

# Bower House Constitution

## Preamble

We the members of Bower House Cooperative, in order to form a sustainable and just cooperative recognize that it is necessary:

1. **A.** To promote a clear awareness to the membership of their responsibilities and obligations towards the house and surrounding ecosystems; furthermore
2. **B.** To ensure that said responsibilities and obligations are discharged in a manner efficient, practical, and harmonious; also
3. **C.** To maintain Bower House financially and physically in the soundest possible condition; moreover
4. **D.** To protect the individuals, living in the house, of minority opinion from harsh and unjust rules;

Hereby create this constitution to govern over the Bower House Cooperative:

## Article I: Definitions

1. **A.** 'Constitution' shall refer to this document in its entirety.
2. **B.** 'Bower House Cooperative,' 'Bower House,' 'Bower,' and 'house' shall be defined as the building located on the property: 127 Whitehills Drive, East Lansing, Michigan 48823.
3. **C.** 'Student Housing Cooperative,' and 'SHC' shall refer to the body that owns the Bower House Cooperative.
4. **D.** A 'member' is any person who has ever held a valid contract with Bower House Cooperative.
5. **E.** An 'active member,' or 'house member' is any member currently living in Bower House privy to the following conditions:
  1. **1.** Has a valid contract with SHC.
  2. **2.** Is currently in good financial standing with SHC.
6. **F.** A 'guest' is anyone staying at Bower House for any length of time without having signed a contract.
7. **G.** 'Active membership,' or 'membership' is the total number of individuals who are active members, or the entire group of active members.
8. **H.** A 'house meeting' shall be defined as a congregation of house members assembled to transact business pertaining to the internal operation of Bower House subject to the rules and regulations set forth by this constitution.
9. **I.** The 'constitutional addendum,' or 'addendum' will be where passed rules and regulations will be placed. The addendum is not apart of the constitution, but a supplement to it.
10. **J.** 'Meat' will be defined as an animal byproduct that is typically derived from the death of that animal.
11. **K.** The term 'personal living space' is defined as the individual room that an active member lives in.
12. **L.** A 'common room' shall be defined as any room that is not an active member's personal living space.

13. **M.** An 'Ecosystem' is a synthesis of all flora, fauna, and biological processes that interact with and are affected by membership of Bower house.

## Article II: Scope

1. **A.** This constitution shall be subject to all laws and regulations set forth by the United States of America, the State of Michigan, and the City of East Lansing.
2. **B.** This constitution shall be subject to all rules and regulations set forth by the Michigan State University Student Housing Cooperative (MSU-SHC) and all of its respective governing bodies.
3. **C.** This constitution shall supersede and null all previous constitutions initiated by Bower House Cooperative.
4. **D.** This constitution shall supersede any rules or regulations that were implemented under its governance.
5. **E.** All rules and regulations made under the governance of this constitution shall be placed in the addendum section of this constitution upon the approval of the active members during a Regular House Meeting.

## Article IV: Governance

1. **A.** All rules and regulations imposed upon the members and guests of Bower House shall be adopted at house meetings or be stated within this constitution.

## Article V: House Meetings

1. **A.** A Regular House Meeting shall be a house meeting composed of the active membership subject to the following:
  1. **1.** Quorum shall consist of anyone who attends the meeting.
  2. **2.** Will be held on the first, third, and fifth (when applicable) Sundays of each month during the periods of time when Michigan State University classes are in session.
  3. **3.** A facilitator for a meeting shall be selected at the previous house meeting. In the event that no facilitator was selected at the previous house meeting, a vote of active members will determine the current meeting facilitator.
  4. **4.** The agenda for the meeting shall be distributed all house members a minimum of 48 hours prior to meeting time.
  5. **5.** Will have the ability to vote on any business that concerns Bower House.
  6. **6.** Decisions at a house meeting will pass by a majority vote, unless otherwise described in this constitution.
2. **B.** An Emergency House Meeting shall be a house meeting composed of active members subject to the following:
  1. **1.** A minimum of 48 hours notice will be given to all active members. When called, a brief agenda must be announced.
  2. **2.** Will have the ability to vote on any business that concerns the structural integrity of Bower House, legal issues, or SHC decisions.
  3. **3.** Shall not have the ability to implement new rules, regulations, or fines.
  4. **4.** All decisions made at an Emergency House Meeting shall be subject to review at the following Regular House Meeting.
  5. **5.** Can be called by any member of the house.
3. **C.** All house meetings are mandatory. If a member does not receive approval from the

facilitator to miss a given meeting, then they shall be fined \$10.

## Article VI: Rules

1. **A.** All members and guests are expected to read and heed all rules implemented in the manner dictated in Section C of Article VI.
2. **B.** Any member or guest who violates a rule is subject to a fine as prescribed by that rule and/or this constitution.
3. **C.** Rules shall be implemented in the following manner:
  1. **1.** Suggested rule is brought up during a Regular House meeting.
  2. **2.** Is passed in the manner prescribed by Article V, Section A, Subsection 6.
  3. **3.** Is written, posted, and added to the addendum section of this constitution.
4. **D.** Any rule not added to the official constitution addendum shall not be enforced.

## Article VII: Standing House Rules

1. **A.** Smoking
  1. **1.** There is no smoking of cigarettes, cigars, or other tobacco paper rolled paraphernalia within Bower House.
  2. **2.** Smoking is allowed outside of Bower House.
2. **B.** Meat
  1. **1.** Meat is hereby allowed to be prepared, cooked, consumed, and stored in common areas and house member personal living spaces.
  2. **2.** House members are expected to keep in mind both the diets of their fellow house members and the history of
  3. **3.** Bower House with its relation to meat; and therein keep their actions respectful in this regard. This includes dishes used with meat being washed thoroughly.
  4. **4.** House money shall not be used to purchase meat.
3. **C.** Room Picks
  1. **1.** Room picks will be based on seniority. Overall the member with the most seniority will get the first room pick, and the second highest will get second, and so on and so forth. Seniority will be decided as follows:
    1. **i.** The person with the highest points has the highest seniority.
    2. **ii.** For each fall or spring semester living in Bower, the active member will be assigned 5pt.
    3. **iii.** For each summer semester living in Bower the active member will be assigned 3pt.
    4. **iv.** For each fall or spring semester living in SHC outside of Bower, the active member will be assigned 2pt.
    5. **v.** For each summer semester living in SHC outside of bower the active member will be assigned 1pt.
    6. **vi.** If point totals are equal for the two active members, then their signing dates will be used to determine whose seniority is higher. If that is the same, then an impartial manner such as drawing straws, flipping a coin, or rolling a die will determine who has higher seniority for those individuals.
  2. **2.** When room picks are done:
    1. **i.** For fall/spring semesters, room picks are done by the end of the preceding spring semester. Room picks are set until May, however if a room becomes empty, that room will be available for any member to move into based off of seniority.

2. **ii.** For summer semester, room picks are done after the fall/spring picks of the following school year, but must be done at least two weeks before the summer contract period starts.
3. **3.** Squatter's Rights
  1. **i.** Squatter's rights are in effect. Active members occupying a room have the right to not be kicked out of the room they currently inhabit.
  2. **ii.** Exception: Summer semester. The summer semester room picks do not carry over into the school year. The room picks decided the preceding spring hold precedence.
4. **D.** Energy Consumption
  1. **1.** Window-mounted air conditioning units are banned from use in any personal living space.
  2. **2.** Personal refrigeration units in personal living spaces will be charged an additional \$10 per month.
  3. **3.** Space Heaters in personal living spaces:
    1. **i.** Space heaters must be newer than 5 years old
    2. **ii.** Maximum energy usage for a space heater is 1000kWh
    3. **iii.** Active members using a space heater will be subject to an additional \$20 per month charge each month of use.
    4. **iv.** This charge is based on whether or not there exists a space heating unit within an active member's personal living space, not if they claim to be using it or not.

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