

# Orion House Constitution

**Preamble:** This association is known as Orion House, so named after Orion Ulrey. Members who pay their dues will be considered members for life, but only current residents under contract will be considered housemates and allowed to vote.

The purpose of the association shall be to provide room and board to its members at low cost. The reason for such an association is to provide an hospitable and educational living experience where members are encouraged to grow through co- operative living. Members are encouraged to acquire new skills that will benefit them as individuals and the House as a whole.

Contained in this document is the set of standards and procedures outlining ways of delegating responsibility and authority in a democratic and cooperative manner, in keeping with the purpose of the House and the policies of the MSU-Student Housing Corporation.

## Article 1: Membership

1. **1.1** Prospective members shall become members upon applying to the SHC, touring the house and being approved by the membership, making a full payment of their SHC member dues and shares, signing a membership agreement and establishment of residence within the House, in that order. Members must also be members of the MSU Student Housing Corporation and obey its policies and by-laws. All of these conditions must be completed before membership is valid.
1. **1.2** Any person who agrees to fulfill the conditions of the House membership agreement shall be eligible for membership. No person shall be denied membership on the grounds of race, creed, sex, gender, sexual orientation, marital status, age, family status, disability, or political preference.
1. **1.3** Members are required to sign membership agreements that coincide with the Student Housing Corporation membership agreement dates, unless otherwise approved by the house and the SHC Board of Directors. All members who join after beginning of the membership agreement date will pay the complete membership fee and share, but other charges will be made proportional to the amount of time left in the school year. Members leaving before their membership agreement expires are financially obligated to pay the monthly member assessment and the advertising costs (if needed) to fill their position. This obligation does not expire until a replacement signs a membership agreement.
1. **1.4** Members who pay their house dues will be considered 'members for life', but only current residents under membership agreement will be considered 'current members' and allowed to vote on all matters.

## Article 2: Member Responsibilities and Duties

1. **2.1** Members are required to:
  1. **2.1.A** Take an active part in the operation of Orion House;
  2. **2.1.B** Promptly pay monthly charges
  3. **2.1.C** Attend all House meetings, unless excused for valid reasons
  4. **2.1.D** Make proper use of House facilities
  5. **2.1.E** Clean up all personal messes left in common areas, and wash any dish they used.
  6. **2.1.F** Actively participate in physical upkeep of the house
  7. **2.1.G** Obey all rules and policies that Orion House sets
  8. **2.1.H** Abide by the Roommate Bill of Rights as follows:
    1. **a)** Each roommate has the right to privacy and equal use of the room.
    2. **b)** Each roommate must try to respect the other's desires regarding lights, noise, and use in general.
    3. **c)** A roommate must obtain explicit permission from their roommate to have an overnight guest in the room each time s/he has a guest.
1. **2.2** Attendance at meetings is mandatory. Members may be excused from House meetings by submitting written or verbal notice to the House Board Representative 24 hours prior to any House meeting. Excuses should explained in as much detail as necessary. Authority is given to the House President/Board Representative to approve or dismiss excuses. If the member missing the meeting wishes to contest the "unexcused" status of their absence, it must be put on the agenda for the next house meeting, and be approved by  $\frac{2}{3}$  membership. Each unapproved excuse shall be considered an unexcused absence.
1. **2.3** Any unexcused absence from a regular house meeting will result in a fine, with consecutive unexcused absences resulting in compounding fines: the first absence is a freebie, second absence \$10, third absence \$20. If a member misses three consecutive meetings, the membership may vote to evict the member in question. Five absences (consecutive or not) in a semester will also result in the membership being empowered to evict the member.
1. **2.4** Members are required to perform a minimum of 4 weekly chore credit points of work duty assigned by the Chore Checker on a weekly basis. A dish duty calendar will also be posted by the Chore Checker. Each member must also complete 1 hour of general house improvement during each of Orion House's Work Weeks (See Article 4.8.J). Chores and general improvement are required as part of the member's membership agreement in keeping with the cooperative principle of keeping costs down by substituting labor for capital.
1. **2.5** If a house member wishes to prematurely break their membership agreement, it is the member's responsibility to find a replacement. This responsibility will end on the date the replacing member contractually begins their lease. Any potential new member must meet all Orion House membership conditions. In the case of a double room vacancy the potential new member must be approved by the remaining roommate. Any objections must be written out and submitted to the Membership Officer. Any member may also "buy out" of their membership agreement by paying 3 months worth of rent in advance. The member is then no longer obligated to find a replacement for their membership agreement, and the responsibility falls to the house and membership officer.

## Article 3: House Meetings

1. **3.1** Attendance at all meetings is mandatory for all current members. (See Article 2.2 for

exceptions). Meeting will be held biweekly and on a regular schedule set at the start of each semester.

1. **3.2** The House is governed under this constitution. The House is empowered to make day to day decisions and policies as long as they do not conflict with this constitution, the Student Housing Cooperative Code of Operations, By-laws, and/or decisions of the SHC Board of Directors. Decisions will be made by majority vote at House meetings, Facebook polls, or via other democratic means as defined in this Article. A quorum of current members must be present for voting to take place, except at special House meetings as described below.
1. **3.3** At the first House Meeting of each term the House shall offer input on a schedule of the term's house meetings. A schedule will be posted by the House Board Representative within a week of that first meeting for the whole term. The House Board Representative must post the meeting agendas at least 3 days before each meeting.
1. **3.4** Quorum is defined as 50% plus one of current members of the House, unless otherwise stated. Quorum may be adjusted during summer semester if necessary. Motions passed at regular House meetings with quorum shall be binding on all members, guests, and visitors to Orion House. Quorum will not be required for emergency meetings due to lack of quorum at regular .
1. **3.5** Emergency meetings are defined as regular house meetings (i.e. are mandatory) that are not on the beginning term schedule. Any member along with the House President may call an Emergency Meeting. In the event that the inability to raise quorum has impaired the House's ability to address issues, the House Board Representative may call a special House meeting by posting the time that is amenable to most members. If quorum is not reached through these efforts, then a 2/3 majority vote of those voting members present will be sufficient to pass motions. Motions passed at an Emergency House Meeting may be overturned by a simple majority at subsequent Regular house meetings where quorum is reached, in order to avoid abuse of special meeting voting rules.
1. **3.6** The first Regular House meeting of a contract period must be held within ten days of the move-in date. This date is to be set at the last meeting of the previous contract period.
1. **3.7** If the previous House President is no longer residing in the house at the first meeting of the new contract year, then any member with meeting facilitation experience may facilitate the first meeting of the semester.
1. **3.8** The following items will be on every House agenda:
  2. - Attendance
  3. - Officer Reports
  4. - Finance Officer
  5. - Education Officer
  6. - Facilities Officer
  7. - Membership Officer
  8. - Board of Directors Representative
  9. - Chore Checker
  10. - Rent Inquiry
  11. - Fine Appeals
  12. - Old Business
  13. - New Business/Discussion
  14. - Announcements
1. **3.9** House meetings must not last longer than 3 hours, unless the meeting is extended by a 2/3

vote of members present. The Agenda should include a 10-minute break for lengthy meetings.

1. **3.10** The House Board Representative (or their stand-in) should encourage relevant discussion, facilitate organized problem solving, and demand that disputes be settled with civility. In the event that a discussion becomes so heated that the President is struggling to maintain order, s/he may immediately call for a 5 or 10 minute break, after which time, the membership must vote to continue the same discussion before proceeding. If the argument becomes unruly again, the discussion will be halted and put on the agenda for the next meeting (if necessary), unless the issue absolutely must be resolved at the current meeting.
1. **3.11** The facilitator will not vote, except to break a tie. The facilitator still counts toward reaching quorum.

## Article 4: House Officers

1. **4.1** Orion House must always maintain current house members in the following House Officer positions as outlined by the SHC Code of Operations:
  2. - Board of Directors Representative
  3. - Finance Officer
  4. - Education Officer
  5. - Facilities Officer
  6. - Membership Officer
1. **4.2** Officers must be elected for each term at the first or second house meeting of the semester. Officer descriptions are available within this Article, and this constitution as a whole must be made available to all members from the day of move-in.!!! Orion House Officers will be elected by a majority vote. Officers must serve until they are replaced or no longer reside in the house, to ensure harmonious operation of the House. This extends responsibilities to cover all periods between house meeting and over breaks/vacations.
1. **4.3** Any officer may be recalled by a majority vote if the issue is announced on a meeting agenda. At the meeting, members must express their grievances regarding the performance of the officer in question. The officer in question may not facilitate the meeting. All recall votes shall be anonymous.
1. **4.4** All House Officers will prepare a report for each house meeting. The report should include happenings at any meetings they have attended, the current situation of any house activities they oversee (i.e. Membership Officer should report on vacancies, Facilities Officer should report on projects, etc).
1. **4.5** The Board of Directors Representative must:
  1. **4.5.A** Vote for Orion House at all SHC BoD meetings. House members are encouraged to attend board meetings at their discretion.
  2. **4.5.B** Electronically post the agenda for each house meeting at least 3 days prior to the meeting. Members are expected to contribute to the agenda with any topics they wish to discuss.
  3. **4.5.C** Sit on one of the SHC standing committees and work with the Finance Officer pay any fines assessed to the House for non-attendance of any SHC meetings.
  4. **4.5.D** Be considered a Director of SHC and is charged to act in the best interests of the House and SHC.
  5. **4.5.E** Put every effort into getting the membership's input on all SHC issues.
  6. **4.5.F** Sign any corporate documents.

7. **4.5.G** Be familiar with the SHC Code of Operations and By-Laws. They will be a reference for issues members have with SHC and their policy and practices.
  8. **4.5.H** Be familiar with any policies monitored at the last board meeting.
  9. **4.5.I** Be the default house member to speak with the authorities during an emergency. If the Board Representative is under the age of 21, they must assign a replacement ahead of time to speak with the authorities in a house party situation.
  10. **4.5.J** Be a veteran member of the house, if at all possible.
  11. **4.5.K** Facilitate the first house meeting of the contract period. Any member may volunteer to facilitate a house meeting, by announcing they'd like to at the previous meeting. The Board Representative serves as the default facilitator.
  12. **4.5.L** Understand the definition of harassment and must work with the Membership Officer in fulfilling the obligations of the procedure if the need arises.
  13. **4.5.M** Maintain the House Google Drive, keeping it organized and up to date.
  14. **4.5.N** Keep track of meeting absences, and report those to the Finance Officer when fines are needed to be given.
  15. **4.5.O** House Board Rep has to inform housemates that the Stalk Doc exists and they should add their information to it in the event of an emergency.
  16. **4.5.P** Be an administrator for the House Facebook Group.
  17. **4.5.Q** Assign parking, refrigerator and freezer space at the beginning of each semester, keeping in mind seniority, frequency of car use, and amount of grocery space needed.
  18. **4.5.R** Receive 3 chore credit points per week.
  19. **4.5.S** Conflict manager
1. **4.6** The Finance Officer must:
    1. **4.6.A** Serve on the SHC Finance Committee and attend each meeting or send a substitute.
    2. **4.6.B** Reports should also include any updates resulting from finance committee discussions.
    3. **4.6.C** Formulate the term budget immediately after the first house meeting of each term, using input from the Corporate Treasurer. This formal budget will be on the agenda of the second house meeting of the term. The budget will pass by a 2/3 majority of the current house membership and all members must sign the budget in agreement.
    4. **4.6.D** Pay all House bills by the due date, or else the house may vote to charge the Finance Officer the equivalent of any late fines or reinstallation fees incurred due to late payment (must pass with a majority vote at a house meeting).
    5. **4.6.E** Keep the house checkbook for the appropriate year. They must ensure that the checkbook for the inactive year is held at the SHC. They may also distribute a checkbook or debit card to the House Shopper, if they are a signer on the Orion bank account.
    6. **4.6.F** Be given all receipts by the House Shopper to complete the House Reconciliation by the 15th of each month (for the previous month.)
    7. **4.6.G** Make the House records available to any member who wishes to see them. This includes posting a copy of the semester budget on the Facebook Page and Google Drive.
    8. **4.6.H** The Finance Officer must also make the records available to the SHC bookkeeper and Corporate Treasurer if necessary.
    9. **4.6.I** Serve as financial spokesperson for the House when dealing with banks, utility companies, suppliers, or the SHC office.
    10. **4.6.J** Problems with the House books or House members' accounts must be brought up at finance committee meetings, along with a ledger of all member accounts.
    11. **4.6.K** The Finance Officer shall be responsible for any fines imposed upon the House due to negligence in attending committee meetings.
    12. **4.6.L** Keep track of all Recycling Money, and keep it in a secure location.

13. **4.6.M** Towards the end of each month, be given the records of fines and credits from the Chore Checker, and be notified of the members who missed meetings from the House Board Representative, so that those people will be fined/credited appropriately on the Charge Sheet.
  14. **4.6.N** Post the Charge Sheet on Facebook before the end of each month, so that members know how much rent to pay. The officer must also submit the Charge Sheet to the Members Services Coordinator before the end of the month. This also serves as a way to alert the house of any member who haven't paid rent, or have incurred house fines.
  15. **4.6.O** Bring up the maintenance budget at the house meeting.
  16. **4.6.P** If at all possible, take time to train the next Finance Officer.
  17. **4.6.Q** Be a veteran member of the house, if at all possible.
  18. **4.6.R** Finance Officer should have some background in accounting, mathematics, or other applicable fields.
  19. **4.6.S** Be credited 3 chore credit points each week.
1. **4.7** The Education Officer must:
    1. **4.7.A** Reports to the house should include things the committee has been working on as a group and the officer's role in these projects.
    2. **4.7.B** Educate the members about life in a co-operative, as well as Orion House history.
    3. **4.7.C** Attend all Education meetings or send a substitute. Any fines for not attending will be charged to their account.
    4. **4.7.D** Contributing to or coordinating the contributions of Orion House to the Pine Press.
    5. **4.7.E** Help the House Board Representative and Membership Officer to resolve any disputes among the membership.
    6. **4.7.F** Update the house on the Pine Press, important points from committee discussions, as well as upcoming committee events (volunteer days, educational events and professional development opportunities).
    7. **4.7.G** Review the House Constitution at the beginning of each term and suggest any changes that they feel fit to the Membership for approval at the second meeting of the term. If no changes are to be made the constitutions then the current constitution should be approved at that meeting, or input should be taken from the membership if they do not approve. The Education Officer will continue to present changes at the meetings until the membership approves them by a 2/3 majority.
    8. **4.7.H** Provide the SHC with an updated Orion Constitution, whenever amendments are made.
    9. **4.7.I** Officers should be able to open the floor for house discussion/education on topics that education committee works on (e.g. consent, bystander intervention, sustainability, mental health) and receive input from housemates. Along with membership officer, should be able to lead discussions on house culture/health when necessary.
    10. **4.7.J** Encourage and lead members in adding to the House's culture, norms and history
    11. **4.7.K** Be an administrator on the house Facebook group.
    12. **4.7.L** Receive 3 chore credit points per week.
    13. **4.7.M** Conflict manager
  1. **4.8** The Facilities Officer must:
    1. **4.8.A** Be responsible for the maintenance and upkeep of the physical House.
    2. **4.8.B** Attend all SHC Maintenance Committee meetings, or send a replacement. Any fine due to non-attendance will be charged to their account.
    3. **4.8.C** Officers should be able to report on recent discussions of the facilities committee, and should be able to navigate and share access to documentation within Facilities Google Drive.

4. **4.8.D** Keep complete set of duplicate keys in a place that is secure, but accessible to all housemates.
5. **4.8.E** Ensure that all House duties that involve maintenance are done in a proper fashion. The Chore Checker will be notified of any negligence and s/he may issue a warning. Further negligence will result in a fine.
6. **4.8.F** Determine the need for all maintenance supplies. The Maintenance Officer shall be authorized to spend House maintenance funds, with prior consent given by a quorum vote of the house for any purchases over \$50, taking care not to deplete the semester's budget. Budget should be brought to meeting to discuss funding by the finance officer.
7. **4.8.G** Keep track of all House work and repairs and record these in the House maintenance log and report any irregularities to the SHC Executive Vice-President.
8. **4.8.H** Notify, as a primary responsibility, the SHC office of any maintenance problems, with the house is unable to solve within its own budget and labor pool.
9. **4.8.I** Officers should be able to answer code-related questions regarding pets, appliances, maintenance, and physical development.
10. **4.8.J** Consult with the House Finance Officer to determine whether the house should budget more than the standard/minimum amount for Maintenance.
11. **4.8.K** Train the House members to do minor preventative maintenance, which the building and appliances need regularly.
12. **4.8.L** Coordinate with the Chore Checker at least one (and no more than two) work weeks each semester. A list of activities for the work week(end) must be presented at a House meeting prior to the work week(end). Anyone that does not participate will be fined.
13. **4.8.M** Prepare for the Fire and City inspections. This entails attending the inspection dates with city officials and taking the initiative to bring the house into compliance.
14. **4.8.N** Consult the House on a house improvement project that will be covered by the yearly Maintenance Grant. It is a very important duty of the Maintenance Officer to ensure that at least one grant per year is given to Orion.
15. **4.8.O** Set the house thermostat to no higher than 70 degrees in the winter (68 is recommended). S/he should lower the temperature to 60 degrees at night and during winter break. The Maintenance Officer is the only member with authority to change the thermostat. You must gain permission from the house facilities officer. A House vote can be made to lower or higher the thermostat temperature.
16. **4.8.P** Ensure that all of the smoke detectors and fire extinguishers in the House are in proper working condition, and that the House has the proper distribution of them.
17. **4.8.Q** Inform the membership of and post an emergency fire escape plan in a common area.
18. **4.8.R** Keep a log of the House furniture and its condition. Assessment of furniture in members' rooms will be updated each time someone moves out, and an assessment of common area furniture will be done at the end of each contract period. Major damage to a piece of Orion furniture shall be charged to the member's account, if they are at fault.
19. **4.8.S** Should be aware of and able to inform their house on major SHC capital improvements projects/budgets.
20. **4.8.T** With the help of the Interim Coordinator, inspect rooms each time someone moves out and keep a record of their condition.
21. **4.8.U** Serve as a backup to the Interim Coordinator in making certain all members have room and House keys.
22. **4.8.V** Receive 3 chore credit points per week. House can vote to lower chore credits if maintenance officer is not doing enough around the house.

1. **4.9** The Membership Officer must:

2. - As a primary responsibility, support the ongoing effort of keeping the House full to capacity.

The importance of this task cannot be overemphasized. The entire year is a critical time for membership.

3. - See that prospective members meet the qualifications for open membership and understand costs and responsibilities. They should also schedule and conduct tours for prospective members whenever possible (however, any member can give a tour to a prospective member).
4. - Attend all SHC Membership Committee meetings to learn and share knowledge of how to find new members. S/he may send a substitute to the meetings, but will be charged for any fines resulting from non-attendance.
5. - Should be able to report on events being planned (especially mandatory events), dates for the next New Member Orientation and All Member Party and status of house vacancies/spots filled.
6. - Put new members' names on the appropriate mail slot. The Membership Officer is responsible for ensuring each new member has a copy of the House Constitution and any other documents that may be useful in orienting a new member.
7. - Be aware of any policies enforced upon the House (i.e. pet policy, guest policy, harassment policy). This person is to know and understand the policies as it is in their job description to assist the SHC Vice President of Membership (VPM) in implementing them.
8. - Understand the definition of harassment and must work with the House President in fulfilling the obligations of the procedure if the need arises.
9. - Conflict manager
10. - Should be able to lead discussions on house culture/health when necessary.
11. - Schedule room picks and keeping track of house seniority as laid out in Article 5.
12. - Receive 4 chore credit points per week in the fall due to increased workload, 3 chore points a week in the spring and summer.

## Article 5: Other House Positions

1. **5.1** As stated in Article 2.4, members are required to perform 4 weekly chore credit points assigned by the Chore Checker on a weekly basis. All House Officers, as detailed in Article 4, receive 3 weekly chore credit points for their contributions to the house as an officer.
1. **5.2** Aside from House Officers, there are other positions which earn chore credit points. Members may run for these positions at the start of each term, or whenever a position is otherwise open. Members who are elected into these positions will be expected to perform their outlined duties for the entire semester. The duties of those positions are as followed:
  1. **5.3** Chore Checker, must:
    2. - Maintain a list of all possible chores to be assigned, ensuring that chores are prioritized and on a rotation.
    3. - At the first house meeting of the term, announce a day and time that weekly chores will be due for the entire semester. Chores will be late after that time.
    4. - Check all chores at the time that they are due, posting a list of members who will be fined in the same place that the chore list was posted. See Article 6 for more details on chore procedures.
    5. - Take suggestions from the membership regarding preferred chores.
    6. - Post the chore list at least 3 days prior to the day that they are due.
    7. - Post the dish duty schedule for the coming month by the 25th of each month.
    8. - Post a list of all chore descriptions/expectations.
    9. - Ensure new members know how to do their chores, when to do them, and what the repercussions will be if they fail to do them.
    10. - Keep a binder near the chore board with a detailed description of how to do each of the



chores.

11. - Work with the Facilities Officer in determining what duties should be performed during the work week.
12. - Create a practical door-duty list for each official house party, keeping practical security in mind for the preferred door duty times.
13. - Towards the end of the month, the Chore Checker must report the list of fines/credits to the Finance Officer, along with the annotated chore lists, dish duty sheet and fine/extensions sheets.
14. - Be credited 3 chore points per week.
  1. **5.4** House Shopper, must:
  2. - The house shopper will strive to do house shopping every seven days, unless they request an extension.
  3. - Be a signer on the Orion Bank Accounts, if s/he chooses to use a house checkbook instead of paying on their own and being reimbursed.
  4. - Be compensated for gas in the form of \$10 rent credit per month, unless the Shopper fails to complete their duties on time.
  5. - Consult with the Finance Officer regarding an appropriate food budget, at the start of each term. Furthermore, it is the House Shopper's primary duty to spend within the constraints of the food budget.
  6. - Ensure that all primary food staples are stocked every week, which include, but are not limited to:

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milk, eggs, butter/margarine, spices, garlic, salt, pepper, flour, sugar, coffee, pasta, rice, bread, bagels, onions, potatoes, cheese, peanut butter, cream cheese, condiments, vinegar, oils, cooking spray, baking soda, baking powder, ziploc bags, cleaning supplies, hand soap, dish soap, paper towels, toilet paper...

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1. - Attempt to accommodate the requests of the membership by buying requested items, whenever budgetarily possible and beneficial to members.
  2. - Submit grocery receipts to the Finance Officer within 2 days of shopping.
  3. - Be credited 3 chore credit hours per week.
1. **5.5** The 2 House Recyclers, must:
  2. Return all recyclables to a recycling facility/bottle return whenever recycling bins are full; this must be done at least once every two weeks, or fines will be imposed.
  3. Clean the recycling room area, wash out all recycling bins when dirty, and maintain organization of the recyclables.
  4. Submit all recycling money to the Finance Officer with a receipt within two days of the recycling trip.
  5. Be compensated for gas in the form of a \$5/driver monthly rent credit, unless the Recycler fails to complete their duties.
  6. Be credited 4 chore credit hours per week.

## Article 6: Chores and Financial Obligations

1. **6.1** Members must complete their weekly chore duties, as assigned by the chore checker.

2. - Members may ask for an extension on their chore, not to exceed 24 hours, by discussing the terms with the Chore Checker prior to the time that the chores are due. Extensions (with an expiration time) will be posted with the fines.
  3. - Members may “steal” (receive an equivalent credit) other members’ fines by completing the chores that were not done on time. However, any chore deemed “incomplete” (some effort was put forth) by the Chore Checker results in an automatic 24-hour extension to the member, of which the Chore Checker must notify the member directly, and add the extension to the lists of fines and extensions, with a brief explanation of what still needs to be done.
  4. - Suspected abuse of chore extensions may be brought forward by the Chore Checker at a house meeting, and the house can vote not to grant any further extensions to the member in question.
  5. - Chore fines are equivalent to \$5 per point per week.
  6. - If a member fails to do their chores for roughly one month, chore checker may put your name on the house agenda under Rent Inquiry. If the member in question steals another member’s chore after failing to do their own, that will count towards their chores.
  7. - Any member may switch chores with another member, but failure to complete a chore will result in a fine to the member originally assigned to the chore, unless the Chore Checker was made aware of the switch before chores were due.
1. **6.2** Every day, one to two members will be assigned dish duty, according to the dish duty calendar posted by the Chore Checker. The member performing dish duty may choose to wash dishes throughout the day, but the earliest that dish duty can be deemed complete is 7pm. The member then has from 7pm until noon the next day to put away all dry dishes in their correct places and wash all dirty dishes in the sink and surrounding area. Failure to complete dish duty on time will result in a \$5 fine person per dish. After noon, any member may steal the fine, and write their name on the dish duty calendar on the previous day to indicate that they stole the dish day and will receive a \$5 per person’s dish duty credit.
1. **6.3** At the first House meeting of each term, the House shall offer input on the budget to be created by the Finance Officer. This budget should include all expected expenses; utility bills, SHC expenses (assessments), house savings, food/supplies, and a maintenance budget. The Finance Officer is advised to construct the budget based on the previous year’s actual spending (records can be provided by the Corporate Treasurer).
1. **6.4** All house savings are not subject to member refund. Savings can only be spent on house improvements (not bills, or other normal expenses) approved by 2/3 current members at a normal house meeting. Any improvement must include a written financial and time/labor estimate to be presented at the House meeting. Any member may present a proposal to the House.
1. **6.5** Any member maintaining a \$100 or more balance will be placed on the House Meeting Agenda for a “Rent Inquiry”, Fines & Appeals. The member will explain their situation and negotiate a payment agreement before the meeting is adjourned. (Payment agreement must be approved by a simple majority).
1. **6.6** Any failure to meet the terms of the payment agreement will be grounds for eviction. The Finance Officer will call attention to the member’s failure to meet the agreement and discuss with that member one-on-one, and then if suited bring it up at the next house meeting during Rent Inquiry.
1. **6.7** If any member fails to meet the terms of the payment plan and had signed a contract for an additional period, they will automatically lose room security (Article 7.7) and fall to the bottom of the seniority list of returning members, so only new members will be behind that member in

seniority. If the failure to meet the payment plan occurs between Room Picks and the end of the contract period, the house may pass a majority vote to redo Room Picks based on the new seniority.

1. **6.8** The House must be fully reimbursed for any damage resulting from the conduct of any member, or member's guest. The responsible member/host will be fined, if necessary, to cover the cost of the damage. The amount will be set at a regular House meeting and added to the account of the responsible party.

## Article 7: Seniority

1. **7.1** Seniority will be based on:
  2. - Number of consecutive semesters lived at Orion. Summer counts as a continuity, but not a discontinuity. If a member signs a contract and pays the month's charges 1 month prior to the beginning of the new semester, this will count as the members first semester in the house and would put that person above new members moving in for the new semester.
  3. - Number of consecutive semesters lived in the SHC. If a new member is coming from another SHC house, they will have seniority over new members who have not lived in the SHC.
  4. - In the probable event that multiple members have lived at Orion or the SHC for the same amount of semesters, the signing date and time for the original contract period will serve to determine the order of seniority.
1. **7.2** The Orion contract signing deadline (for maintenance of seniority) will be one week before Room Picks are done.
1. **7.3** The Membership Officer must establish a list of seniority at least two weeks before Room Picks. The order should announced at the house meeting prior to Room Picks. Changes may be made during the two weeks to account for members signing in that period.
1. **7.4** Fall room picks will be done before May 1st. Room picks may be redone, if seniority changes according to Article 7.2, and the redo is voted on at a house meeting. There will be no more than two redos for Room Picks after the original Room Picks in April, regardless of changes in seniority.
1. **7.5** New room picks will not be done for changes in membership in January or May. If a spot is open, any member may elect to move into that room, but they will not be granted room security, as defined in Article 7.7, of their new or old room.
1. **7.6** Once a member has moved into a room, s/he cannot be bumped out of that room except in the following cases:
  2. - A member fails to adhere to a payment plan created as a result of a Rent Inquiry.
  3. - A member fails to complete a 3-hour house improvement project created as punishment for failure to do chores.
  4. - A member fails to sign a contract by Orion's signing deadline.
  5. - A member changes rooms midway through the contract period. They will not be granted security for either room.
  6. - A member was given their room based on a sublease/ contract coverage; they did not choose their room at Room Picks. They only retain room security if they have been in that room since the start of the contract period. Otherwise, s/he will not be granted room security, because that member may not be high enough in seniority to be able to pick that room anyway. This prevents a relatively new member from subleasing a desirable room, and being allowed to keep it.

1. **7.7** If two persons lay claim to a double they previously shared, the person with higher seniority remains in the double.
1. **7.8** A member in a double will be given an opportunity at Room Picks to choose their roommate without regards to seniority.
1. **7.9** Parking assignments will be made by the House Board Representative at the beginning of each semester based primarily on seniority, and secondly on frequency of car use. There are nine parking spots in Orion's lot, seven along the north side, and two on the west side. Each individual parking space in Orion's lot will be assigned to a member. Orion has additional parking spots in Vesta (2), Beal (2), Raft Hill (1), Toad Lane (2), New Community (4). These houses are required by the SHC Code of Operations to grant parking to Orion members, whenever necessary. Orion will assign members' cars to these locations, but not to individual parking spots.
1. **7.10** Once parking is assigned, members must adhere to the parking assignments (unless members agree to switch spots, etc.). Located near the parking assignment whiteboard, is a form for Orion Parking Violations. If someone in the house or someone's friend is parking in the lot, membership may vote to fine that housemate \$10 for the first time, \$20 next time, \$30 next time, etc. The "orion-vesta-beal park" Facebook group may be used as a resource to communicate parking questions, etc.
1. **7.11** Refrigerator and freezer space is chosen by the member with the help of the House Board Representative at the beginning of each semester. House Board Representative will make an effort to determine how much room each member needs, and assign space accordingly. All members are entitled to at least half of a shelf. Members are expected to use only the shelves assigned to them, unless negotiated with another member. Food cubbies will not be assigned by the house, but there are 24 cubbies, enough for each member; every member is entitled to a food cubby. Members who are leaving Orion, and fail to clean out their food cubby and/or fridge shelf space will have all its contents donated to Orion's house food and supplies.

## Article 8: Harassment Policy

1. **8.1** Harassment is any kind of behavior towards a person which impairs the members full enjoyment of the benefits, climate, or opportunities of MSUSHC.
1. **8.2** Harassment may include (but is not limited to) the following:
  2. - Malicious remarks or behavior towards another person. This is to include:
  3. - - Discriminatory behavior. For example, when harassment is in an active form. Such as pinching, caressing, touching, burning crosses, vandalism, etc.
  4. - - Verbal or written insults. Including, but not limited to, discriminatory, offensive, or obscene remarks. For example, the writing or the speaking of derogatory names or comments that refer to the individual's race, creed, ethnic origin, gender, sexual orientation, etc.
  5. - - Explicit verbal threats. When an individual's personal safety is put in jeopardy by the language of another. For example, "I will hit you if you...", "You had better listen or else...", "If you do not do what I say I will hurt you...", etc.
  6. - Physical intimidation, including manipulative or otherwise inappropriate behavior. Intimidation includes offensive advances (e.g. sexual propositions) or inappropriate behavior (e.g. touching, caressing, kissing). This includes actions with or without the threat of punishment for non-compliance and with or without the promise of reward for compliance.
  7. - Unreasonable invasion of a person's privacy.

8. - Any act of vandalism towards a person.
  9. - Assault—including any kind of physical violence.
1. **8.3** Any member or guest who feels that they are being harassed by another member of Orion has the option to utilize the following procedures to ameliorate the situation against the alleged harasser. The alleged victim can choose one or more of the following three options:
    2. - The alleged victim may bring the alleged harassment to the House President and have a meeting, including the parties of the facilitator, the alleged harasser and the alleged victim.
    3. - The alleged victim may approach the alleged harasser and discuss the problem with that individual.
    4. - The two parties may choose a mediator, of which both approve, to facilitate a meeting between the alleged victim and the alleged perpetrator. If this is not possible then the House Membership officer will mediate or appoint an individual. This may include a mediator outside of Orion House.
    5. - The allegation is documented with the Membership Officer. This documentation is to be confidential and the Membership Officer is the only person having access to the files. This person will grant access to the files to the alleged victim, the alleged harasser and the House Board Representative only.
    6. - The alleged victim may report the incident to the SHC, where a grievance committee will be formed in order to help them proceed further.
    7. - The alleged harasser is to be given a period of time to adjust their behavior. The time is to be determined by the parties that attend the meetings that are discussed above.
    8. - G. If the alleged harasser adjusts their behavior in the allotted time, with the satisfaction of the alleged victim, then the case is closed but the documentation is to remain on file.
  1. **8.4** If the alleged harasser does not adjust their behavior in the allotted time, according to the alleged victim, then the alleged victim may utilize one or more of the next three options.
    2. - The alleged victim may bring the alleged harassment to their House President and have a meeting, including the President, alleged victim and the alleged perpetrator.
    3. - The alleged victim may approach the alleged harasser and discuss the problem.
    4. - The alleged victim and the alleged harasser are to agree on a mediator to facilitate a meeting between the alleged victim and the alleged harasser.
  1. **8.5** After the second mediation, the action of the alleged harasser is documented again with the Membership Officer. This documentation is to be confidential and only the Membership Officer has access to the files. This person will permit access to this documentation to the alleged victim, alleged perpetrator and the House Board Representative.
  1. **8.6** After the second allegation, an emergency meeting must be held within one week, with the option of inviting the SHC VP of Membership to facilitate.
  3. **8.7** Both the accuser and the alleged accused have the option to appeal to the MSU-SHC Membership Committee.
  1. **8.8** Sanctions against the alleged harasser will be either fines or eviction, taking into consideration the outcome of the house meeting or the SHC Membership Committee meeting.
  1. **8.9** Consent is a must. Consent is defined as permission for something to happen or agreement to do something. Consent must be given as a verbal, clear, and enthusiastic yes by all parties involved, given they are in a fair position to do so. Fair is defined as being able minded to make the decision and without pressure or influence to do so. Consent can be revoked or adjusted at anytime by anyone involved.
  1. **8.10** The house has a blacklist managed by an elected council. The blacklist is for persons who have been identified as violators to the house Constitution or someone's personal safety and

comfort. The committee and the house mate bringing up the blacklist will create a plan together, using as much confidentiality as the person needs. The plan will be kept in place unless the person agrees to changes or they are no longer members of the house.

## Article 9: Guest Policy

1. **9.1** Per the SHC Code of Operations, no person may stay in the house for more than 31 days as a guest. With house approval, the guest may become a member and sign a contract, if space is available, or if the host is willing to turn their single into a double, or their double into a triple (with the permission of the original roommate) in order to accommodate the new member.

## Article 10: Pet Policy

1. **10.1** We declare ourselves an animal friendly house. By choosing to live in this house, you are agreeing to possibly live with any approved animals. The purpose of the Pet Policy is to allow members to keep uncaged animals while protecting the health and safety of members, and the physical condition of the house. Dogs that are not ESAs are not allowed in Orion because they are apt to cause extensive damage to the house, and pose a liability in the case of bites. Pet owners must submit a Pet Agreement so the SHC is aware of all pets living in the house and has assurance that every pet has been properly vaccinated. The barriers to submitting a Pet Agreement are low, thus any member that does not register its pets is subject to a harsh penalty by the SHC.
1. **10.2** The term "pet" refers to all cats and other uncaged animals. Dogs are not allowed unless they are an ESA, except for visits, not to exceed one week, unless members are notified and vote to approve the dog for a determined amount of time (Pepper's Law). If the visiting dog is causing distress to other pets or house members, the member responsible for the dog must remove it from the house.
1. **10.3** Orion shall not house more than one pet per every seven assessments, however, with a three-fourths majority vote of house members supporting them, an appeal can be made to the Maintenance Vice President and the Maintenance Committee to have one additional pet over the limit.
1. **10.4** All pets must be registered with a single pet owner.
1. **10.5** Each pet is subject to re-approval at the first house meeting of each semester.
  2. - If the house does not vote on the animal, the pet is considered re-approved.
  3. - Re-approval is valid until the beginning of the next semester. The house cannot require the pet owner to remove the pet from the House until then.
  4. - If exceptional circumstances exist (e.g., the pet is damaging the house or a member is allergic), the members may petition the Facilities Office to hold a re-approval vote before the next semester.
  5. - If the House does not re-approve the pet, the pet owner has one month from the date of the House meeting to remove the animal from the House.
  6. - If the pet poses a severe threat to the health or safety of House members, other house animals, or the physical condition of the House, the Facilities Officer may require that the pet be removed before one month.
  7. - If the pet owner does not remove the pet by the deadline, the owner will be fined an initial \$20 and an additional \$5 per week that the pet remains in the house.

8. - Refusal to remove an unapproved pet may be grounds for referral or expulsion.
1. **10.6** All pet owners must submit a Pet Agreement signed by the House Maintenance Officer and the pet owner to the Maintenance Vice President prior to the pet taking residence in the House. This Pet Agreement must specify that the pet owner is financially and otherwise responsible for any damage the pet causes to the house and that the pet owner has alternate housing plans for the pet.
1. **10.7** Any member with a current outstanding balance of over \$100 may not file a Pet Agreement.
1. **10.8** Upon request of the membership, the pet owner must provide proof that the pet has been treated for parasites or other health issues. Failure to treat the pet or provide proof of treatment may result in removal of the animal.
1. **10.9** Any costs from damages attributed to the pet, or non compliance with removal will be the responsibility of the pet owner and will be assessed to the owner by the Finance Officer on the charge sheet.

## Article 11: Party Policy

1. **11.1** A house-sponsored party is defined by these five conditions: the party has a theme, the party was approved by a  $\frac{3}{4}$  majority at a regular house meeting, the party is advertised, the party takes place in a communal area of the house, the party has amplified music.
1. **11.2** All house parties must be voted on and approved at a house meeting by at least a  $\frac{3}{4}$  majority, as stated in the SHC Code of Operations.
2. - A house member voting yes shall enjoy full privileges enjoyed as a host of the party as well as shared responsibility of any damages, fines, legal action, or any other negative ramifications resulting from the party.
3. - A house member voting no for the party will be expected not to participate in the party unless otherwise approved by a house vote. These members will also be exempt from any shared responsibility as described in the SHC Party Policy of the SHC Code of Operations.
4. - A house member abstaining from the vote will be exempt from any shared responsibility as described in the SHC Party Policy of the SHC Code of Operations unless they participate in the party. In the event of a dispute, the members participation will be decided with a vote at a House meeting.
1. **11.3** The house members who participate in the party must also participate in the set up, clean up, and security of the party.
2. - The Chore Checker shall create a sign-up sheet in order to designate members for party set up and clean up. Members may sign up for their preferred task.
3. - The Chore Checker will also create a door duty list (not open sign up, assigned by the CC), keeping in mind logistics (ensuring at least one guy in each time slot).
4. - Any participating member who does not complete their specific duty as defined by the Chore Checker shall receive a fine of \$10.
1. **11.4** A party is subject to being stopped or cancelled at any moment due to medical, legal, or any other situations where the welfare, safety of the house or its members is at risk. A party is not subject to being stopped or cancelled due to personal reasons that lie outside of the reasons listed in this section.
1. **11.5** A party shall be defined as an official house gathering that is voted on by the house

members and as defined in the SHC Party Policy in the SHC Code of Operations. This status requires that house members recognize and follow the specific traits and responsibilities described in this section of the house constitution as well as those of the SHC Party Policy in the SHC Code of Operations.

1. **11.6** Due to legal and safety reasons, the preferred distribution of alcohol will be BYOB (bring your own booze).
  2. - If house members decide to make alcohol available (as in a keg, jungle juice, or other community sources of alcohol), the Chore Checker must designate a person or peoples to act as a "kegmaster". The responsibility of this job will be to ensure that any person consuming from the house alcohol is a member or special guest of the house and is of legal standing. The other responsibility of the kegmaster is to ensure that no one adds additional alcohol or other substances to the communal alcohol source.
  3. - The house may never use budgeted house funds to buy alcohol. However, recycling money may be used to buy house kegs or booze. If sufficient recycling money is not available, it is recommended that the house not provide house alcohol for a party, until funds become available.
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1. **11.7** Any hard copy or electronic invitations must only be made available in a private or a secret setting. Any distribution of the party information or description to public forums is strictly prohibited. Examples of prohibited distribution methods include open Facebook events, coffeehouses, or campus billboards.

## Article 12: Miscellaneous

1. **12.1** Smoking of any kind is not allowed in Orion House.
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1. **12.2 TV usage**
  2. - If any major sporting or other event is going on, such as an MSU football game, that event will take priority over regular television programs, unless those watching the TV do not express interest in the event.
  3. - No member is allowed to purchase on-demand movies or pay per view shows without approval at a house meeting.
  4. - DVR recordings will be deleted after one month. No member should delete the recorded show of another member before that time.
  5. - Any group of members watching TV may informally vote on the preferred show to watch.
  6. - The house will only pay for one cable box in a common area. Members should not have cable TV in their rooms.
  7. - The door to common areas (between the tree and checkered rooms) should be closed during quiet hours, and TV should be kept at a low volume.
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1. **12.3 Internet usage**
  2. - All members will have access to house internet. Personal routers are encouraged.
  3. - Passwords for online television (Xfinity, HBOGo, etc) will be provided to all members.
  4. - No member shall illegally download content using house internet.
  5. - Members should be considerate in their volume of downloads, as this slows the internet for all members.
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1. **12.4 House Facebook Page**
  2. - The house will maintain a house Facebook group for the purpose of easy and instant communication with all members. It is also recommended that members join the SHC Facebook



group.

3. - Administrators for the group will be the Membership Officer, Education Officer, and House Board Representative.
4. - Only current house members should be allowed in the Facebook group, and a new group should be created for each contract year.
5. - Any member can post on the group about any issue, but should use discretion so as not to crowd the page with unnecessary posts.

#### 1. **12.5 Quiet Hours & Music**

2. - The house will vote on quiet hours at the beginning of each semester, ensuring that quiet hours begin later during the weekends.
3. - In the week before and during finals week, more restrictive quiet hours may be enacted.
4. - A member who is in violation of quiet hours should be verbally warned by any member affected by the disturbance. After a warning, the affected member may propose a fine for the violating member at the next house meeting, not to exceed \$10 (for the first offence).
5. - Amplified music or other programming should never be played during quiet hours, and should be kept at a reasonable volume at all other times.

#### 1. **12.6 House Library**

2. - The house will maintain a bookshelf in a common area, for the free usage of all members and guests.
3. - Any member may donate books to the house library, and any member may borrow books freely. Borrowing time should not exceed one month, unless no other member wants the book.
4. - No member shall sell house books for personal profit.
5. - Orion house documents and resources will be kept in the house library.

#### 1. **12.7 Paint Policy**

2. - Any painting done in common areas should be a preconceived mural of some kind. The painter must get approval from the house (majority vote at a meeting) regarding location, size, and the general idea of the mural. The painter should show reasonable progress after getting house approval, and the mural should be finished by a date negotiated during the initial proposal discussion. If the membership does not like the mural after it is finished, or if a member painted something without prior house approval, it will be the job of the painter to edit or paint over the mural.
3. - Any Member who decides to paint their room in any way, will be subject to a house vote to determine whether the room needs to be repainted by that member at the end of that member's tenure, for the sake of attractiveness and viability for future members of a particular room. The Facilities Officer will be responsible for bringing this concern before the house at a regularly scheduled house meeting.
4. - a. If a house decides that a room painted by its current resident should be repainted, that member shall be responsible for the labor and cost of repainting the room before that member moves out.
5. - b. If the room in question is not repainted by that member within two weeks of the end of that resident's contract, that member will be considered non-compliant and \$50 will be deducted from their member shares, to be given to the house for labor and materials.
6. - c. If a House decides that a room be repainted and the current resident does not comply, the Maintenance Officer will be responsible for ensuring the repainting the room before the new resident moves. This can include, but is not limited to: repainting the room on their own; the temporary use/hiring of SHC salaried staff and preferred SHC subcontractors; and the delegation of work to a member needing to fulfill work week or house improvement hours, etc. The color of paint used to repaint a resident's room will be neutral in nature and at the discretion of the House.

### 1. **12.8 PACE Violations**

2. In the unfortunate case that Orion is cited for a PACE violation, the charge will be filed under the "Contingency" line item in the house budget.
3. If the violation was a direct result of a particular member(s)' actions or inactions, the house may vote to move the financial responsibility to said member(s) with a  $\frac{3}{4}$  majority at a regular house meeting.

### 1. **12.9 Energy Conservation**

2. - All house members are expected to turn off all lights and appliances/electronics when leaving a room, especially at the end of the night. This includes unplugging things like the microwave and toaster oven.
3. - Showers should not exceed 20 minutes in length, for the purpose of water conservation and bathroom availability.
4. - Members should only wash full loads of laundry, because washing small loads wastes water.
5. - House thermostat should never be set higher than 70 degrees; 68 degrees will serve as the default in the winter. During winter break, or any time when most members are away from the house, the thermostat should be set to 60 degrees. The gas bill is one of the largest bills the house has to pay, so it is important to be conscious of the thermostat setting. Only the Facilities Officer may adjust the thermostat; any member who has been found to adjust the thermostat to over 70 degrees will be fined \$20.
6. - Members may vote to charge for personal appliances such as mini-fridges, air conditioning units, and space heaters, as these greatly increase electricity costs.
7. - During long breaks, when members are not in the house (winter break, spring break, vacations, etc), they are expected to unplug all cords from outlets, to cut down on electricity costs.

### 1. **12.10 Gun Policy**

2. Members shall not bring any of the following items into the house: firearms, ammunition, explosives, or any inherently dangerous property.

### 1. **12.11 House Norms**

2. The house must hold meetings each semester to establish or redefine house norms. House norms are defined in the "Orion House Norms" document in the house Google Doc. Membership may impose a penalty based on the severity and importance deemed by the Membership. Violation of the most current established house norms may result in a fine, and/or eviction.

## **Article 13: Amendments**

1. **13.1** This Constitution may be amended by a two-thirds vote during a regular house meeting which has quorum present. (Quorum is defined as 50% of current membership plus one).
1. **13.2** Any amendments which pass are edited into the House Constitution by the Board Representative. An updated version of the House Constitution will be given to the SHC Vice President of Education by either the House Education Officer or House Secretary.

## **Article 14: Scope**

1. **14.1** This Constitution supersedes all previous constitutions and all policies at variance with it. Except where delimited in this Constitution, the membership is generally empowered to make all decisions and policies on house matters.

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