

## Body Corporate Guidelines

Increasing numbers of Queenslanders are moving out of suburban housing blocks to take up residence in units, apartments and flats.

The increasing popularity of dwelling in units, apartments and flats can be attributed to the attractive lifestyle associated with this type of housing. Proximity to restaurants, shops and places of employment is a major drawcard for people to take up residence in an apartment.

Aside from the popularity of apartment living, there are some major issues to be aware of before making such a move. Living in buildings that house large numbers of people is completely different to the unrestrictive living on a suburban block. Those who dwell in apartments, flats and units have very little control over the space of their accommodation.

Most residential blocks have a body corporate committee responsible for major decisions that affect residents. Works such as changing the paint colour or nature of the brickwork on a residential building are decisions that have to be run past the body corporate committee. Other issues that can arise between residents are noise between apartments, smoking in apartments, noise travelling upwards from people having parties down below, pets and barbecues on balconies.

Choosing to live in an apartment comes with many terms and conditions, and it is advisable that contracts are read carefully and a legal representative is consulted.

Queensland Parliament recently passed the Body Corporate and Community Management and Other Legislation Amendment Bill to create legislation that requires body corporate committees to abide by a standard code of conduct. The legislation amendment is designed to hold body corporate committees more responsible for making decisions on reasonable grounds and setting a stronger framework for them to work within.

The legislation also aims to act as a tool and guide for committees to promote the best interests of the body corporate and disclose any conflict of interest an individual committee member may have.

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