

Expectations

Seattle Renters' Commission

Adopted March 4, 2026

About this Document

This document serves as a complement to the SRC bylaws, laying out in more detail how the Commission operates. This document may be amended via simple majority vote.

Commissioner Expectations

In order to effectively move forward the work of the Renters' Commission, it's crucial that every Commissioner participate in all meetings and be actively involved, working on projects between meetings.

1. **Time Commitment:** Commissioners are expected to commit a minimum of 2-5 hours/month (outside of monthly meetings) to Renters' Commission work, for a total of at least 4-7 hours/month.
2. **Committee & Work Groups:** Commissioners are expected to be on at least one committee at all times, and at least one work group per quarter.
3. **Communication:** Commissioners commit to reading emails regularly and responding in a timely manner.
4. **Meeting Attendance:** Commissioners are expected to participate in all meetings.
 - a. **Hybrid:** While meetings will generally be hybrid, in-person attendance is strongly encouraged for regular meetings.
 - b. **Timeliness:** Meetings will start on time, which means Commissioners should be present and ready for the meeting promptly at the start time.
 - i. **In-person attendees** should be in City Hall at least 5 minutes early in order to navigate to the room and be seated by meeting start time.
 1. Note: The doors and elevators to City Hall lock at 6 p.m., when SRC meetings generally start. Arriving at or after 6 p.m. greatly disrupts the meeting, as it requires an on-time attendee to leave the meeting to usher the late attendee to the room.
 - ii. **Virtual attendees** should aim to log in 5 minutes early to allow for any technical issues.
 - c. **Preparation:** Commissioners should arrive prepared, including having reviewed and being ready to discuss:
 - i. Agenda and past meeting minutes for approval
 - ii. Any materials sent out in advance of the meeting
 - iii. Recording of the last meeting (if relevant; see "Meeting Absence")
 - d. **Preview of Upcoming Work:** At the end of each meeting, each Commissioner should be prepared to state what they'll be working on for the rest of the month to ensure transparency, accountability, and collaboration.

5. **Meeting Absence:** While Commissioners are expected to prioritize meeting attendance, they may need to miss a meeting on rare occasions.
 - a. **Absence Types:** Absences may be considered Excused or Unexcused.
 - i. **Excused absences:** There are two types of excused absences:
 1. **Planned excused absences:** If a Commissioner needs to miss a meeting, they should request a planned excused absence by emailing the DON liaison and Executive Committee with the following at least one week in advance:
 - a. Meeting date
 - b. Reason for missed meeting
 - c. Preview of Upcoming Work (see above)
 2. **Unplanned excused absences** include reasons like illnesses or health conditions, family emergencies, and safety concerns. Unless circumstances prevent it, Commissioners should email the DON liaison and Executive Committee with the above list (1a-1c) as soon as possible before the meeting.
 - ii. **Unexcused absences:** Unless otherwise stated or excused by the Executive Committee, all other absences will be considered Unexcused.
 - b. **Meeting Notes:** Excused and unexcused absences will be stated at the beginning of each meeting and noted in the meeting minutes.
 - c. **Continuity:** Commissioners are expected to watch the meeting recording (distributed by the DON liaison) as soon as possible and no later than the next meeting. Achieving continuity in discussions from one meeting to the next strengthens Commission deliberations.
6. **Exceptions:** Exceptions to these expectations may be granted on a case-by-case basis by the Executive Committee.

Meeting Procedures

Seattle Renters' Commission

Adopted April 1, 2026

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Standard Meeting Agendas

1. **Development:** Agendas are developed by the Executive Committee, typically one week before the meeting and sent to all Commissioners in advance of the meeting.
 - a. **Decisions:** Agenda items will note if a Commission decision is anticipated.
 - b. **Additions:** Commissioners may request additions to the agenda by emailing the Executive Committee and DON Liaison at least one week before the meeting.
 - c. **Revisions:** After the agenda has been sent out, Commissioners may request revisions by emailing the Executive Committee and DON Liaison as soon as possible. If advance notice is not possible, Commissioners may make a motion to revise the agenda during the meeting.

2. **Topics:** Commission agendas will include a range of topics, including, but not limited to:
 - a. Standing agenda topics:
 - i. Land/labor acknowledgements
 - ii. Approval of meeting minutes
 - iii. Approval/update of current meeting agenda
 - iv. Public comment
 - v. Committee and work group updates
 - vi. Unfinished/New Business
 - vii. Commissioner Commitments: What are we each working on between now & next meeting?
 - b. Proposed legislation, programs/projects, policies, and stances on issues
 - c. Operations, including annual work plan, bylaws, and budget
 - d. Roles and recruitment of Commissioners, including term renewals
 - e. Seattle Social Housing Development Board roles and recruitment, including term renewals
 - f. Briefings and background presentations, including from City departments, other Commissions, organizations, the public, etc.

Meeting Materials & Minutes

1. **Meeting Materials:** Materials referenced during the meeting, especially those requiring a Commission action, will be provided before each meeting whenever possible.

2. **Minutes:** The DON liaison will prepare and distribute minutes to Commissioners after each meeting. Meeting minutes will include:

- a. Commissioners present and absent
- b. Summaries of topics discussed
- c. Votes and decisions
- d. Follow-up actions

Standard Meeting Operations

1. **Meeting Facilitation:** Meetings are typically facilitated by members of the Executive Committee, but that Committee may request or select another Commissioner to facilitate a specific meeting or a portion thereof. The facilitator's role includes:
 - a. Encouraging thoughtful use of time, including:
 - i. Keeping the meeting in time with the agenda as much as possible
 - ii. Gauging whether a discussion is ready to move to a proposal and whether a proposal is ready to move to a vote
 - b. Supporting balanced participation as needed
2. **Discussion:** Discussion should generally remain focused on the agenda and support the Commission's work. Commissioners are encouraged to participate thoughtfully, make space for others, and engage in respectful disagreement.
3. **Hybrid Meetings:** Most Commission meetings are hybrid, which can present challenges. The following norms aim to ensure meetings are as cohesive as possible.
 - a. **Commissioner identification:** For public clarity, all in-person Commissioners should place their name tent in front of them. Virtual Commissioners should identify themselves with a "C." in front of their screen name.
 - b. **Hybrid participation:**
 - i. **In-person:**
 1. In-person attendees are expected to use the microphone to ensure all attendees can hear, if requested.
 2. In-person attendees should avoid side conversation to ensure virtual attendees can clearly hear the proceedings.
 - ii. **Virtual:** Virtual Commissioners may indicate a readiness/desire to speak in whatever manner works best for them and is clear to the meeting facilitator. This includes using the "raise hand" feature, indicating intent to speak in the chat, unmuting their microphone, or simply speaking during a break in discussion.
 - c. **Chat:** In hybrid meetings, chat works best for logistics rather than discussion, as messages are only clearly viewable by virtual attendees and may not be seen in real time. Commissioners are encouraged to participate verbally during discussion when possible to support clarity and accessibility.
 - d. **Public attendees:** The public comment period of meetings is the platform established for hearing from members of the public. The virtual meeting platform used for meetings technically enables the use of chat by the public, but those comments generally should not be considered as part of the discussion. Public

attendees should remain on mute, except during their given public comment period.

4. **Actions:** Any action taken by the Commission shall follow the following procedure:
 - a. **Proposal:** Any Commissioner makes a clear proposal to take action or make a decision.
 - b. **Discussion:** If needed, Commissioners discuss the proposal and/or ask clarifying questions. Suggested changes may be incorporated into a proposal with the agreement of the proposer. If there is disagreement about how to proceed, the Commission will briefly decide whether to vote on changes separately.
 - i. The facilitator(s) should use a “progressive stacking” technique to call on members who have not already spoken if there is a lot of back-and-forth discussion.
 - c. **Vote:** The proposing commissioner or meeting facilitator restates the vote and calls for a second.
 - i. If there is no second, the motion fails and the meeting proceeds.
 - ii. If the motion is seconded:
 1. Vote facilitator asks: (1) Who supports this? (2) Who does not support this? (3) Who abstains?
 2. Commissioners may vote in any manner, as long as their vote is clear and recorded. This includes a verbal response, a raised hand, a video call reaction (like a raised hand), or a typed comment in the chat.
 - d. **Confirmation:** The motion and results are announced by the vote-taker and recorded by the DON liaison.
 - e. **Additional Actions:** A successful proposal may be followed by complementary proposals, such as determining whether Commission members may speak publicly on the issue, whether to establish a work group, etc.
5. **Comments:**
 - a. **Public Comment:** Each meeting agenda will include a public comment period, with speakers typically allotted two minutes each, to be determined by the meeting facilitator(s). While the public comment period is not intended to be a dialogue, Commissioners may ask follow-up questions if time allows.
 - b. **Absentee Comment:** Commissioners with an excused absence may submit written comments or questions in advance, which the Executive Committee will present at the meeting if time allows.

Values & Practices

Seattle Renters' Commission

Adopted April 1, 2026

About this Document

This document serves as a complement to the SRC bylaws, laying out in more detail how the Commission operates. This document may be amended via simple majority vote.

Values

Values are the beliefs that we hold to be principally important in this work; they are the “what” of how we operate.

1. **Housing exists to meet a basic human need**, and when that need conflicts with profit, access to safe and affordable homes takes precedence.
 - a. Abundant resources in the city as a whole are available to meet renters' needs, and we must actively choose to make meeting renters' needs a priority.
 - b. Policies must address the power imbalances inherent to our housing system.
 - c. Policies without enforcement and oversight allow exploitation and displacement to continue unchecked.
 - d. Landlords, institutions, and government must be accountable for the harms they cause.
 - e. Everyone deserves safe, affordable, accessible, and desirable housing, with access to green space and amenities, in the neighborhoods they choose.
 - f. Universal design practices benefit everyone. All housing and neighborhoods must be accessible by design, so everyone can move throughout and thrive in their communities.
2. **Racial justice is inseparable from housing justice.** Redlining, exclusionary zoning, and disinvestment continue to shape housing outcomes today. Housing policy must confront and dismantle the legacy of racism that drives displacement and homelessness.
3. **Those most impacted by housing injustice must be centered in shaping solutions.**
 - a. Black, Indigenous, and other communities of color; low-income renters; immigrants and refugees; disabled people; LGBTQ+ renters; elders; youth; and families at highest risk of displacement and homelessness bring the clearest understanding of the issues renters face and what is needed to move toward equitable housing for all.
 - b. Public decisions that affect renters must be transparent and responsive to the people most impacted.
 - c. Solidarity with communities facing systemic oppression is essential.
4. **Accessibility is a core condition of the democratic process.**
 - a. Meetings, information, and engagement must remove barriers — physically, linguistically, and otherwise — rather than create them.

Practices

Practices are the application of our Values; they are the “how” of what we do. They are meant to help set the tone and standards for the Commission’s work to flourish. Commissioners have a shared responsibility for creating a welcoming and productive environment.

1. Working Together

- a. Use the names and pronouns people choose.
- b. Collaborate in the spirit of pulling together with our individual and mutual gifts towards a common purpose.
- c. Strive to share power by proactively working to include all.
- d. Foster a commission culture of openness, warmth, and possibility.
- e. Honor our collective responsibility to answer to our community and fellow commissioners in order to earn each other’s trust through integrity.
- f. Begin from the assumption that fellow Commissioners are acting in good faith and share a commitment to our values.
- g. Be receptive to feedback, recognizing that the impact of our words may differ from our intent.
- h. Treat one another with care, empathy, and respect, including during times of disagreement.
- i. Lead with curiosity, asking questions to understand one another’s perspectives and clarify differences.
- j. Address conflict directly, with thoughtfulness, flexibility, and kindness.

2. Equity in Our Work

- a. Treat accessibility as a shared responsibility, proactively working to identify and provide accommodations, including language access, in meetings, materials, and engagement.
- b. Communicate in plain language and explain acronyms or technical terms, so all Commissioners can participate fully, and the public can understand our work.
- c. Consider who is not in the room, how structural barriers shape that absence, and identify ways to incorporate those perspectives.
- d. Recognize differences in power and privilege within the Commission and center the perspectives of renters most impacted by housing injustice, particularly those less often heard in City Hall, throughout our discussions and in our recommendations.
- e. Share lived experience and expertise when they meaningfully advance the discussion, and participate in ways that create space for others within our limited time together.
- f. Celebrate each other's unique strengths and offer each other mentorship and encouragement in areas of growth.

This document should be developed to include a conflict resolution process for navigating conflict.

Roles

Seattle Renters' Commission

Adopted April 1, 2026

About this Document

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Roles

1. **Co-chairs** (Referred to as “chairperson(s)” in the bylaws)
 - a. **Elections:** Co-chair elections and term limits are outlined in the bylaws.
 - b. **Structure:**
 - i. The bylaws allow the Commission to elect one or more co-chairs. The Commission’s consistent practice and preference is to have two co-chairs.
 - ii. Co-chairs are expected to work as a team without hierarchical structures or decision-making.
 - c. **Duties:** The following are duties of co-chairs, who may choose to delegate aspects of the duties to Vice Chairs, as needed.
 - i. **Presiding over Meetings:** Co-chairs preside over all Regular and Special Meetings, which includes:
 1. Open and facilitate the Commission meetings, managing the flow and timing of the topics on the agenda.
 2. Make sure that all Commission members have opportunities to participate in discussions. The co-chairs may use a “progressive stacking” technique to call on members who have not already spoken.
 - ii. **Preparing for Meetings:**
 1. Meet on a regular basis with the DON Liaison to review and discuss ongoing business, set meeting agendas, and discuss priorities of the SRC.
 2. Review and comment on materials being presented to the Commission in advance of meetings, as needed.
 3. Set and finalize agendas.
 - iii. **General Governance:**
 1. Communicate with Commission members between meetings, as needed, to better understand issues and search for consensus on solutions, or discuss issues regarding process or schedule. Commissioners will avoid violations of the Open Public Meetings Act (rolling quorum, etc.).
 2. Speak on the status of SRC’s work, processes, and procedures as directed by the Commission or requested by other groups
 3. Chair/lead the Executive Committee

4. If needed, co-chairs may suspend vice chairs from the Executive Committee until a full vote of the Commission can be taken. In such a case, the reason for suspension should be stated to the suspended vice chair and the Commission.

2. **Vice Chairs** (Referred to as “vice-chairperson(s)” in the bylaws)

- a. **Elections:** Vice chair elections and term limits are outlined in the bylaws.
- b. **Structure:** The number of vice chairs should reflect the number of standing Committees, per the bylaws.
- c. **Quorum:** Should the combined total of co-chairs and vice chairs meet or exceed quorum, the Commission may choose to make all Executive Committee meetings public to avoid violation of quorum or may determine a specific Committee(s) whose Vice Chair(s) will not be represented in the Executive Committee until quorum allows.
- d. **Duties:** The following are duties of vice chairs:
 - i. Serve as lead of their designated Committee, including coordinating meetings (supported by the DON liaison as resources and time allows) and reporting to Executive Committee on work status
 - ii. Serve on the Executive Committee:
 1. Attend and actively participate in Executive Committee meetings.
 2. Executive Committee business between meetings as agreed upon by the Committee or assigned by co-chairs.
 3. Act as a representative to the Executive Committee for the respective committee(s) they lead and Work Groups they oversee, providing updates and reports in Executive Committee meetings or in writing, when unable to attend
 - iii. Preside over Regular Meetings in the absence of a Chairperson.
 - iv. If the SRC is without any Chairperson(s), fulfill Chairperson duties until a new Chairperson is elected.

3. **Department of Neighborhoods Staff Liaison**

- a. **Commission Meetings:**
 - i. **Book meeting facilities** for Commission meetings and subcommittee meetings, as needed.
 - ii. **Call attendance** at the beginning of each meeting and document absences.
 - iii. **Logistical support** during meetings and as requested, time permitting.
- b. **Records:**
 - i. **Meeting minutes:** Produce meeting minutes in a timely manner, which include any decisions made and Commissioner commitments (i.e., new members of a work group)
 - ii. **Ongoing records:** Maintain Commission records for continuity of both Commission business and the DON liaison role in the City of Seattle SharePoint, including:
 1. Commission roster, including term end dates

2. Committee and work group rosters
 3. Meeting attendance, including status of excused/unexcused absences
 4. Decisions made/votes taken by the Commission
 5. Documents and presentations shared by/with the Commission, as necessary
- iii. **Public communications:** Post meeting agendas and notice of meetings; prepare, send, and publish Commission letters; update Commission website; and send out e-newsletter notices.
- iv. **Email Inbox:** Monitor the DON_SRC_Liaison email inbox and share relevant emails with the Commission.
- v. **General Support:**
1. **Meeting preparation and follow up:** Meet with the Executive Committee before and after monthly Commission meetings to assist in coordinating meeting agendas, materials for meetings, and follow-up.
 2. **Stakeholder coordination:** Coordinate communication with and briefings from other City Commissions, City departments, the Seattle Housing Authority Board of Commissioners, and other community groups and associations, including those representing rental property landlords, to gather information, feedback, and recommendations related to the Commission's work.
 3. **Legal responsibilities:** Support the Commission in following legal procedures, including upholding the bylaws and establishing ordinance, operating within the Open Public Meetings Act, and seeking clarification from the City Attorney's office as needed.
 4. **Research:** Assist with research on specific topics, time permitting.
 5. **Additional Meeting Coordination:** Coordinate workgroup and committee meetings as requested, time allowing.
 6. **Recruitment, Appointments, and Onboarding:** Work with Seattle Department of Neighborhoods Communications, City Clerk's Office, and commissioners to plan, prepare, launch, and follow-up on commission and the Seattle Social Housing Developer Board recruitment as positions become vacant. Gather information to complete necessary appointment paperwork. Assist in onboarding new commissioners.