

Ten Agreements Every Community Should Make Before Move In By Annie Russell

Some of these agreements you will need to facilitate the work of your community during development, and others you will need as soon as you move in. People are very busy moving in for the first several months and it will be hard to get enough focus to complete these agreements until several months after move-in.

- General Communication Guidelines
- Email Communication Guidelines
- *Decision Making Guidelines including Revisiting Decisions
- *Dog and Cat Agreement
- Rental Agreement
- Community Meals
- Participation
- *Conflict Resolution
- *Design Review Guidelines
- Community House Use including Guest Rooms

This is a generic order, with agreements being addressed early in the process at the beginning of the list. Each community may find they want to make these agreements in a different order. Agreements around pets and rentals are at the top of the list because these are questions that often need to be addressed during marketing so people can decide if your community is appropriate for them.

One way to create these Agreements is to assign them to the appropriate team (or an ad hoc team) to create. Step 1: That team takes responsibility for starting a brainstorming session about what they do and don't want to see in the agreement. Don't try to reach consensus at this stage. Step 2: The team then does some research into other communities' agreements and drafts an agreement that takes into consideration both the communities ideas, and what other communities have done. This is taken to the community for feedback and possible consensus. Step 3: If consensus isn't reach, the team redrafts the Agreement taking into consideration the community's feedback and takes it back to the community for consensus.

*These issues are often addressed in the CC&Rs so you need to make sure that the CC&Rs are in agreement with your more informal, but nonetheless binding Agreements,