

Council of Neighborhood Associations of South Pinellas County, Inc.

Membership Eligibility and Application Policy

Purpose:

This policy defines eligibility and the process for application for ACTIVE membership (hereafter referred to as "membership") in the Council of Neighborhood Associations of South Pinellas County, Inc. (hereafter referred to as "CONA").

Definition: NEIGHBORHOOD

A neighborhood is a group of residential dwellings that are grouped and joined together by a series of borders. Neighborhood borders are typically determined by streets, lot lines, and natural or man-made boundaries such as creeks and waterways. These borders are the neighborhood boundaries.

Dwellings within a neighborhood can be single-family, multi-family, owner-occupied, or rented.

Definition: NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

(Includes Neighborhood, Civic, Property Owners, Community, and Homeowners Associations)

Neighborhood Associations are formally recognized organizations which offer an opportunity for residents to participate in maintaining and improving their neighborhood. Depending upon the By-Laws of the organization, association membership may be voluntary or mandatory. It may be restricted to property owners, or open to all persons who rent or live in property within its boundaries.

In the State of Florida, mandatory associations must be organized under Florida Statute Chapters 718 - 721 or 723.

Neighborhood Associations are typically concerned with a broad range of matters that affect the quality of life in their community, which may include topics as beautification, public safety, land use, and other civic and community issues.

ELIGIBILITY

Neighborhoods within the contiguous boundaries of the City of St. Petersburg, Florida are eligible for membership.

APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP

Applications for membership are addressed to the CONA Secretary and Membership Chair, and must be submitted on the CONA Application for Membership form.

Applications must include the physical (geographic) location of the applying neighborhood as defined by streets, lots, and/or natural or man-made boundaries. If applicable, it should also include the scope of the membership (owners, renters, single family, multi-family, etc.) within the physical boundaries.

Neighborhood Associations whose boundaries do not substantially overlap with an existing Association may apply for membership.

Associations whose boundaries substantially overlap with an existing Association and who wish to apply for CONA membership must seek the approval of the existing Association including, if appropriate, revision of the existing Association's boundaries. If approval is granted a certified copy of the granting Association's Board meeting minutes or approval letter should be attached to the CONA membership application.

In rare cases a petition may be required for the new Association to gain the approval of the existing Association. In such a case, written notice of the petition must be given to all property owners and residents within the new Association's boundaries.

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The petition is authored by the new Association and is signed by their potential members. Petition language must be included to allow the individual signing the petition to either

1. Support the creation of a new Association and to transfer their membership to the new Association, or
2. Choose to remain with the existing Association and not support the creation of the new Association.

At a minimum, the petition requires the support of a simple majority of the individual eligible members within the applying Association's boundaries. Such support shall be shown by a list of the supporting petitioner's names and property addresses, and an indication as to whether they are the property owner or resident, or both.

A copy of the petition must be submitted to the existing Association with a request for approval, including revision of the existing Association's boundaries .

If approval for the new Association is received from the existing Association the new Association may apply for CONA membership. A certified copy of the Board meeting minutes or concurrence letter should be attached to the CONA membership application.

Existing Association approval notwithstanding, if the petition results in a supermajority (more than 2/3) eligible member support for the new Association the new Association may apply for CONA membership. If membership is subsequently approved by CONA this will result in a Neighborhood Association with overlapping boundaries.

With overlapping boundaries there may be instances in which both Associations will need to work together in order to achieve CONA's and their goals. Typically, these issues will be related to requests for resources such as setting Neighborhood priorities.

CREATION OF A NEW NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

Residents who are interested in starting a new voluntary Neighborhood Association may contact CONA or the St. Petersburg Neighborhood Affairs department for assistance.