Harambee House Manifesto

Preamble

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

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

Hereby create this constitution to govern over the Harambee House Cooperative

Article I: Definitions

1. **1.** ‘Constitution’ shall refer to this document in its entirety.
2. **2.** ‘Harambee House Cooperative,’ ‘Harambee House,’ ‘Harambee’ and ‘house’ shall be defined as the building located on the property: 427 Hillsdale Street, Lansing, Michigan 48933
3. **3.** ‘Student Housing Cooperative,’ and ‘SHC’ shall refer to the body that owns the Harambee House Cooperative.
4. **4.** A ‘member’ is any person who has ever held a valid contract with Harambee House Cooperative.
5. **5.** An ‘active member’ or ‘house member’ is any member currently living in Harambee House privy to the following conditions
    1. **a.** Has a valid contract with SHC.
    2. **b.** I currently in good financial standing with SHC.
6. **6.** A ‘guest’ is anyone staying at Harambee House for any length of time without having signed a contract.
7. **7.** ‘Active membership’ or ‘membership’ is the total number of individuals who are active members, or the entire group of active members.
8. **8.** A ‘house meeting’ shall be defined as a congregation of house members assembled to transact business pertaining to the internal operation of Harambee House subject to the rules and regulations set forth by this constitution.
9. **9.** 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. **10.** The term ‘personal living space’ is defined as the individual room that an active member lives in.
11. **11.** A ‘common room’ shall be defined as any room that is not an active member’s personal living space.

Article II: Scope

1. **1.** 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 Lansing.
2. **2.** This constitution shall be subject to all rules and regulations set forth by the Michigan State Housing Cooperative (SHC) and all its respective governing bodies.
3. **3.** 'This constitution shall supersede and nulls all previous constitutions initiated by Harambee House Cooperative.
4. **4.** This constitution shall supersede any rules or regulations that were implemented under the governance of this constitution.
5. **5.** 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. **1.** All rules and regulations imposed upon the members and guests of Harambee House shall be adopted at house meetings or be stated within this constitution.

Article V: House Meetings

1. **1.** A Regular House Meeting shall be a house meeting composed of the active membership subject to the following:
    1. **a.** Quorum shall consist of ⅔ of the active house membership. In the event that quorum was not achieved at the preceding Regular House Meeting, quorum shall be ½ of the active membership for the latter meeting only.
    2. **b.** House meetings will take place every other Sunday
    3. **c.** A facilitator and note taker will be decided at the beginning of each meeting.
    4. **d.** The standing agenda for house meetings is as follows:
        1. **i.** Committee Meeting Review
        2. **ii.** Officer Reports
        3. **iii.** Member time
    5. **e.** All house members will have the ability to vote on any business that concerns Harambee House.
    6. **f.** Decisions at a house meeting will pass by a majority vote, unless otherwise described in this constitution.
2. **2.** All house meetings are mandatory. If a member has to miss a meeting, they must get permission from the rest of the active members.

Article VI: Rules

1. **1.** All members and guests are expected to read and heed all rules implemented in the manner dictated in Section 3 of Article VI.
2. **2.** Fines may be administered due to broken rules as agreed upon at a Regular House Meeting
3. **3.** Rules shall be implemented in the following manner:
    1. **a.** Suggested rule is brought up during a Regular House Meeting

    2. **b.** Is passed in the manner prescribed by Article V, Section 1, Subsection F.
    3. **c.** Is written, posted, and added to the addendum section of this constitution.
4. **4.** Any Rule not added to the official constitution addendum shall not be enforced.

Article VII: Standing House Rules

1. **1.** Smoking
    1. **a.** There is no smoking of any kind within Harambee House
    2. **b.** Smoking is allowed outside of Harambee House.
2. **2.** Room Picks
    1. **a.** Room picks will be based on contract signing date.
3. **3.** Guests
    1. **a.** Members may have guests at Harambee House a maximum of 3 days per week, 2 of which may be an overnight stay (unless otherwise agreed upon by the house)
    2. **b.** Members must inform housemates of when they have a guest via the Discord Chat.
    3. **c.** House must vote on accepting guests staying longer than a week.
    4. **d.** Guests staying long term may stay no longer than 30 days.
    5. **e.** Guests staying long-term will be charged $25 each week.

Article IX: New Members

1. **1.** Potential members of Harambee House must complete an the SHC Application, House Tour, and Interview in order to be accepted in the House.
2. **2.** Membership will vote on accepting a new member. Quorum (⅔) must be reached for acceptance.
3. **3.** If all rooms are full, members may be accepted and placed on a waiting list.

Artle X: Responsibilities of Membership

1. **1.** Work Responsibilities
    1. **a.** All active members of Harambee House are required to perform duties as decided upon by the house.
    2. **b.** Final responsibility for assigned work rests with the active members who originally signed up for the job. If an active member cannot do a job, they may exchange duties with another active member if both active members agree to the conditions of exchange.
2. **2.** Financial Responsibilities: Contracts, Rent Payments, and Deposits
    1. **a.** Dues and deposits required by Harambee House and MSU SHC must be paid before a new member moves into the house.
    2. **b.** Any fines imposed by the membership for violating house rules, non performance of assigned work, or other offences shall be added to the member’s share of expenses. The member in question must pay these.
    3. **c.** The Membership Officer will fill house openings.
    4. **d.** Openings due to a vote to release a person from a contract must be filled by that member.
    5. **e.** If a contract is broken:
        1. **i.** And there is more than one person which will be released from their contract, the rooms will be filled by prospective members that contact the house independent of an individual’s advertising efforts in the order that the departing members signed

    their release forms at the SHC office.
    2. **ii.** And an active member finds an acceptable applicant through their own advertising efforts, then that active member will be released from their contract when the new contract is finalized.
6. **f.** All house expenditures not accounted for will have an immediate stop payment put on them by the Finance Officer.

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