



CHAPTER

HANDBOOK

Revised 11/2021

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Your Chapter Binder or Folder

The Chapter Handbook was originally intended to be printed out back-to-back, hole-punched, and kept in a 3-ring binder. However, you can also create a "Virtual" binder by keeping electronic copies in a folder on your computer. Here are some other suggestions for things that Chapters should have on file:

- Your Chapter Bylaws
- Your park rules
- A sample of your park's rental agreement
- The current Mobilehome Residency Law (MRL), preferably the expanded version available from the Senate Select Committee on Manufactured Home Communities
- Copies of your city or county Rent Stabilization Ordinance, MHP Closure Conversion Ordinance, Senior Park Overlay, etc., if you have any of these
- Contact information for your local government (City Council or County Board of Supervisors) and your State legislators (Senator and Assembly Member)
- Contact information for local attorneys, preferably any who are knowledgeable about manufactured-home issues

GSMOL Forms, Handouts, and Booklets can be downloaded from the website, www.gsmol.org, under the Resources tab, Forms and Resources sub-tab. It's good to have a sample of all our major handouts in your collection.

INTRODUCTION

This Handbook is intended to be a guide and reference for the use of GSMOL Chapter Officers and others carrying out GSMOL functions for a Chapter. We hope that you will find this Handbook useful, and will give feedback to the Publications Committee about any other topics or materials you think would be beneficial to include in future editions of the Handbook. (The nearest GSMOL Leader or the Home Office can let you know how to contact the Chair of the Publications Committee.)

CHAPTER GOALS

(will be described in more detail elsewhere in the Handbook)

- Bring organization, knowledge, unity, and strength-in-numbers to the GSMOL members in your park.
- Build your Chapter and GSMOL's overall membership by carrying out efficient membership enrollment, retention and support in your park.
- Keep your members informed on the Mobilehome Residency Law (MRL), HCD Title 25 (Health & Safety regulations), local laws and ordinances that apply to MH living, current MH bills in the State Legislature, and other MH matters.
- Coordinate your members and residents to work together to support GSMOL-sponsored bills in the State Legislature and block bills harmful to MH owners.
- Collaborate with your park's Homeowners Association, if any, to help protect the rights of park residents and improve quality of life in the park.
- Set up a line of communication between your Chapter and local government officials and legislators. Attend City Council or Board of Supervisors meetings when there are items on the agenda that affect MH owners.
- Take every opportunity to educate your local government, State legislators, local realtors, and the media on the issues that MH owners face.
- Work with GSMOL leaders, other parks in your community, and with any local area MH owners groups, to benefit MH owners by:
 - helping to put on Regional Conferences and other events for MH owners
 - supporting local efforts to adopt or defend MH-related ordinances
 - standing behind parks in the community who are facing a crisis
 - helping to elect local and State officials and legislators who support MH owners

STAYING ALIVE!

In order to remain an active Chapter, you must always have the following elected officers: **President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer**. (Secretary and Treasurer can be the same person). These officers must always be sure to renew their membership on time. If an officer becomes overdue on renewal, he or she cannot technically hold office, and that renders your Chapter inactive.

Every Chapter should also have a **Membership Coordinator or Chair** and a **Legislative Contact**. These roles may be taken by any of the elected Chapter officers or by a separate person appointed by the elected officers. Both must be able to receive messages and other materials by email.

If a GSMOL Chapter Officer position becomes vacant, the position must be filled by a person appointed by the President as soon as possible, to fill out the remaining term until the next election. **Be sure to notify the Home Office!!**

At least one general Chapter meeting per year is required for a Chapter to remain active (League Bylaws 5.9) but the Bylaws also say that "at least four (4) meetings per year shall be held in order to promote member interest". Meetings of the Chapter Officers may be held whenever needed.

In January of every year, we have **Chapter Check-in**. Every Chapter sends a Roster of Chapter Officers form (#240), a Minutes Verification form (#330), and a Treasurer's Report form (#285) to the Home Office. The Minutes form must show at least ONE meeting was held in the past year.

Once a year, in your Chapter's anniversary month (the month you were chartered or reactivated), the Secretary may submit the **Chapter Allocation Form (#250)**, as long as you have had the FOUR meetings required to claim the \$25 Allocation within the past year. (If you do not know your Chapter's anniversary month, contact the Home Office.) **NOTE: Virtual meetings, i.e. by teleconference, Zoom, etc. count as meetings for the Minutes and Allocation forms.**

An **election of Chapter Officers** must be held at least every other year. The **Roster of Chapter Officers Form (#240)** must be sent to the Home Office immediately after the election.

WHEN YOU NEED HELP

Your "first tier" of support is your nearest GSMOL Associate Manager, Region Manager or Zone Vice President. You can find contact information in *The Californian* or on the website. We also encourage you to make use of resources on the GSMOL Website, <http://gsmol.org>. You may also refer to the "References" page in this Handbook.

THE GSMOL HOME OFFICE

**800-888-1727
14802 Beach Blvd.
La Mirada, CA 90638**

Please inform the Home Office immediately of any changes in your Chapter officers.

Most of the GSMOL forms, handouts, booklets, etc. are available to be downloaded from our website, under the RESOURCES tab, Forms and Resources sub-tab.

You will need to contact the Home Office staff for any of the following:

- Materials and Supplies not available on the website
- Back issues of *The Californian* to use for membership events or include in Welcome Packets for new residents
- Setting up special procedures for handling renewals (see the Membership section in this Handbook)

WHO YA GONNA CALL?

Please encourage your members to **contact one of your officers first, rather than the Home Office**, when they need help with a question or problem related to mobilehome matters. You are their “first tier” of support, but if you are unable to answer their question, you can refer them to the next level, i.e. their nearest GSMOL Associate or Region Manager or Zone Vice President. See the “**GSMOL Procedure for Processing a Park Complaint**” in this Handbook for the steps you can walk your members through when there is a park problem.

GSMOL's LEADERSHIP STRUCTURE

Refer to "Who's Who" and Zone Map in *the Californian*

State Board of Directors

President

|

Secretary – Treasurer

Zone Vice Presidents

(one responsible for each of the 6 zones)

VP at Large – VP for Resident Owned Communities

|

Region Managers

(one responsible for each of the 14 regions)

|

Associate Managers

(each responsible for a local area inside a region)

|

Chapter Officers

Chapter President

|

Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer

(or combined Secretary/Treasurer),

Membership Chair, Coordinator, Legislative Contact

|

Members

THE GSMOL CHAPTER OFFICERS

- The GSMOL Chapter Officers consist of the required elected Officers (President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer (or Secretary/Treasurer) and appointed Chapter Officers (Membership Coordinator and Legislative Contact). Other officers may also be appointed, such as Program Director, Translator/Interpreter, etc., although these are not "official" GSMOL positions and will not appear on any reports from the Home Office.
- Each Chapter must always have a President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer (or Secretary/Treasurer) who are GSMOL members in good standing (paid up), in order to remain active. When an Officer position becomes vacant, a new Officer must be elected or appointed by the President as soon as possible, and the Home Office notified.
- The Membership Chair and Legislative Contact roles may be assigned to any of the elected officers, or to separate people appointed by the elected officers.
- The Chapter Officers represent GSMOL within the park. Major decisions for the Chapter (those that are not required to be voted upon by the members according to the Chapter By-Laws) are made by the Chapter Officers as a group, except that in the case of a deadlock, the President makes the final decision.
- In parks where there is a combination GSMOL Chapter / Homeowners Association with the same officers, the responsibilities described on these pages reflect only those related to GSMOL.

THE CHAPTER PRESIDENT

1. Is the leader of the Chapter, and the Chairman of the Chapter Officers.
2. Conducts the Chapter meetings.
3. Appoints Committee Chairs or Coordinators as needed, such as Membership, Legislative, Programs, Political Action, Disaster Response, etc.
4. Upon the vacancy of an Officer position, appoints or elects a replacement as soon as possible and notifies the Home Office.

THE CHAPTER VICE PRESIDENT

1. In the absence of the President, presides over a meeting.
2. May take on the role of Membership Coordinator, Legislative Contact, or some other special function.

THE CHAPTER SECRETARY

1. Prior to each meeting, consults with the Chapter Officers to prepare an agenda.
2. Sends a notice of each Chapter meeting to the members and other residents in the park.

3. In the absence of the President and Vice-President, presides over a meeting.
4. At each Chapter meeting, reads the minutes of the previous meeting.
5. Records the minutes for each meeting, including the move/second/vote for any vote of the membership.
6. At a meeting where an election of Chapter officers takes place, verifies that each member voting is in good standing, and tallies the votes.
7. Submits the Roster of Chapter Officers Form (#240) after every election of officers and whenever there are any changes in the Officers, including the Membership Chair or the Legislative Contact
8. Submits the Roster of Chapter Officers form (#240), Minutes Verification Form (#330), and Treasurer's Report Form (#285) to the Home Office every January.
9. May submit the Chapter Allocation Form (#250) and Minutes Verification Form (#330) once a year in the Chapter's anniversary month, if the Chapter has had at least four GSMOL meetings since the last anniversary.

THE CHAPTER TREASURER

1. Keeps the Chapter funds. May establish a bank account if needed. The bank account must be set up in the name of "GSMOL Chapter *number, park name*", for example "GSMOL Chapter #1234, Happy Valley MHP"; Chapters will establish their own Tax ID if the bank requires it. At least 3 Chapter officers should be signatories on the Chapter bank account. **GSMOL Chapter funds must not be combined with funds from any other organization.**
2. Disburses funds as approved by the membership with a move/second/vote, or as specified by Chapter By-Laws.
3. Keeps an accounting of activity of cash receipts and disbursements that indicates the relationship to Chapter business.
4. Gives a Treasurer's Report at each meeting. Reporting the balance on hand is sufficient.
5. Submits a Treasurer's Report (Form #285) in January of each year. The report will list total income and expenses from October 1 of the year which is two years ago to September 30 of the previous year.

THE MEMBERSHIP CHAIR or COORDINATOR

1. Forms and chairs a Membership Committee or Team, if needed, to assist with membership enrollment, renewals, and support.
2. Will receive a monthly Membership Report by email either from the Chapter President or directly from the Home Office.
3. Keeps track of each member's renewal month and sees to it that each member gets a reminder call or email when it's their renewal month
4. Sees to it that someone on their committee follows up with members who are late renewing.
5. Gives a Membership Report at meetings.

6. Works with the State Membership Committee and Membership Action Team (MAT), and any local GSMOL leaders to develop the best practices for membership management.

THE LEGISLATIVE CONTACT (LC)

1. Forms a Legislative Action Team (LAT) in the park, to help carry out the tasks described below.
2. With the help of the park LAT, sets up an email list with the email addresses of residents, and a "phone tree" with the phone numbers of those who don't have email. The email list and phone tree will constitute the LAT Network for the park, to allow the Legislative Contact to "get the word out" quickly and effectively when needed.
3. Receives information, instructions, and materials by email from the statewide LAT Committee during the legislative season, and distributes to the park LAT.
4. Sends out calls to action as directed by statewide LAT, through the park's LAT Network as described above.
5. Participates in Legislative Teleconferences as often as possible. If the LC is unable to participate in a teleconference, another Chapter officer may substitute.
6. The LC and park LAT are encouraged to get to know local government officials (City Council or Board of Supervisors) and attend meetings whenever there are issues of concern to MH owners.
7. The LC and park LAT should familiarize themselves with any local ordinance that affects MH owners, such as a Space Rent Stabilization Ordinance, MH Park Closure/Conversion Ordinance, MH Park Zoning Overlay, Senior MH Park Zoning Overlay, etc.

**LEADERSHIP CODE OF CONDUCT OF THE GOLDEN STATE
MANUFACTURED-HOME OWNERS LEAGUE
(GSMOL)**

The following Code of Conduct has been approved by the GSMOL Board of Directors, and shall apply to the Board of Directors and to all Regional Managers and Associate Managers of GSMOL.

WHEREAS, an organization has the right to make and enforce internal rules of conduct which advance and promote an efficient and orderly operation, and to require its leaders to refrain from conduct which tends to injure the reputation or purposes of the organization;

AND WHEREAS, GSMOL has adopted the following Code of Conduct as internal rules of conduct for GSMOL leadership;

NOW THEREFORE, the undersigned, who is a GSMOL volunteer leader, hereby agrees to honor and be bound at all times by the following rules-of conduct while performing his/her volunteer duties and obligations, while providing guidance and leadership to GSMOL members, and while advocating to others in furtherance of the mission and purpose of GSMOL:

1. To be loyal to GSMOL at all times, and to do my best to protect GSMOL members, and to actively pursue the objectives and purposes of GSMOL.
2. To keep confidential any information entrusted to me as a GSMOL leader.
3. To faithfully serve GSMOL members with impartiality, and to provide no special privilege to any individual member(s).
4. To recognize, follow and uphold the GSMOL Bylaws.
5. To follow, exercise and insist upon application of sound and prudent business practices in the conduct of GSMOL affairs.
6. To follow all existing and approved GSMOL policies, procedures and protocols.
7. To refrain from stating or issuing any false or misleading information pertaining to other persons or organizations, or to their activities or efforts.
8. To refrain from making or distributing any false, malicious or discriminatory information or comments concerning fellow members, Directors, Officers, leaders or GSMOL Staff.
9. To respect the chain of leadership and recognize that the Board of Directors is the ultimate governing authority of the organization.
10. To cooperate in every reasonable and proper way with other private or public organizations.
11. To use every available opportunity to improve the public and private sector's understanding and view of GSMOL, and to promote and protect the reputation of GSMOL.

12. To make every good faith effort to actively attend any meeting which my position requires or obligates me to attend.
13. To work closely with, respect and cooperate with my fellow members, Directors, Officers, leaders and GSMOL Staff.
14. To accept assignments or duties delegated or entrusted to me by my fellow Board members or leaders.
15. To demonstrate respect and inter-zone professionalism towards fellow directors and leaders in all manner of communication: verbal, telephone, written and via the Internet.
16. To maintain the highest standards of personal and ethical conduct and behavior at all times, both during meetings and during any interaction or activities in which I am engaged on behalf of GSMOL.
17. Penalties or discipline for any violation of this Code of Conduct shall be governed by Roberts Rules of Order, Chapter XX, Section 60.

EXAMPLES:

In a Meeting:

A breach of this Code by a leader may occur in a meeting, where he/she repeatedly questions the motives of other members or leaders whom he/she mentions by name, or persists on speaking off topic or about irrelevant matters during discussion or debate. The Chair or any other member may "call the member to order" by stating that the member is out of order. If the member complies, the matter can be dropped. If the objectionable statements continue, a motion can be offered which requires the offending member to either apologize and refrain, or leave the meeting until he/she is prepared to do so.

Outside of a Meeting:

A breach of this Code may occur other than in a meeting where any leader engages in conduct or makes statements that tend to injure the good name or reputation, or hamper the work of GSMOL or any GSMOL member, Director, Officer, leader or Staff member. Such conduct may expose the leader to disciplinary action, including suspension, termination or non-renewal of membership, as determined by the Board of Directors, pursuant to the applicable provisions of the GSMOL Bylaws.

I certify that I have received, read and agree to the above-described Leader's Code of Conduct, and that I shall make every good faith effort to follow each of the above described rules of conduct to the best of my ability.

Dated: _____

Name/Position: _____

USE OF GSMOL NAME

Over the years, the unauthorized use of the GSMOL corporate name by local GSMOL Chapters and members has caused a great deal of trouble. Use of GSMOL letterhead on correspondence without adequate authority can potentially damage GSMOL, expose GSMOL to legal risk, or otherwise create an impression that GSMOL is supportive of a position that has not been confirmed by the Board of Directors, or which is contrary to GSMOL's best interests. The following is a sample of situations where the GSMOL corporate name must NOT be used. There may be other situations not listed which will be addressed on a case-by-case basis. If you have any doubts, call the Home Office and discuss the matter with the Office Manager, or contact your Zone Vice President before using the corporate name in any context.

The corporate name of "GOLDEN STATE MANUFACTURED-HOME OWNERS LEAGUE, Inc.", or "GSMOL", or the Home Office address, phone number, fax number or letterhead must NEVER be used in the following situations and circumstances:

- A. In any lawsuit, court filing, administrative rent control case or other public filing, where use of any of the above information would convey an impression that GSMOL is a party to a legal or administrative proceeding, or advocating a particular position. GSMOL may only be mentioned if the reference is to a published article or other written public statement made by a Board member regarding a particular issue.
- B. To indicate sponsorship of any event, such as a party, dinner, fund-raiser or other political or social function. If the event is being sponsored by a local Chapter, use the following reference: "Local Chapter of GSMOL, Inc. No. _____(number), of _____ (park)."
- C. In any general correspondence addressed to a park owner, a newspaper, a public official, or any other person or entity on behalf of the local Chapter. Any such letter must be written and authorized by officers of the local Chapter and must plainly indicate that the remarks are being made only by that local Chapter and not by GSMOL corporate officers or Board members. Use the format in paragraph B above to indicate that only the local Chapter is making the communication, and not the state organization.

Remember, the GSMOL Board does not have practical ability to control or monitor every use of our corporate name by all local Chapters, their officers and members. Any unauthorized use of the corporate name could expose GSMOL, the local Chapter and its officers and members to serious legal liability for which you could be held personally responsible. **If you desire for the GSMOL corporate name to be used, contact your Zone Vice President or the GSMOL Home Office for approval. If you desire to use official GSMOL letterhead for any communication, contact your Zone Vice President first to request assistance.** Thank you for reviewing and cooperating with this important Policy.

SUGGESTED AGENDA FOR CHAPTER MEETINGS

1. Call to Order
2. Salute to the Flag
3. Introduce Visitors, New Residents, New Members
4. Minutes of Last Meeting – Reading and Approval
5. Treasurer’s Report
6. Membership Report
7. Legislative Report
8. Other Reports
9. Old Business and Action Items from Previous Meeting(s)
10. New Business
11. Open Discussion
12. Determine Action Items for Next Meeting
13. Adjourn (a presentation by a guest speaker may follow the business meeting – see “Programs and Topics for Resources and Guest Speakers” in this Handbook)

Basic Procedure for Motions

1. Motion is made (“I move that...”).
2. Motion is seconded by another person (“I second the motion”).
3. Chairman (presiding officer) asks if there is any discussion.
4. When there has been sufficient time for discussion, Chairman will ask if members are ready to vote on the motion. Or anyone may say “Call the question” to proceed with the vote, and the Chairman then asks if the members are ready for the vote.
5. Chairman repeats the motion (“It has been moved and seconded that....”).
6. Chairman says “All in favor, say Aye (or raise your hand)”.
7. Chairman says “All opposed, say Nay (or raise your hand)”.
8. Based upon result, Chairman says “The motion is carried (or defeated)”.

Alternative to Step 6 for a motion you are pretty sure will pass: The Chairman may ask “Is there anyone opposed to this motion?”. If no one responds, the Chairman says “Hearing none, the motion is carried by acclamation”.

PROGRAMS AND TOPICS FOR RESOURCES AND GUEST SPEAKERS

ADULT EDUCATION CLASSES: Both community colleges and unified school districts frequently offer adult classes of all kinds. Invite a representative to your park to describe what the offerings are for the upcoming year.

COMMISSION ON AGING/AREA AGENCY ON AGING: Outstanding resource for wide variety of programs and services for seniors and will hopefully be able to put you in contact with experts in many fields.

BRILLE VISION SERVICES: Speaker presents information on diseases of the eye, all aspects of services available to residents for low vision individuals including how to sign up for Books on Tape.

CARDIOLOGIST: Some physicians are willing to do presentations on Heart Health, Stroke signs and prevention, etc. Bring packets of information. Contact your local Hospital Community Outreach office.

CARING CALLERS and SENIOR PEER COUNSELLING -The Program Coordinators will discuss both programs and their focuses. You may want to become a "caring caller" or a "peer counselor" or you may know someone who would benefit from having a caring caller" or a "peer counselor".

COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTERS: Choose the agency which provides medical care to moderate and low income residents. A representative can come out to describe the services available for all ages of residents and any special programs your county provides.

CONSERVATION PROGRAMS: Every community has a variety of different types of "conservation" programs.....for water, for energy, etc. Check your Utility Services Departments first, then the phone book for special programs near you and invite a representative to come speak about their conservation plans and ideas.

COUNTY MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES: Have a presenter review all services for children and families which the local agency provides. They should discuss any group counseling programs for youth and adults available through the Mental Health Department or related agencies. Outreach is critical.

CRLA - California Rural Legal Assistance: Speaker will provide the income

eligibility figures for your county and describe the types of legal situations which their attorneys are able to assist individuals and families in resolving. They will also discuss specific topics such as Labor, Housing and Education Rights.

ELDER/DEPENDENT ADVOCACY & OUTREACH:

The speaker is the Victim/Witness Coordinator with the Office of the District Attorney for all counties. S/he helps train Law Enforcement, Firefighters and other First Responders in assisting seniors in various crises or threatening situations. S/he can discuss a wide variety of ways to protect themselves against fraud, scams and other abusive situations.

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

AMERICAN RED CROSS
OFFICE of EMERGENCY SERVICES
CITY FIRE DEPT

Using these three resources, a park can put together an Emergency Preparedness Presentation for its residents or review the one it has by bringing in the experts.

EOC - COMMUNITY ACTION PARTNERS: This program may have different names in different communities. The focus is on basic health services and home repair assistance to low income families, seniors and the disabled. Funds are derived from state and federal monies.

DRUG AND ALCOHOL ABUSE COUNSELING PROGRAMS: Every community has one or more sources of treatment and counseling for drugs and alcohol abuse. Outreach is critical for residents in need. Bringing a speaker in can make a difference and help someone get assistance to begin treatment.

HICAP - MEDICARE 1-800-434-0222

Excellent presentation on options available in any county for MEDICARE, also describes different approaches... i.e. Supplemental Plans vs. Medicare Advantage plans. Details about Prescription Drug Programs. HICAP sends you a flyer you can modify and use in your newsletter.

HOSPICE: Hospice will come out and talk about end of life issues, counseling services they provide, palliative care for a loved one.

HOSPITAL COMMUNITY EDUCATIONAL SERVICES: Most facilities offer speakers on a wide variety of topics who will bring materials and handouts to share. Ask for the Educational Community Outreach or Public Relations Department.

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS: The League has a number of different outreach

programs and speakers available. Check your local organization to see what topics are possible, from voter services to affordable housing.

LEGAL & ATTORNEY SERVICES: Invite a local attorney who specializes in wills, trusts, Health Care Directives and guidelines for end of life paperwork so the transition for your beneficiaries will be smooth.

NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH PROGRAMS: The local police department or sheriff's department will send an officer to discuss setting up a "Park Watch" program for your mobilehome park, including materials and workshops.

OLDER ADULT MENTAL HEALTH PROGRAM: This program has a Geriatric Specialist who will discuss the new Mental Health Services Act and the Programs being developed with those funds in most counties. Certain of these will address isolation and depression, which are on the rise in the senior population.

PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT: Invite a representative of the local department to come discuss the wide range of programs offered; youth programs-teen programs-adult and senior programs. If you are a senior park, limit the topics to programs which are just for seniors. Representative will bring flyers for all classes and programs the department offers.

PEDIATRICIAN: Some physicians will speak to a group about children/youth health, important vaccinations, common illnesses of childhood, etc.

RSVP plus SAIF: RSVP explains their volunteer program and leaves a packet of information on the type of positions where a person can volunteer.

SAIF is a presentation, promoted by RSVP, which focuses on all kinds of ways you can protect yourself financially from what information you put on your checks to recognizing and avoiding phone fraud to Internet Fraud to Investment Fraud, also includes descriptions of Identity Theft and how to prevent it.

This is a good package which goes together very well in about an hour to an hour and one half presentation.

SENIOR LEGAL SERVICES PROJECT: Provides basic legal services to seniors, 60 +, by appointment at local senior centers. Services include Durable Power of Attorney and California Advanced Health Care Directives, Housing Issues, General Civil Law Advice, Elder Abuse, etc. Attorney will discuss various senior topics.

TRANSPORTATION SERVICES: Many communities have several different types of public transportation services available for individuals who no longer drive at reduced rates. Call the local bus company to find out the ones in your area (Ride On, Dial-a-Ride, etc). A representative should be willing to come speak about the eligibility requirements (if limited) and cost of the rides.

CHAPTER ALLOCATION PROCEDURE

The month when a Chapter was chartered or reactivated is known as their anniversary month. A Chapter's "year" will run from one anniversary month to the next. If you don't know your anniversary month, ask the Home Office.

The Chapter Secretary or Treasurer may submit the **Allocation Request Form (Form #250)** in the anniversary month of each year, verifying that the Chapter has had **at least 4 (four)** general Chapter meetings in the year since the last anniversary. This entitles the Chapter to receive the yearly allocation of \$25. Meetings may be virtual if it is not safe to assemble in person.

The Allocation Request Form must be accompanied by the **Minutes Verification Form (Form #330)**. (It is no longer necessary to send in the actual minutes.)

BUILDING MEMBERSHIP FOR GSMOL AND YOUR CHAPTER

Successful membership building involves three basic goals:

- 1. Get members.**
- 2. Keep members.**
- 3. Support members.**

The specific strategies for accomplishing these goals vary from park to park, and also depend upon whether your Chapter has a designated Membership Chair and a Membership Committee to help with the various tasks.

We have outlined some basic ideas for membership management on these pages. You are encouraged to develop your own methods, and share them with your GSMOL leader (Associate or Region Manager or Zone VP)!

BLOCK ORGANIZATION

In parks with 100 spaces or more, it's a good idea to divide the park up into "blocks". Each block should have about the same number of households. Each block will have a Block Captain (BC), who lives in the block. These people are usually also members of the park's Membership Committee. The Block Captains may be assigned to carry out tasks such as the ones described below for their blocks.

1. GET MEMBERS

Welcome Wagon: Keep track of homes for sale. When a new resident moves in, visit them with a "Welcome Packet". This might contain the basic GSMOL flyer called "Who we are – What we do" (Form #725). This flyer can be downloaded from the website in English, Spanish, Vietnamese or Chinese), and it is also available in a format that can be folded into a brochure. Also include a membership form, and perhaps a back issue of *The Californian* (the Home Office can supply these). Speak to them in person, if you can, and encourage them to join. Some of the things you want to tell them are:

- Who we are
- What we do
- Some of the things we've done lately statewide and locally
- Why it's important for them to join

The specific information for these bullet points can be found in the handout mentioned above. Also tell them about your Chapter, when the meetings are held, and who they should contact if they have questions. Introduce the new member at your next Chapter meeting.

Each One Reach One: Give each of your GSMOL members a membership form and a flyer with information about GSMOL (such as the handout mentioned above). Ask them to sign up just one other resident in the park for GSMOL, and have them pass on the same “kit” to the person they sign up, with the request that THEY sign up a new person. This is known as a “grassroots” effort.

KEEP MEMBERS

Personalize the Renewal Process: As you know, GSMOL members are sent a renewal notice every year the month before their renewal month. If they haven’t paid by the end of their renewal month, they get a second notice in the month after their renewal month. Eventually, if no renewal is received, the member is dropped from membership. **A member who is late on renewal loses all their membership privileges, including holding office and voting.** Zone and regional leaders get reports which show the members who failed to renew, but they need to concentrate their efforts on the parks which don’t have a Chapter. So **here is how your Chapter’s MC and BCs can ensure that your members don’t fall into the cracks.**

1. Your MC, using the monthly Membership Reports as a guide, should give each BC a list of the members in their block in the order of their renewal months, so that each BC can contact their neighbors when it’s time to renew.
2. Each of these members should be contacted to find out if there is a problem with their renewal. Some of the problems are described below.
 - a. You may find that the member has passed away or left the park, in which case your Membership Chair needs to send the notice back to the Home Office with a message such as “Deceased” or “Moved”. (Keep a watch on their home when it goes up for sale, and try to sign up the new resident who moves in!)
 - b. There could be a financial issue, in which case the Chapter may want to discreetly offer a gift membership.
 - c. The member may have the idea that GSMOL is not doing anything for them, or may have some reason to be upset with GSMOL – in this case, have someone who is a good “sales person” for GSMOL contact them, or refer them to your Associate or Region Manager or Zone VP.

Set up a Chapter Renewal Month: This makes it easier for the renewals to be collected, and it’s easier for the members to remember when to renew. Chapters which do this typically put on a “Renewal Roundup” party. **Be sure to let the Home Office know that you are planning to convert everyone to renew in the same month.**

1. Select the month which has **the most memberships due.** For the sake of this explanation, let’s assume that it’s June.
2. In May, let all your members know that you want to establish June as a renewal month for all members, and that through the coming year, everyone who renews in some other month will pay **ONLY THE AMOUNT TO TAKE THEM**

TO JUNE OF THE NEXT YEAR. In other words, their renewal amount will be pro-rated.

3. Ask the Home Office to begin sending YOU (the MC) all the renewal notices beginning with those for July. (They actually get sent out in June.)
4. When the July notices arrive, you will write the pro-rated amount on each notice before delivering it to the member. Those renewing in July will be paying only \$22.92 because they only have to pay up to June of the next year.
5. When the August notices come, those will be pro-rated to \$20.84. September notices will be pro-rated to \$18.76, October to \$16.68, November to \$14.60, December to \$12.52, January to \$10.44, February to \$8.36, March to \$6.28, April to \$4.20, and May to \$2.12. By the time June rolls around again, everyone will be switched over to renewing in June except as noted in #6 below.
6. Once you start the process, NEW members who join at some other time than your renewal month will pay the usual \$25 (or whatever their membership costs) and will get pro-rated the NEXT year.

SUPPORT MEMBERS

Since you, the Chapter officers, are your members' connection with GSMOL, you may be asked a question that you can't answer, or be presented with an issue that you don't know how to solve.

Know where to find the answers!

Your Chapter should build and maintain a list of references for your officers and members, like the things we suggested on Page 3 and the Recommended References at the end of the Handbook. The Resources Tab on the website is also a good place to look for information.

Go up the pipeline!

If you are not able to find an answer to a member's question, or if you get in over your head with an issue, don't worry – you can always "go up the pipeline". This is one reason we have a "chain" of GSMOL leaders, beginning with you, the Chapter officers, and then, depending upon your area, your nearest Associate Manager, Region Manager, or Zone Vice President (see the "Who's Who" page in *The Californian*, or the Contact page on the website). These leaders will help you find the information or solution that you need. See also "GSMOL's Procedure for Processing a Park Complaint" in this Handbook.

LEGISLATIVE ACTION TEAM (LAT)

The Legislative Action Team is a network, connected mostly by email and telephone, reaching out to GSMOL members and other park residents to mobilize them when there is a campaign to support or oppose a bill in the State Legislature.

The LAT is run by the statewide LAT Committee, a steering committee which, in consultation with the GSMOL Legislative Advocate, develops ideas for new bills and seeks bill authors among the State legislators, tracks other bills related to manufactured housing, determines GSMOL's position on each bill, and develops the action plans for the bills that we will campaign for or against.

In order for the LAT Network to operate at its full potential, **every park should have a Legislative Contact**, who acts as a liaison between the LAT Committee and the members and other residents in their park (parks without a Chapter can also have an LC). The LC can be one of the elected Chapter officers or a separate person.

The LC's work is described elsewhere in this Handbook, but basically, they find other volunteers in the park to set up a Legislative Action Team for the park. With the help of these team members, the LC establishes an email list of park residents, and a "phone tree" to reach residents who don't have email.

When a call to action is sent to the LC by the statewide LAT Committee, the LC and the park LAT use the email and phone network to mobilize residents to carry out the action plan.

The LC also gives reports at Chapter meetings.

The LAT Network has allowed residents to respond quickly by letters, phone calls, emails, etc. to encourage their State legislators to support or reject a particular bill coming up for a vote. Many, many more people have been able to have an influence on their legislators because of the LAT.

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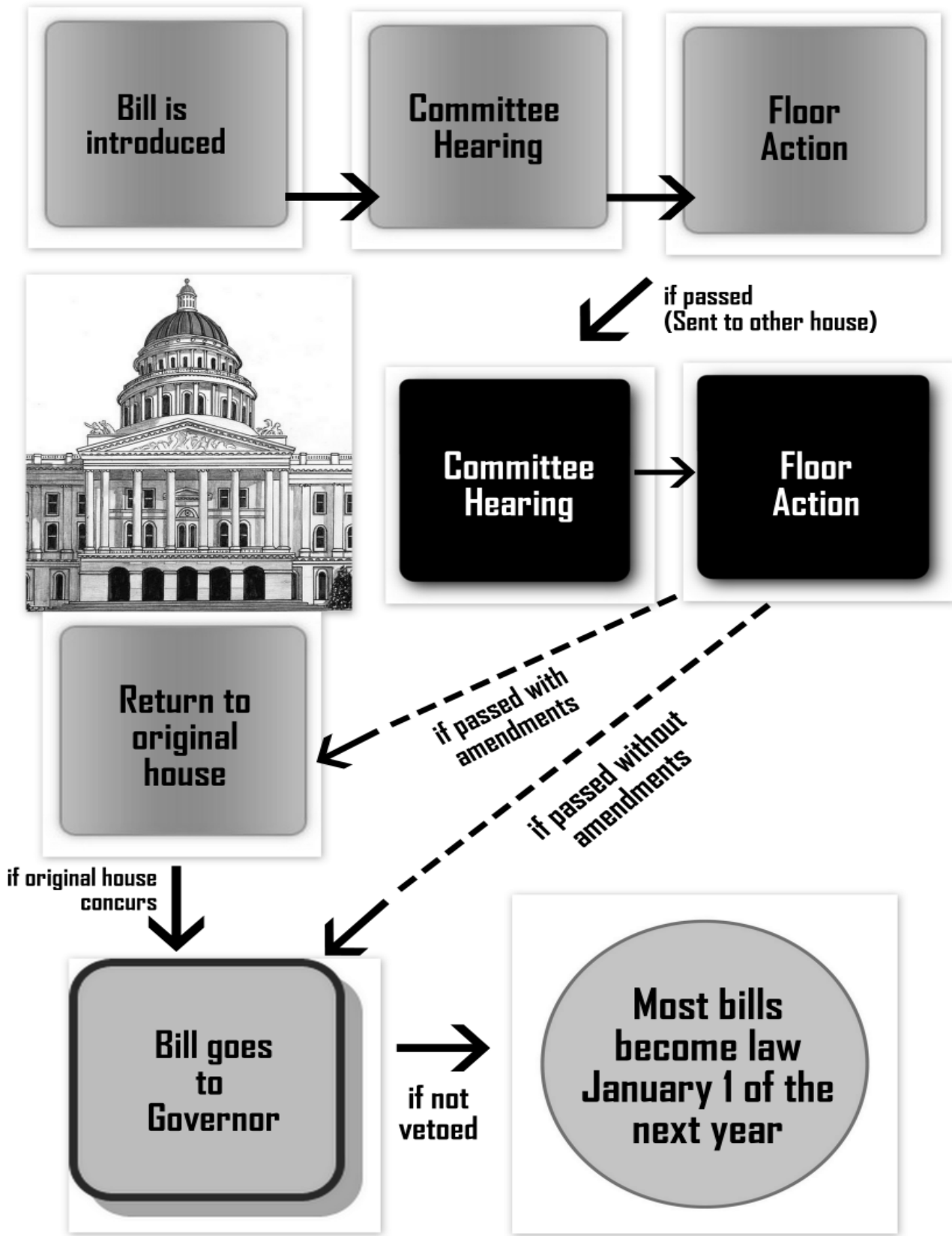
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GSMOL PROCEDURE FOR PROCESSING A PARK COMPLAINT

(THIS IS ALSO A HANDOUT – FORM #635)

1. **DO YOUR HOMEWORK.** Be sure to do all research first. If there are other residents in your park experiencing the same problem, **work together** to compare notes and include evidence from all the individuals, and follow the steps below as a group, with the assistance of your GSMOL Chapter officers if you have a Chapter, or your nearest GSMOL Region, Assistant or Associate Manager.
 - a. Have **documentation** of facts, specific incidents, dates of occurrences, significant details, photos if necessary.
 - b. Find information regarding the **rule being violated** – whether it is
 - i. A **park rule**
 - ii. A violation of the **Mobilehome Residency Law (MRL)**
 - iii. A health or safety violation covered by **Title 25** of the state **Housing and Community Development (HCD)**
 - iv. A violation of a **local rent control or park closure ordinance**
2. **TALK TO THE MANAGER.** Speak to the on-site manager in a business-like manner **with another person present** and let them know your intention to file a complaint.
3. **SUBMIT A COMPLAINT FORM.** If no satisfactory action is taken, fill out a **complaint form** and submit it to Management. If there is no official form for the park, write a letter. Be sure to keep a copy.
4. **SUBMIT A LETTER WITH A TIME LIMIT.** If there is still no resolution, prepare a **professional written communication**, again outlining the concerns/complaints with all details and documentation, the efforts you have taken to resolve it and the specific section of rules which apply. If a health or safety hazard is involved, mention your intention to get HCD involved. **Set a 30 DAY time limit** for a response (certain situations may require a shorter period of time) and submit it to the **Management and Owner**, mailing it to the Owner if necessary.
5. **GET LEGAL HELP.** If there is no response after 30 days, the Chapter should assist the resident to submit a complaint or request for help to one of the following:
 - **MRL violations:** submit a complaint to the MRL Protection Program
 - **Problem with HCD inspections, violations, permits, titling or registration:** submit a complaint to HCD's Mobilehome Assistance Center
 - **Other issues:** consult with Zone VP about whether the case should be referred to a local legal aid agency or to GSMOL's attorney

OPERATING A CONJOINED GSMOL CHAPTER / HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION

This is a very efficient way to utilize your volunteers, especially in smaller parks, by combining the operations of the GSMOL Chapter organization and the HOA organization together. The principal officers (~~President, Vice-President, and Secretary-Treasurer, or separate Secretary and Treasurer~~) Secretary, and Treasurer (or Secretary/Treasurer) are usually the same for the two organizations. Other Board members may also be the same. It is important to note that each organization must have its own Bylaws and needs to honor the formalities of its own Bylaws in electing its Officers ~~according to the Bylaws of that organization~~. Also, the Treasuries must be separate. Your GSMOL Associate or Region Manager or Zone Vice President can assist you in developing the conjoined organizations. Here are some things you will need to know.

1. There are four ways to form a conjoined Chapter/HOA:
 - A park with an existing HOA adds a Chapter. This is the most common way it is done.
 - A park with an existing Chapter adds an HOA.
 - A park that has both organizations combines them by having the same officers for both, and sharing meeting times.
 - A park that has neither organization forms a combined HOA and Chapter together. This is not recommended, however. It is better to have at least one of the organizations existing and on solid footing before adding the second.
2. In order to form a GSMOL Chapter you will need at least 15 GSMOL members in your park if you have 150 or more occupied spaces, or 10% of occupied spaces if you have less than 150. The officers of the Chapter will have to be GSMOL members, of course.
3. In addition to a President, a Vice President, a Secretary and a Treasurer, two additional appointed officers will be needed for your Chapter: 1) the Legislative Contact, who acts as a liaison between the statewide Legislative Action Team (LAT) Committee and your residents; and 2) the Membership Coordinator. The LC will serve both organizations, but it will probably work best for each organization to have its own MC.
4. Your Treasurer(s) need(s) to keep funds and accounting from the Chapter and HOA separate. Funds for the two organizations **must not** be mixed. If you put Chapter funds into a bank account, you will need to use GSMOL's tax ID, which you can obtain from the GSMOL Home Office.

5. Each organization will need to have its own Bylaws. Sample Bylaws for Chapters and HOAs are available from your local GSMOL leader. The officers who will serve both organizations should meet and agree on both sets of Bylaws.
6. If the second organization is to be an HOA, the officers will need to decide how to determine membership in the HOA. Some HOAs automatically include all residents as members, but an organization can only claim to represent the residents who join as members.
7. The officers of the existing organization should meet, along with any interested residents, to decide how the organizations will operate, sharing meeting times and other resources, and what functions will be carried out by each.
8. To add the second organization, the existing organization will call a general meeting of all residents. The plan to join the second organization with the existing one is announced and discussed, and then the residents all vote on whether to accept it. The officers of the existing organization are then elected to serve the second organization. If the second organization is a Chapter, only the GSMOL members can vote to elect the officers, and the officers must then be sworn in by a regional or Zone leader. The leader can do this remotely by being connected to the meeting by telephone, if he or she is unable to be there in person.

NOTE: It is not necessary for ALL the officers of both organizations to be the same, or for the same people to hold the same offices in both organizations. But any way that you can combine them helps to make it possible to have both organizations in a park where it is difficult to find people who are willing and able to be officers (which is just about ANY park!).

<p style="text-align: center;">ADOPT A PARK HELP CREATE A NEW CHAPTER OR SUPER-CHAPTER</p>
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Assuming that a park has sufficient members, there are three ways that a GSMOL Chapter can be formed:

1. The residents take it upon themselves to form a Chapter, usually as the result of a crisis in the park.
2. A GSMOL Associate or Region Manager or Zone VP organizes the residents to form the Chapter.
3. A Chapter from a nearby park reaches out to the residents and gets them organized (under the supervision of a GSMOL zone or regional leader).

We don't want to wait for parks to suffer a crisis before we get them organized (it's a lot better to be organized BEFORE the crisis comes!). And our zone and regional leaders all have lots of parks in their area of responsibility – where to start?

If your Chapter is looking for something to do that can be of great benefit to another park, please consider option #3. By "adopting" a park near you, you can be the eyes, ears, arms and legs for your nearest GSMOL zone or regional leader, who may live too far away, or may be too swamped, to do the "boots on the ground" work.

So how does your Chapter "adopt" a park?

1. Contact your nearest GSMOL zone or regional leader and let them know that you are thinking of adopting a park.
2. Pick a park. You may already have a park in mind – maybe you have been thinking about the residents in a nearby park and saying "Those folks really need to get organized!" If you don't have a park in mind, your GSMOL leader should be able to find a good candidate near you.
3. Your leader will work with you to contact the GSMOL members in your target park and set up a meeting (which can be a virtual meeting such as a telephone conference, Zoom, etc. if it is not possible to have an in-person meeting) to which they can also invite nonmembers.
4. Your Chapter officers and any other interested members of your Chapter will attend the meeting with the target park and talk to them about the benefits of having a Chapter. Bring or email them copies of our handout, "Why Have a GSMOL Chapter in your Park?" (Form #765) which you can download from our website www.gsmol.org under the Resources tab, Forms and Resources sub-tab. If the park doesn't have enough members to form a Chapter, bring or send some membership materials so you can sign up new members.

5. If they show an interest, and they have enough members for a Chapter, the next thing is to find people who are willing and able to be Chapter officers. This is usually the hardest thing to accomplish and is the reason that many parks with lots of members don't have a Chapter. Each of your officers can briefly tell the members what they do in their job so they will know what to expect.
6. If people don't volunteer to be officers on the spot, encourage them to keep talking it up and seek out other residents in the park who might be good officer material (they would have to join GSMOL, of course). Give them a month to see what they can do, and help them in any way you can.
7. If they are able to find officers,
 - a. Work with your GSMOL zone or regional leader to call another meeting (the GSMOL leader will have to attend). Again, this can be virtual.
 - b. Invite ALL the residents and make sure that at least 50% plus one of the GSMOL members can come.
 - c. The GSMOL leader will run the meeting, and will have the members vote to form (or reactivate) the Chapter and elect the officers. He or she will fill in the paperwork and will send them a copy of the Chapter Handbook.
8. OR --- if after their best efforts, the members in the target park are not able to find all of the officers they need, but they still want to be part of a Chapter, you can talk to them about the possibility of forming a Super-Chapter with your Chapter (assuming your Chapter is willing, of course). With a Super-Chapter, the officers of your Chapter would serve as the Super-Chapter officers to begin with. The members in the other park would attend your Chapter meetings and participate in your Chapter activities. Eventually some of the members in the other park may want to run for office. See the "Super-Chapter Guidelines" for more information on how to set up a Super-Chapter.

SUPER-CHAPTERS – COMBINATION PARKS GUIDELINES

A Super-Chapter is usually made up of a "Main Park" which has an active Chapter and one or more nearby "Satellite Parks" which are not able to form a Chapter of their own due to insufficient GSMOL membership or other reasons. If there is no park with an active Chapter to act as the Main Park, the park with the most members may be considered the Main Park. The Super-Chapter will be assigned a special Super-Chapter number by the Home Office; each of the parks retains its original "park number" in GSMOL's records.

If this scenario applies to your geographical area, your local Associate or Region Manager or Zone VP can help you and your neighbor park(s) set up a Super-Chapter using the following guidelines.

1. The parks which form the Super-Chapter must should ideally be within the same jurisdictional boundaries, but this is not set in cement. They must be close enough together so that residents can easily attend meetings at one or more of the parks.
2. The park acting as Main Park, if it has an active Chapter, must poll its GSMOL members to see if they are in agreement to take on this role (simple majority).
3. A letter should be sent to the GSMOL members of the prospective Satellite park(s), explaining the Super-Chapter concept and asking for input from them. At a later date, on-site or virtual resident meetings should occur to discuss the benefits of being a part of GSMOL and to promote membership.
4. There will be one GSMOL Roster of Chapter Officers per Super-Chapter. Satellite parks and the Main Chapter should discuss how their officers will be organized. The makeup of the officers needs to be tailored to the wants and needs of the parks involved. A decision about whether each park will have its own Membership Chair Coordinator (MC) and Legislative Contact (LC) needs to be made, and whether additional officers without specific function will be included.
5. The Super Chapters' Bylaws must be created. A sample set of Super-Chapter Bylaws is available for download at www.gsmol.org under the Resources tab, Forms and Resources sub-tab. The Super-Chapter's Bylaws need to reflect the inclusion of the satellite Chapter/parks by name, address and size.
6. The means of communicating information to and from the parks needs to be addressed. There should be a Legislative Contact within each park to expand the LAT Network (which is based upon email and telephone communication).

The email and phone network thus created may also be used for general communication among the parks.

7. When you have written up your plan for the Bylaws and transition process (including the above details), review it with your Associate or Region Manager or Zone VP. The Zone VP is the one who must approve the formation of the Super-Chapter.
8. If your Super-Chapter is approved, your Bylaws, Chapter Officers Roster Form, and Allocation Form must be turned in to the Home Office.

CONVERTING YOUR PARK TO RESIDENT OWNERSHIP

Resident ownership of MH parks is a very positive goal, for many reasons. Properly done, converting the park where you live to resident ownership

- Stabilizes your monthly housing expenses over the long term;
- Secures the value of your homes;
- Avoids the consequences if local rent control is ever lost or compromised;
- Makes your homes easier to sell;
- Builds your park into a real community and improves its quality of life;
- Protects your park from ever being closed or changed to another use.

The best approach is to convert your park into a "resident owned cooperative." That means that your Homeowners Association becomes a nonprofit corporation that owns the park. Residents are issued membership shares by the corporation. A board of directors (elected by the homeowners) decides park policies. The HOA hires a professional property management company to manage park operations.

Three things that your residents can do to be pro-active about the possibility of purchasing your park someday:

1. Contact David Loop, GSMOL's Vice President for Resident Owned Communities – **831-688-1293 / deloopl@sbcglobal.net**. He will explain the procedure and tell you about resources available to help residents purchase their park, including park purchase consultants who handle a lot of the "red tape".
2. Form a Homeowners Association, if you don't already have one. (See the section about making a conjoined HOA alongside your GSMOL Chapter.)
3. Have your HOA send a letter at least once a year to your park owner, stating your interest in being considered as a potential buyer if the park is put on the market. David Loop can furnish you with an example letter.

Contact David Loop if you have any questions about Resident Owned Parks.

When A Homeowner Sells Their Home...

GSMOL would like its members and other homeowners to know a few things that will be important to them when they sell their mobile/manufactured home. Please be on the lookout for homeowners selling their home and make sure they get this information. (We also have this in a standalone handout called "When You Sell Your Home", Form #770, which is available on our website www.gsmol.org under the Resources tab, Forms and Resources sub-tab.)

It used to be that when a new buyer signed a **long-term lease** – longer than twelve months – **they would not be able to be covered by the local Rent Stabilization Ordinance**, if there was one. However, thanks to a bill that GSMOL sponsored, **AB 2782** by Assemblymember Mark Stone and Senator Tom Umberg,, **this is no longer the case for any new long-term leases signed February 13, 2020, or later.**

By the terms of this new law, **any long-term lease that YOU are required to pass on to your buyer** will become subject to the terms of the Rent Stabilization Ordinance (if you have one) as of **January 1, 2025.**

It is only the rent terms in the lease that are affected by this new law.

Also, you should know that Governor Newsom signed a bill that GSMOL supported, **SB 274 by Senator Bill Dodd**, which became law on January 1, 2020. One part of this bill says that if you have a buyer who is being rejected because their income doesn't qualify them to live in the park, the buyer can now submit **other proofs of ability to pay rent**, such as other financial assets they own, if they should wish to do so.

Finally, just a word to the wise: **if the park offers to buy your home**, consider carefully what could happen as a result. When the park owns both the home and the space, **that space is removed from rent stabilization.** Should the park rent the home out, the tenant may be charged double or even triple the typical rent for the park, since they are paying for both a home and a space. Or if it is an older home, the park may pull it out, replace it with a new home, and sell it to a new resident. Although the new resident can ask for a month-to-month rental agreement and be under the protection of the rent stabilization ordinance, the park owner is allowed to start them out at a much higher rent than the previous owner was paying because they (the park) were temporarily in possession of the home. Or the park can require them to sign a long-term lease, and then they won't even have rent stabilization. **There is nothing illegal about any of these practices, but it is NOT "affordable housing" as mobile/manufactured homes are intended to be.** So, if your area has rent stabilization, selling your home to the park should be the **very last resort.**

USEFUL REFERENCES FOR YOUR CHAPTER

WEBSITES

GSMOL – <https://gsmol.org>

GSMOEF – Golden State Manufactured-home Owners Education Fund
<https://edfundacademy.blogspot.com>

Mobilehome Residency Law (MRL)
<http://mobilehomes.senate.ca.gov/publications>

Senate Select Committee on Manufactured Homes and Communities
<http://mobilehomes.senate.ca.gov/>

State Legislative Information website – information on bills going through the State Legislature
<http://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/>

California Housing & Community Development (HCD)
<http://www.hcd.ca.gov/>

Mobilehome Parks Act (MPA, a.k.a. Title 25)
<http://www.hcd.ca.gov/manufactured-mobile-home/mobile-home-parks/laws-and-regulations.shtml>

California Rural Legal Assistance (CRLA) – can provide legal assistance to low-income MH owners
<http://www.crla.org/>

National Manufactured-Home Owners Association
<http://www.nmhoa.us/>

GSMOL's Model Emergency Response Plan
http://gsmol.org/files/resources/EMERGENCY_PLAN_COMPLETE.pdf

Other useful websites you may wish to list here:

- Your local ordinances (Rent Stabilization, Park Closure Conversion, etc.)
- Your State Senator and Assemblymember's websites
- Your city or county government's website

PUBLICATIONS by authors associated with GSMOL

Manuals by GSMOL Corporate Counsel Bruce Stanton – Excellent resources for those seeking to understand the MRL, leases, or the process of drafting and working with local government to adopt a Rent Stabilization Ordinance or Park Closure Conversion Ordinance. These manuals are available on our website www.gsmol.org in the Members Area.

- MRL Action Manual
- Rent Stabilization Ordinance Manual

MHP Living, Successful Living in California Manufactured Home Parks by Carl Eric Leivo Ph.D www.mhpliving.com Purchase at <https://www.createspace.com/3800762> or Amazon.com

The author was formerly on the GSMOEF (Education Fund) Board of Directors and has been a co-presenter at GSMOL “Roadshows” along with Bruce Stanton. This comprehensive book answers questions regarding these and other topics:

- Sale and financing of MHs
- HUD Code and MH construction
- HCD, permits, and park maintenance
- Park utilities – gas, electricity, water, sewer
- Fostering Homeowner Associations
- Telling your story to elected officials, the press, and the public