

A resident democracy gives residents power to influence

The purpose of the joint administration law is to give residents power to decide and possibilities to influence issues regarding their living situation, and to increase the comfort of living. The law concerns state produced rental apartments, which can, for example, be city-owned blocks of flats.

A resident democracy gives the possibility to affect issues concerning one's own block of flats and enhances comfort and well-being. It also assists in the tackling of problems and finding solutions together with the proprietor.

Everyone has the right to vote in a residents' meeting

In a residents' meeting everyone can have their say and decide who will take care of matters of the house for the next year. The meeting is not held for fun, but rather to decide on important matters.

A resident committee operating in the house calls the residents to the meeting at least once a year. The invitations to the meeting are distributed to every apartment and put up on the notice board latest a week before the meeting, showing the time, place and issues dealt with during the following meeting.

Issues and problems of the house are dealt with in the meeting, as well as choosing a new resident committee. Any resident of the house above the age of 18 can cast a vote. The meeting's decision of the issue at hand will be the opinion that receives the majority of votes, unless it has been decided otherwise before.

The residents' meeting elects the residents' representatives

The residents' meeting chooses the resident's representatives for the board of directors of the apartments' private limited company or other organ that takes care of matters relating to the blocks of flats. The chosen persons represent the tenants and their opinions in meetings. They can bring residents' views forward and propose subjects preferred by residents.

Residents can also choose a supervisor who oversees the economy and can, when needed, check up on grounds for a rent increase, for instance. Rents can only be increased if expenses increase in a state produced rental house, as is the case with blocks of flats owned by the city.

The residents' meeting chooses a committee for the house, along with the number of members and their choice practices in the committee. This resident committee functions as the "governing body" and for their part takes care of issues regarding the house. The chosen members of the committee can be dismissed by the decision of the residents' meeting if they haven't performed their duties.

The resident committee has many rights and responsibilities

The residents' committee is heard in all big decisions relating to the house, as in decisions regarding rent increases, renovations and administration. The committee also prepares presentations of these to the proprietor. It is not indifferent who is elected to the committee, but anyone with enough enthusiasm can learn how to operate in one.

The residents' committee sets the code of conduct and works as a conveyor in disputes between residents. When needed, it engages in cases of disturbance. The grounds for distribution, rules and supervision of common areas, such as laundry rooms, are also part of the resident committee's duties. The committee has a lot of practical power in the block of flats.

The owner has to give sufficient information to the resident committee, an auditor can confirm the details when needed. The owner must personally communicate all the information to the resident committee. The law obliges the proprietor to follow the joint administration law and fill the duties. If the duties aren't fulfilled, the owner is followed a conditional imposition of a fine.

The law on joint administration in blocks of flats can be found at www.finlex.fi