remaining assets of the Residence Society will be distributed to the society or societies that are formed of residences from the current Residence Society.

Article 3 | Government

3.01 The Society shall be governed by The General Assembly and Executive Board which shall act in the best interests of all Society members in accordance with the Society Constitution vested with the legislative and executive powers respectively.

3.02 The membership of the Society shall be divided into Houses governed by local councils, the number and composition of which shall be determined by the General Assembly. Each House Council shall be subordinate to The Residence Society, but shall have the authority to pass any resolution and/or enact any policy it considers necessary and expedient on any matter not considered by this Constitution, the Bylaws of the Society, or the rules, regulations or policies of the Residence Society, the Alma Mater Society, other student governments or Queen's University. Any such duly passed resolutions and/or policies shall be binding on the residents of the governed House and shall be enforced by the Residence Society.

3.03 The ResSoc is an organization of the students and therefore ultimate accountability is owed to the Society membership.

3.04 By virtue of their status as students of Queen's University, ultimate responsibility for the well-being of members of the Residence Society is vested in the Senate of Queen's University under the University Charter and delegated to the Residence Advisory Committee. Recognizing this responsibility, the ResSoc is accountable to the Residence Advisory Committee insofar as its activities impact the well-being of those living in residence. The President acts as one of the co-chairs for the Residence Advisory Committee and works alongside the Director of Housing & Ancillary.

3.05 By virtue of their status as students of Queen's University, ultimate responsibility for the non-academic discipline of members of the Main Campus Residents' Society is vested in the Senate of Queen's University under the University Charter and delegated to the Alma Mater Society (AMS). Recognizing this responsibility, the ResSoc is accountable to the AMS and the University Senate insofar as its authority for non-academic discipline is subordinate to that of these bodies.

Article 4 | Legislative Power

4.01 The Legislative power shall be vested in a General Assembly which shall consist of representatives elected by the members of the Society including the Residence Society President, Vice President of Society Operations and Vice President of Residence Operations while the Society's Officers and House Presidents are hired. Such representatives become trustees of the student interest and therefore share responsibility for the well-being of Society members insofar as that responsibility is recognized by the University Senate through the Residence Advisory Committee.

4.02 The primary purpose of the General Assembly is legislation, oversight of the executive, and the provision of a public forum for initiation and discussion of policy.

4.03 The following shall be members of the General Assembly and shall have one vote each:

- (i) the President
- (ii) the elected Vice Presidents

- (iii) the Hired Executive members such as the Chief Financial Officer, Human Resources Officer, Programs & Marketing Officer, and House Presidents
- (iv) the students at large sitting on the Residence Experience Committee

4.04 The following shall be non-voting members of the General Assembly

- (i) the Speaker
- (ii) The Executive interns

4.05 The President(s) of any and all other, duly constituted, self-governing societies of residents recognized by the Senate of Queen's University and/or one of its committees, the University Rector, the President of the Alma Mater Society, Presidents of other student governments, and the members of the society shall have standing invitations to attend all meetings of the Assembly with speaking rights.

4.06 The General Assembly may appoint any number of additional, non-voting, members as it deems appropriate.

4.07 No person who is not both a student of Queen's University and a member of the Society in good standing shall be eligible to hold a seat on the General Assembly, nor shall any student be eligible who is an employee of Queen's University Residences or any department thereof. For the purposes of this section, a member of the Society in good standing shall be defined as one who has not been found responsible by any committee, board, or tribunal at any time during their tenure at Queen's for any infraction of rules of non-academic discipline.

4.08 The General Assembly shall:

- (i) for whatever matters of procedure not considered in the Bylaws of the Society, be governed by the Robert's Rules of Order in its latest edition;
- (ii) be open to all Society members except when a two-thirds majority resolution is passed to meet in closed session;
- (iii) grant speaking rights to any interested Society member;
- (iv) keep, and publish at least four times per year, a journal of proceedings when not in closed session;
- (v) assemble at least once a month, until March, or more frequently at the discretion of the President;
- (vi) elect a first-year student at large to sit on the Residence Experience Committee (REC) from the Society membership no later than the last day of September each year;
 - a. the first-year student at large on REC will sit on General Assembly and have voting rights.
- (viii) on the receipt of a petition containing the signatures of at least one-tenth of the Society membership, order a referendum to be conducted or a vote to be taken on the impeachment of an elected officer;
- (ix) allocate annually on a per-student basis and make available for the use of the House Councils, a portion of the revenues from membership dues as it deems appropriate which shall not be less than a sum equal to five percent, but not exceed fifty percent of the per-student membership due in any given year;
- (x) prior to its last meeting each academic year, decide on The Residence Society's mandatory fee for the following year(s) which shall not be less than 95% of the society fee from three years ago, and which shall not exceed the sum of the current year's fee plus a compounded inflationary adjustment

equal to the percentage increase in the fee assessed by Queen's Residences for room and full board for the past three years.

4.09 The General Assembly is responsible for:

- (i) overseeing the work of the President and elected Vice Presidents;
- (ii) ratifying Presidential appointments where the position could not be elected;
- (iii) appointing the auditors of the ResSoc through the Finance Committee;
- (iv) approving the annual ResSoc budget and ensuring, generally through the Finance and Audit Committee, continuing fiscal responsibility;
- (v) establishing Society rules and policies alongside Constitutional Affairs and Ethics Committee (CAEC) which, is necessary to ensure the accomplishment of the objectives of the Society; and
- (vi) generally ensuring that the objectives of the Society are fulfilled.

4.10 The General Assembly has the power to:

- (i) take any action deemed wise, desirable, practical, and necessary to carry out the objectives of the Society and the provisions of the Constitution and Bylaws of the Society;
- (ii) amend the Bylaws of the Society as per the procedures outlined in the Constitution;
- (iii) adopt, amend, or repeal policies or other governing documents of the Society which shall not contradict any matter considered by the Constitution or Bylaws of the Society or the policies of other residence-related organizations;
- (iv) ratify the charters of ResSoc committees;
- (v) resolve itself by majority vote to a certain opinion or agreement of principle on matters relevant to Society members;
- (vi) govern and regulate the finances, accounts, investments, property, business and all affairs whatsoever of ResSoc, and to give directions accordingly;
- (vii) expend funds and approve expenditures in accordance with the Society Financial Policy and Procedures;
- (viii) Consult and cooperate with:
 - a. persons, organizations, and groups, public or private, interested in, affected by, or concerned with Queen's Residences, and/or
 - b. agents and officials of the University concerned with or having jurisdiction over the residences;
- (ix) by 2/3 majority vote:
 - a. revoke the membership of any non-voting member of the General Assembly;
 - b. impeach, by a vote of non-confidence, any elected member of the General Assembly; or
 - c. order a referendum of the students on any matter, the results of which shall not be binding on the Assembly except in the cases of a referendum to determine the Society fee, or a referendum demanded by petition under section 4.08 (vii);
- (x) be the main decision-making body for matters which are unclear or not covered in the Constitution or Bylaws
- (xi) exercise all such powers as are or may be conferred on it by the University; and
- (xii) delegate functions to committees where appropriate.

Article 5 | Executive Power

5.01 The Executive power shall be vested in the President of ResSoc who shall be the Chief Executive Officer of the Society and who shall, as a team along with a Vice President for Residence Operations and a Vice President for Society Operations be chosen annually in January by Society members voting in an election carried out in accordance with the Bylaws of the Society.

5.02 The President shall hold a term of office of one year commencing on the first day of May following their election to office and extending until the last day of April in the year following their election. A vacancy in the office of President shall be filled by the Vice President (Society Operations) until such time as a replacement is elected as per the procedure established by the General Assembly.

5.03 No person shall be eligible to the office of President or elected Vice President except a student at Queen's University who will live in residence during the term of office being contested. The candidates must also have been residence staff at Queen's for at least one year or are currently serving as a residence staff member at the time of nominations. The candidate shall not have held the office of same title or level within the society in previous years; and the President shall not run for the office of Vice President while they are still in office.

5.04 The President is responsible for the well-being and effective operation of all aspects of ResSoc and for overseeing and managing, generally through the Vice Presidents, all of the functions of ResSoc.

5.05 The President has the power to:

- (i) make all administrative decisions concerning the planning and execution of programs and activities of ResSoc;
- (ii) interpret the Constitution, Bylaws, Rules and Regulations and Policies of the Society subject to judicial review by the Constitutional Affairs and Ethics Committee;
- (iii) appoint Society members as representatives to such external committees, boards, and societies as required
- (iv) call meetings of the General Assembly as necessary for the normal carrying out of the business of the Society;
- (v) appoint, with the advice and consent of the General Assembly:
- (vi) members and Chairs of all committees of ResSoc;
- (vii) terminate the employment of a staff for cause; and
- (viii) delegate where appropriate such powers and responsibilities as vested in them by this Constitution.

5.06 The President shall:

- (i) ensure the continuous hiring of House Presidents to office where a hiring or election process has failed to fill the office in due course;
- (ii) report directly and be accountable to the General Assembly;
- (iii) keep the members of the General Assembly up to date on Society initiatives, goals, and work being done through reports to the GA and text-based updates through the executive team's contact platform of choice as new information becomes available;
- (iv) have signing authority for all ResSoc monies in conjunction with the other authorized signing officers as per the Society Financial Policy and Procedures;

- (v) formulate new programs and activities in consultation with the Executive Board and the General Assembly;
- (vi) call to order and preside over all meetings of the Executive Board;
- (vii) preside over meetings in the absence of the Speaker;
- (viii) ensure all decisions of the General Assembly and the Executive Board are carried out;
- (ix) be an ex-officio member of all committees;
- (x) represent the Society and its membership to the University and wider community and, where appropriate, represent the majority opinion of the General Assembly; and
- (xi) coordinate the summer activities of ResSoc;
- (xii) supervise the Vice Presidents directly and the Officers on a high-level; and
- (x) meet with the executives at least bi-weekly in the academic year.

Article 6 | Equal Treatment of Member

It shall be a fundamental principle of the Society that all Society members are entitled to equal services, opportunities, and treatment without discrimination because of race, ancestry, place of origin, colour, ethnic origin, citizenship, religion, creed, sex, sexual orientation, age, marital status, family status, disability or the receipt of public assistance.

Article 7 | Honouraria

All staff members of the Society shall, once a month during the course of a staff member's contract, receive for their services a compensation as determined by the General Assembly in accordance with the Bylaws which shall neither be increased nor decreased during the terms of their office. Other staff employed by ResSoc outside of the House Presidents and executive board, excluding volunteers, shall receive compensation as determined by the President and General Assembly.

Article 8 | Amendments

8.01 This Constitution may be amended by a majority affirmative vote in a referendum of the members of the ResSoc. The referendum must be called by a two-thirds majority of the voting members of the General Assembly, or by a petition presented to the Assembly signed by at least one tenth of the Society membership, or three hundred (300) residents, whichever is greater. The results of a Constitutional referendum where the number of properly cast votes falls below five percent of the Society membership shall be void. Following a successful referendum, amendments shall be sent for ratification to whatever superior University body as may be required.

8.02 This Constitution may also be amended, created, or deleted after two-thirds approval of three readings by the General Assembly at separate sittings. After the first reading, the amendments must be available on the front page of the ResSoc website and sent to the Constitution and Ethics Committee. After the second reading, the Constitution must be approved by majority approval of at least two-thirds of House Councils represented by each House President, Residence Society staff

members, excluding interns, prior to the third reading. The amendment shall become effective after the third reading by the General Assembly.

8.03 Bylaws may be amended, created, or deleted after two-thirds approval of two readings by the General Assembly at separate sittings. After the first reading, amendments shall be posted on the Internet for at least eight (8) consecutive school days. The Bylaw change must be approved by majority approval of at least two-thirds of the House Councils represented by each Residence Facilitator, Residence Society staff members, excluding interns, prior to the second reading. The amendment shall become effective after the second reading by the General Assembly. The amendment must be approved by the Constitution and Ethics Committee prior to the first reading.

Article 9 | Coming into Force

9.01 This Constitution came into force on the first day of May in the year two thousand and thirteen.

9.02 This Constitution supersedes and makes null all previous Constitutions of the Main Campus Residents' Society and the Jean Royce Hall Society.

Appendices

APPENDIX A – DEFINITIONS

A1. ResSoc: The Residence Society of Queen’s University

A2. GA: The Residence Society’s General Assembly consisting of the executive team, the House Presidents, Executive Interns, the speaker, the scribe, and the members at large.

A3. The University: Queen’s University in Kingston, Ontario, Canada.

A4. Core executive: consists of the President, the Vice President of Residence Operations and the Vice President of Society Operations.

A5. Executive board: consists of the President, the Vice Presidents, and the Officers

A5. Seat on the General Assembly: voting position on the General Assembly

A6. Senate Residence Committee: now defunct committee that reported directly to Queen’s Senate. The Senate Residence Committee has been replaced by the Residence Advisory Committee.

A7. Residence Advisory Committee: a joint committee held between Residence Life & Services and the Residence Society.

A8. CAEC: Constitutional Affairs and Ethics Committee