

# South Philly Food Co-op

Established 2010

## Member-Owner Handbook

### \*Pre-store Opening\*

*Thank you for your decision to become a member-owner of the South Philly Food Co-op. We look forward to working together to bring our vision into reality. We are not just a typical grocery store or business. We are owned and operated by our member-owners, who share equally in the co-op's financing and governance. This handbook will serve as a reference to help you understand what your investment signifies and how you can take an active role.*

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### I. Mission

To open a member-owned cooperative grocery store that provides nutritious food to all residents of South Philadelphia while empowering the local community through sustainable practices, food-centric education, outreach, and community building.

We are committed to:

- Providing access to nutritious and locally sourced food at a fair price
- Fostering connections among the diverse people in our community
- Providing nutrition education and outreach for the community
- Building community partnerships with existing businesses
- Promoting sustainable practices to the neighborhood at large
- Growing with the community

## **II. History**

The South Philly Food Co-op was established on April 26, 2010. An informational meeting was held at South Philadelphia Older Adult Center located at the intersection Passyunk Avenue and Dickinson Street. Representatives from Weaver's Way and Keystone Development Center presented the Cooperative model to a group of more than 60 interested community members. Announcements to civic associations, posting flyers, and word of mouth brought this first group together. At that first meeting, a mailing list was developed, and 3 committees evolved: Steering, Outreach, and Legal/Finance.

These three committees continued to meet over the course of the next year to define our mission and character, educate ourselves about co-op structures and best practices, and to engage the community and spread the word through civic association meetings, events and surveys. The South Philly Food Co-op incorporated on May 25, 2011.

\*Note: An updated timeline is available on our website.

## **III. Member Responsibilities**

Member-owner: A 'member-owner' is a person who has monetarily invested in the co-op. The primary member-owner is considered to be the main contact within the 'household.' A 'household' is a group of persons (including children) residing at the same address who live together as a unit.

Orientation and Volunteer Requirements: All new members must complete a new membership orientation according to specific terms as set by the Board. Each household unit must volunteer a minimum of eight (8) hours during each calendar year according to specific terms set by the Board.

Serving on a committee or as a Board member counts toward your 8 volunteer hours.

Member-owners who do not complete their volunteer requirements will have their membership suspended until the hours are made up.

Additional Information about Volunteering: Volunteers are an integral part of making sure that the co-op is as successful and connected to the community as possible. We are always looking for people to work events, spread the word to their neighbors, or offer up their talents and services or business partnerships. You can volunteer once or once a month, every bit helps! If you would like to volunteer or learn more about what volunteering is about, please contact our Volunteer Coordinators at [volunteer@southphillyfoodcoop.org](mailto:volunteer@southphillyfoodcoop.org).

You also have the opportunity to "work" your volunteer hours by referring new member-owners to the co-op! Until we have a store-front, every new member-owner that you successfully recruit will count as 1 hour toward the yearly volunteer requirement. Your name must be written on the new member-owner's application in order to receive credit.

Member-Ownership Share and Payment Option: Potential member-owners are encouraged to invest as their means allow. The member-owner equity is set at \$200 for a one-time investment per household. This can be invested as a single payment or may be paid with the following payment plan.

Member-owners can begin their investing at any level \$25 or higher. Half of the total member equity (\$100) is due by December 31st of that year, and the remaining half is due by December 31st of the following year according to the schedule below. SPFC will send invoices to partially invested member-owners at the end of each year.

To pay via PayPal, use the link on our website: [southphillyfoodcoop.org](http://southphillyfoodcoop.org), and mail your application to the address above. For those who elect to use PayPal, member-owner status will not be granted until the online transaction is completed and verified and your signed application is received. When using PayPal, please use the name, address and email address of the Primary member-owner listed on the application.

To make additional installment payments, mail your check to the co-op with the name of the primary shareholder and member-owner ID #.

<b>Date first contribution made</b>	<b>½ equity (\$100) due by</b>	<b>Total equity (\$200) due by</b>
Before Oct 31, 2011	December 31, 2011	December 31, 2012
November 1, 2011 to October 31, 2012	December 31, 2012	December 31, 2013

Refunds: A Shareholding member-owner may, at any time, terminate membership by submitting a written statement to Member Services indicating that the Shareholding Member wishes to terminate his or her member-ownership. The member-owner's investment shall, upon written request, be returned by check addressed to the Shareholding Member-owner's address of record within ninety (90) days after an equivalent amount of funds has been provided by a new or existing member.

Transfer of Member-ownership: Member-ownerships are non-transferrable.

#### **IV. Member-Owner Benefits**

As a member-owner RIGHT NOW, you are entitled to:

- The opportunity to run and vote for the Board of Directors
- Ability to vote at general membership meetings and petition for policy changes
- Educational classes and workshops
- Discounts at participating local businesses (coming soon!)

When the store opens, you WILL also be entitled to:

- Member-owner specials and sales
- A say in the variety of products offered

#### **V. Organizational Structure**

The South Philly Food Co-op Board of Directors is made up of 9-13 invested members, with some Board members holding offices such as President, Vice President, Treasurer, and Secretary and any other offices and/or responsibilities as laid out by the Board itself.

In addition, there are a number of active committees that support the co-op in various ways. These committees are made up of member-owners and are not elected positions.

**President:** Alison Fritz (2011 - 2012)

**Vice President:** Maria Camoratto (2011 - 2013)

**Treasurer:** Jay Tarlecki (2011 - 2012)

**Secretary:** Mary Beth Hertz (2011 - 2013)

#### **Members at large:**

Julia Koprak (2011 - 2012)

Joe Marino (2011 - 2013)

Erika Owens (2011 - 2013)

Cassie Plummer (2011 - 2013)

John Raezer (2011 - 2013)

Josh Richards (2011 - 2012)

Stephanie Rupertus (2011 - 2012)

#### **General meeting schedule**

Meetings of the general member-owners are held semi-annually, once in October and once in May. Meeting times and locations will be provided to all member-owners at least 20 days in advance.

#### **How to get items on the agenda**

Meeting agendas are set by the Board of Directors. If you would like to have an issue placed on the agenda, you must submit a petition, signed by 10 additional member-owners, to the Secretary no less than 60 days prior to the next meeting. Agenda items should be mailed to: South Philly Food Co-op, P.O. Box 31506, Philadelphia, PA 19147.

## **Committee descriptions**

In addition to the Board of Directors, there are various committees that help keep the co-op running smoothly. Here are our current committees:

Programs and Events: This committee organizes and gives community presentations, schedules and volunteers at local fairs and events, helps plan and execute SPFC fundraising events and manages the Business Outreach efforts.

Marketing and Communications: This committee is responsible for communicating and publicizing SPFC's efforts through our website and blog, creating press releases, newsletters, brochures and other print materials. They are also responsible for branding and communication consistency.

Membership: This committee coordinates and oversees all tasks relating to member-owner recruitment and tracking. They're responsible for processing membership paperwork, maintaining the member-owner database (including volunteer hours) and planning and executing the membership drive strategies. They organize and lead new member orientation on a quarterly basis. The Volunteer Team (within Membership) is responsible for coordinating member-owner volunteer time at various events. They work closely with each event coordinator to assure that all event needs are met.

Bookkeeping/Administration: This committee is responsible for maintaining financial records, membership records and database as well as managing electronic/paper archival systems. They also work with the Treasurer to maintain communication and partner with the Membership Committee to communicate overlapping assignments.

Financial Planning: This committee is responsible for developing a budget to take us through the start-up phase. They will set fundraising goals and will partner with the Grants Committee as needed.

Ad Hoc Grants Committee: This committee is responsible for writing and applying for grants.

Ad Hoc Legal Committee: This committee meets as necessary as new projects arise. Each committee may have legal needs that can be channeled to this team on an as needed basis.

Operations Committee: This committee is initially taking over the working projects of the former Steering Committee. They are responsible for managing a feasibility study and market analysis in addition to carrying out the policies set by the Board. They will partner with the Finance Committee to develop a business plan and financial projections for the co-op.

## **VI. Contact information**

Email: info@southphillyfoodcoop.org

Website: <http://southphillyfoodcoop.org>

Address: South Philly Food Co-op, P.O. Box 31506, Philadelphia, PA 19147

Volunteer info: volunteer@southphillyfoodcoop.org

Member Services: membership@southphillyfoodcoop.org

## **VII. Stay Connected**

There are plenty of ways to be an active member and track our progress:

- Read our blog: <http://southphillyfoodcoop.org/blog/>
- Become a fan on Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/SouthPhillyFoodCoop>
- Follow us on Twitter: <http://twitter.com//spfoodcoop>
- Attend a committee meeting
- Volunteer/participate in an event (Check the calendar on our website for upcoming events!)

## **VIII. Additional information/resources**

### South Philly Food Co-op Bylaws

Full text of the bylaws can be accessed on the South Philly Food Co-op website under 'About us' or by request.

### Online Resources:

*How To Start a Food Co-op:*

<http://www.cgin.coop/start-a-food-coop>

*Webinars from CDS Consulting:*

<http://cdsconsulting.centraldesktop.com/cbld/doc/5469096/w-Fc500WebinarArchives>

*The Food Coop Initiative:*

<http://www.foodcoopinitiative.coop/>