UrbanTec
Modern management for modern living

THE ALBERTA CONDO BOARD SURVIVAL GUIDE

Governance, finances, maintenance and everyday condominium living

A Practical Guide for Owners and Volunteer Board Members

Contents

Chapter 1:

How a Condo Corporation Works

A condominium corporation is created when the condominium plan is registered with Alberta Land Titles. Every person who buys a unit automatically becomes a member of the Corporation. There is no separate application or membership fee.

Owners elect a Board of Directors to oversee the Corporation. The Board does not own the building or property. Its role is to make decisions on behalf of the Corporation and to look after the shared interests of all owners.

One of the most important things to understand is the difference between a unit and common property. Your unit is the area legally defined as your unit on the registered condominium plan. Common property is generally the shared portion of the condominium, which may include hallways, roofs, exterior areas, parkades, landscaping and shared building systems. The condominium plan and bylaws help determine who is responsible when maintenance or repairs are needed.

Condominium corporations are self governing. The Board oversees the finances, enforces the bylaws and helps ensure the common property is properly maintained. Although most Board members are volunteers, they have an important responsibility to act honestly, carefully and in the best interests of the Corporation as a whole.

Many corporations hire a licensed condominium management company to assist with daily administration. The manager provides advice, coordinates work and carries out the Board's direction. The Board, however, remains responsible for the Corporation's major decisions.

Chapter 2:

Your Governing Documents

Before making an important decision, it is helpful to ask a simple question: What do the legislation, condominium plan and bylaws say?

The Condominium Property Act and Condominium Property Regulation provide the legal framework for condominiums in Alberta. A Corporation's bylaws cannot override the legislation.

The registered condominium plan shows the legal boundaries of each unit and the common property. It is often the first document to review when there is a question about ownership, repairs or maintenance responsibility.

The bylaws are the Corporation's own governing document. They commonly address Board structure, meetings, voting, property use, owner responsibilities,
maintenance, insurance and enforcement. The Board cannot change the bylaws on its own. Amendments require a special resolution of the owners and must be registered with Land Titles before they take effect.

Amendments require a special resolution of the owners and must be registered with Land Titles before they take effect.

Rules usually deal with everyday use of common property, such as parking, amenities, move procedures or shared spaces. Rules must be reasonable and consistent with the legislation and bylaws.

Corporations must also maintain important records, including minutes, financial information, contracts and correspondence. Good records help owners understand how decisions were made and help protect the Corporation when questions arise.

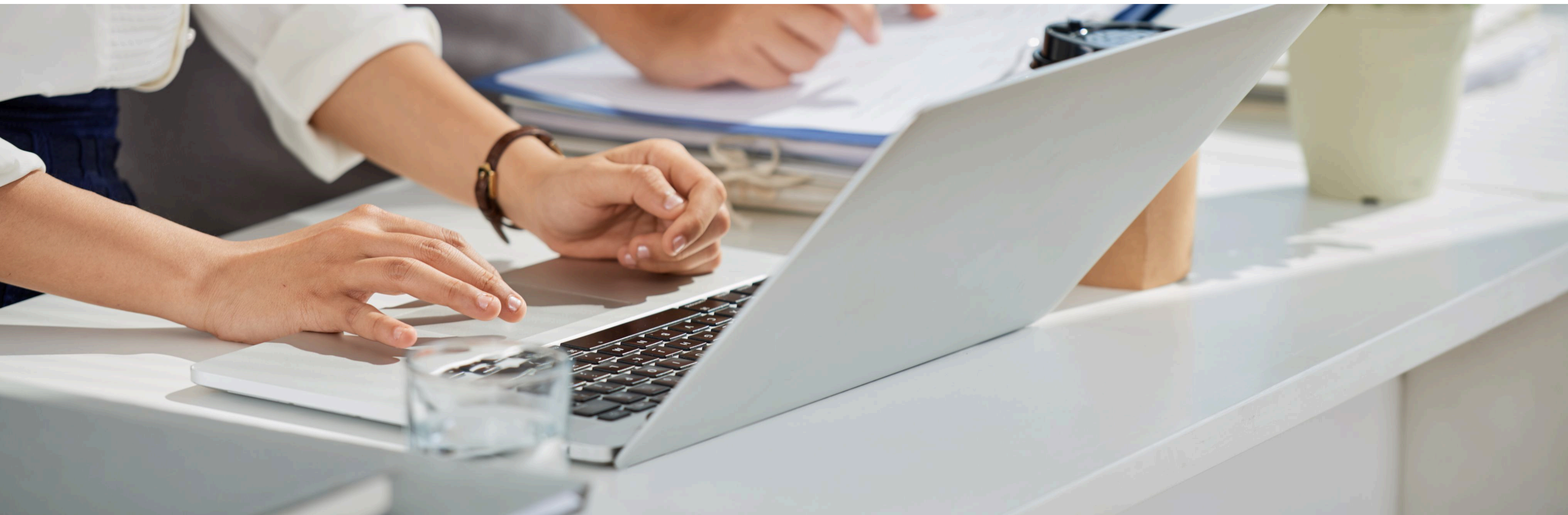
Chapter 3:

The Board's Role and Responsibilities

The Board is elected to guide the Corporation and make decisions on behalf of all owners. Its work includes overseeing finances, approving budgets, maintaining common property, planning for future repairs, enforcing bylaws, hiring contractors and supervising the condominium manager. Every Board member is expected to act honestly, in good faith and in the best interests of the Corporation as a whole. Decisions should not be made to benefit one owner, one group or an individual Board member at the expense of the wider community.

Board members are also expected to use reasonable care and judgment. This does not mean they must be experts in accounting, law, engineering or insurance. It means they should review the available information, ask questions and obtain professional advice when the issue requires it. Conflicts of interest should be disclosed. If a Board member could personally benefit from a contract or decision, the matter should be handled openly and in accordance with the legislation and bylaws.

A strong Board works as a team. Individual directors do not normally have authority to direct contractors, spend Corporation money or make decisions unless the Board has given them that authority.



Chapter 4:

Meetings and Decision Making

Board meetings are where directors discuss the Corporation's ongoing business. This may include finances, maintenance, contractor proposals, insurance, owner concerns and future projects. Clear agendas and accurate minutes help meetings stay organized and provide a record of the decisions made.

The Annual General Meeting, commonly called the AGM, gives owners an opportunity to receive financial information, hear updates, elect the Board and vote on matters that require owner approval. It is also an opportunity for owners to ask questions and learn more about the Corporation.

Current meeting requirements may require an electronic way for owners to attend and participate unless the bylaws provide otherwise. This can lead to virtual or hybrid meetings, where owners may attend either online or in person. Electronic participants must be able to hear and communicate during the meeting.

A Special General Meeting may be called between AGMs when an important matter requires owner consideration or approval. Owners may also request a meeting when the requirements in the legislation have been met.

Quorum is the minimum level of owner participation needed for a meeting to conduct business. The Corporation's bylaws should always be checked because quorum requirements can vary. Valid proxies may also count toward quorum.
Most routine owner decisions are made by ordinary resolution. More significant matters, such as changing the bylaws, require a special resolution and a much higher level of owner approval.

Minutes should clearly record who attended, whether quorum was present, the motions considered, the voting results and the decisions made. Minutes are a record of decisions, not a word for word transcript of every discussion.

Chapter 5:

Budgets and Condo Fees

A condominium corporation relies on owner contributions, commonly called condominium fees, to operate and maintain the property.

Each year, the Board prepares a budget showing how much money the Corporation expects to collect and spend.

The operating budget pays for regular expenses such as insurance, utilities, landscaping, cleaning, management, administration and routine maintenance. The budget should also include the required contribution to the reserve fund. Condominium fees are generally allocated using the unit factors shown on the condominium plan unless another method is properly authorized. Fees are not based only on how much an individual owner uses a service.

A realistic budget helps the Corporation pay its bills, maintain the property and prepare for future needs. Keeping fees artificially low can lead to deferred maintenance, cash flow problems or unexpected additional contributions later. When fees increase, owners are more likely to understand the change when the Board explains the reasons. Insurance, utilities, contracts, repairs and reserve fund requirements can all affect the annual budget.

Unpaid condominium fees affect the entire Corporation. A clear and consistent collection process helps protect the Corporation's cash flow and ensures owners are treated fairly. Alberta legislation provides corporations with collection options, including the ability to register a caveat in appropriate circumstances.

Chapter 6:

The Reserve Fund

The reserve fund is used for major repairs and replacements that do not normally happen every year. Examples may include roofs, elevators, parkades, building exteriors and major mechanical systems.

Everyday expenses, such as landscaping, cleaning, utilities and minor repairs, belong in the operating budget. Reserve fund money is set aside for long term capital needs and cannot be used simply to cover regular operating shortfalls.

The reserve fund study helps the Corporation plan ahead. It reviews the Corporation's depreciating property and estimates when major work may be needed and what it could cost. The study is then used to prepare a reserve fund plan showing how the Corporation intends to fund those future projects.

New corporations must complete their initial reserve fund study, report and plan within the timelines set by the Condominium Property Regulation.

Corporations with 12 units or fewer may, by special resolution, choose to complete their own study, subject to the regulatory requirements.

The study must generally be updated at least every five years. The Board should also review the plan regularly because construction costs, building conditions and project priorities can change.

A well funded reserve fund does not guarantee that a special assessment will never be needed, but it reduces the risk of owners facing a large and unexpected cost when a major component requires repair or replacement.

Chapter 7:

Insurance

The Corporation’s insurance and an owner’s personal condominium insurance serve different purposes. Having one does not replace the need for the other.

The Corporation generally insures the units and common property against the risks required by Alberta condominium legislation, subject to the policy’s limits, conditions and deductible. Coverage is usually based on the Corporation’s Standard Insurable Unit Description, often called the SIUD.

The SIUD describes the standard fixtures and finishes included in the Corporation’s insurance responsibility. Owner upgrades and betterments above that standard may need to be insured through the owner’s personal policy.

Owners should speak with their insurance provider about coverage for personal belongings, liability, additional living expenses, improvements, loss assessments and the Corporation’s deductible if it becomes recoverable from them.

In certain circumstances, the Corporation may recover an insurance deductible from an owner, subject to the Condominium Property Act, the applicable limit and the Corporation’s bylaws. Owners should understand the Corporation’s deductible and make sure their own coverage is adequate.

The Board should review insurance coverage, replacement values, deductibles and major risks with the Corporation’s insurance broker each year rather than simply renewing the policy without discussion.

Chapter 8:

Bylaw Enforcement

Bylaws are most effective when they are applied consistently, reasonably and fairly.

Owners should be able to expect that similar concerns will be handled in a similar way. A Corporation may impose monetary sanctions for bylaw violations when the authority and applicable penalties are properly included in the registered bylaws. Rules are different.

A monetary sanction cannot be imposed solely because a rule has been broken.

A fair enforcement process begins by documenting the concern and confirming which bylaw may apply. The owner should receive clear written information and a reasonable opportunity to respond or correct the issue before the Board makes a final decision.
The Board should review the available information and document its decision. Sanctions should not be applied automatically without considering the circumstances and following the required process.

Owners are generally responsible for the conduct of their tenants, occupants and guests. When a tenant is involved, the owner should be kept informed and given an opportunity to address the concern.

Good documentation is important. Correspondence, photographs, reports, owner responses and Board decisions may become important if the matter later proceeds to the Condominium Dispute Resolution Tribunal or the courts.

Chapter 9:

Maintenance and Common Property

One of the most common condominium questions is: Who is responsible for this repair? The answer usually begins with the registered condominium plan and the bylaws.

The Corporation is generally responsible for common property and property it owns or manages. Owners are generally responsible for their units. However, the exact responsibility can vary depending on the condominium plan and bylaws.

Windows, exterior doors, balconies, plumbing, parking stalls and exclusive use areas often create questions because responsibility is not always obvious. The documents should be reviewed before assuming that either the owner or the Corporation must pay.

When the answer is unclear or the cost is significant, legal, engineering or other professional advice may be worthwhile. A careful decision can prevent the Corporation from creating an unintended precedent.

Preventive maintenance is usually less expensive than waiting for a failure. Regular inspections and a multi year maintenance plan help the Board identify upcoming work, manage costs and coordinate projects with the reserve fund plan.

Maintenance records should include inspection reports, contractor recommendations, completed repairs, warranties and future follow up requirements. Good records help future Boards understand the history of the property.

Chapter 10:

Working with a Condominium Manager

A condominium manager works for the Corporation under the direction of the Board. The manager helps with administration and daily operations but does not replace the Board or make governance decisions on its behalf.

The management agreement explains what services are included, what authority has been delegated, which decisions require Board approval, how fees are charged and how the agreement may be renewed or ended.

Depending on the agreement, the manager may collect condominium fees, coordinate invoice payments, prepare reports, arrange maintenance, obtain quotes, organize meetings, maintain records and communicate with owners.

The Board continues to set the Corporation's direction, approve budgets, authorize significant spending and oversee the manager's work. Clear expectations help prevent confusion about who is responsible for each task.

A good Board and manager relationship is built on timely communication, regular reporting, respectful discussion and a shared understanding of priorities. It is also helpful to agree in advance on how emergencies and urgent decisions will be handled.

Condominium management is a regulated activity in Alberta. Licensed condominium managers must meet the requirements and professional standards established through the Real Estate Council of Alberta.

Chapter 11:

Disputes and the CDRT

Many condominium disagreements can be resolved through clear communication and a careful review of the legislation, bylaws and available records.

When that is not enough, mediation, legal advice or a formal dispute process may be needed.

The CDRT makes good governance and recordkeeping even more important. Clear notices, accurate minutes, documented Board decisions and consistent enforcement help show that the Corporation acted fairly and followed the proper process.

The Condominium Dispute Resolution Tribunal, commonly called the CDRT, began operating in Alberta on April 1, 2026. It provides another way to address certain condominium disputes without beginning in court.

The Tribunal can only deal with matters that fall within the authority given to it by the legislation and regulations. Not every condominium dispute is eligible.

The process may include negotiation, mediation and adjudication, depending on the type of dispute. Decisions may be binding and are subject to the review or appeal rights established by law.

Chapter 12:
Alberta Legislation in 2026

Alberta introduced significant condominium changes through the Service Alberta Statutes Amendment Act, 2024, commonly known as Bill 30. Related legislative and regulatory changes came into effect in 2026.

The changes addressed several areas of condominium governance, including electronic participation at meetings, voting, bylaw enforcement, insurance deductible recovery, owner access to information, Board member protections and the creation of the Condominium Dispute Resolution Tribunal.

Some changes also affect new condominium developments, including interim governance and technical audit requirements.

Boards should be cautious about relying only on past practices or older versions of the legislation. Before making an important decision, the current Condominium Property Act, Condominium Property Regulation and the Corporation's registered bylaws should be reviewed.

Older bylaws may still contain provisions that are outdated or inconsistent with current legislation. A legal review can help the Corporation identify areas that should be clarified or updated.

UrbanTec
Modern management for modern living

Final Thoughts

Serving on a condominium Board can be demanding, but good governance does not require directors to know everything. Strong Boards ask questions, review the available information and seek professional advice when needed.

Clear communication, realistic budgeting, responsible reserve fund planning, consistent bylaw enforcement and preventive maintenance all contribute to a healthier condominium community.

The goal is not simply to manage today's problems. It is to protect the property, support long term financial stability and make decisions that serve the best interests of the Corporation as a whole.

Resources

Important Note

This guide provides general educational information and is not legal, accounting, engineering, insurance or other professional advice. Condominium legislation and regulations may change. For specific matters, review the current legislation, the registered condominium plan and bylaws, and obtain professional advice where appropriate.

1. https://www.alberta.ca/condominium-information
2. https://www.condolawalberta.ca/
3. https://www.reca.ca/
4. https://www.ccisouthalberta.com/

UrbanTec
Modern management for modern living