



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – June 3, 2026

## Ontario Co-operative Housing Sector Unites to Launch We Stand, a Project to Make Housing Communities Safer

**Toronto, ON** — A province-wide coalition of co-operative housing organizations has come together to launch **We Stand**, a program addressing the marked increase in conflict and aggressive behaviour across Ontario’s co-op housing communities. This growing trend of bullying, harassment, and violent behaviour fosters unhealthy community relationships, creates higher staff turnover, and weakens governance.

**We Stand** is a proactive, education-focused program supporting co-op members, staff, boards, and property management partners. It addresses staff safety, board responsibilities under the *Occupational Health and Safety Act*, and the growing complexity of community and workplace dynamics in co-op housing.

### A Unified Approach to Safety and Respect

Developed by the **Central Ontario Co-operative Housing Federation (COCHF)**, the **Peel/Halton Co-operative Housing Federation (PHCHF)**, the **Co-operative Housing Federation of Canada (CHF Canada)**, and **Homestarts Inc.**, We Stand represents the best of co-operative values — community, accountability, and collective action.

“By bringing together federations and sector partners, we are ensuring a safer, more respectful environment for co-op housing staff, members, and boards,” said Elana Harte, COCHF’s Executive Director.

### Program Goals

**We Stand** will tailor a new conflict-prevention framework for housing co-ops by reviewing current policies, training modules, and sector challenges.

### Next Steps

**We Stand** will be launched nationally at the CHF Canada 2026 AGM in June. Pilot evaluations are scheduled for the summer, with a broader sector rollout planned for the third quarter.

## Standing Together for Safer Co-op Communities

“This is a significant step forward for Ontario’s co-operative housing sector,” said Sophie Taylor, Executive Director of PHCHF. “Together, we are building a consistent framework supporting healthier workplaces, stronger governance, and safer communities.”

**We Stand** is a declaration of the value co-ops place on safety, dignity, and respectful relationships. Every member of a co-op community has a role in shaping a supportive environment.

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