
**Maryland Homeowners
Association Act**

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§ 11B-101. Definitions.

(a) In this title the following words have the meanings indicated, unless the context requires otherwise.

(b) “Common areas” means property which is owned or leased by a homeowners association.

(c) “Declarant” means any person who subjects property to a declaration.

(d) (1) “Declaration” means an instrument, however denominated, recorded among the land records of the county in which the property of the declarant is located, that creates the authority for a homeowners association to impose on lots, or on the owners or occupants of lots, or on another homeowners association, condominium, or cooperative housing corporation any mandatory fee in connection with the provision of services or otherwise for the benefit of some or all of the lots, the owners or occupants of lots, or the common areas.

(2) “Declaration” includes any amendment or supplement to the instruments described in paragraph (1) of this subsection.

(3) “Declaration” does not include a private right-of-way or similar agreement unless it requires a mandatory fee payable annually or at more frequent intervals.

(e) “Depository” or “homeowners association depository” means the document file created by the clerk of the court of each county and the City of Baltimore where a homeowners association may periodically deposit information as required by this title.

(f) (1) “Development” means property subject to a declaration.

(2) “Development” includes property comprising a condominium or cooperative housing corporation to the extent that the property is part of a development.

(3) “Development” does not include a cooperative housing corporation or a condominium.

(g) “Electronic transmission” means any form of communication, not directly involving the physical transmission of paper, that creates a record that:

(1) May be retained, retrieved, and reviewed by a recipient of the communication; and

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(2) May be reproduced directly in paper form by a recipient through an automated process.

(h) “Governing body” means the homeowners association, board of directors, or other entity established to govern the development.

(i) (1) “Homeowners association” means a person having the authority to enforce the provisions of a declaration.

(2) “Homeowners association” includes an incorporated or unincorporated association.

(j) (1) “Lot” means any plot or parcel of land on which a dwelling is located or will be located within a development.

(2) “Lot” includes a unit within a condominium or cooperative housing corporation if the condominium or cooperative housing corporation is part of a development.

(k) “Primary development” means a development such that the purchaser of a lot will pay fees directly to its homeowners association.

(l) “Recorded covenants and restrictions” means any instrument of writing which is recorded in the land records of the jurisdiction within which a lot is located, and which instrument governs or otherwise legally restricts the use of such lot.

(m) “Related development” means a development such that the purchaser of a lot will pay fees to the homeowners association of such development through the homeowners association of a primary development or another development.

(n) “Unaffiliated declarant” means a person who is not affiliated with the vendor of a lot but who has subjected such property to a declaration required to be disclosed by this title.

§ 11B-102. Applicability of title and § 11B-105, 11B-106, 11B-107, 11B-108, 11B-109, and 11B-110.

(a) Except as expressly provided in this title, the provisions of this title apply to all homeowners associations that exist in the State after July 1, 1987.

(b) The provisions of §§ 11B-105 and 11B-108 of this title do not apply to the initial sale of lots within the development to members of the public if on July 1, 1987:

(1) More than 50 percent of the lots included within or to be included within the development have been sold under a bona fide arm’s length contract to members of the public who intend to occupy or rent the lots for residential purposes; and

(2) Less than 100 lots included within or to be included within the development have not been sold under a bona fide arm's length contract to members of the public who intend to occupy or rent the lots for residential purposes.

(c) The provisions of § 11B-110 of this title do not apply to common area improvements substantially completed before July 1, 1987.

(d) The provisions of § 11B-105 of this title do not apply to developments containing 12 or fewer lots or in which 12 or fewer lots remain to be sold as of July 1, 1987.

(e) Except as provided in § 11B-101(f) of this title, this title does not apply to any property which is:

- (1) Part of a condominium regime governed by Title 11 of this article;
- (2) Part of a cooperative housing corporation; or
- (3) To be occupied and used for nonresidential purposes.

(f) For any contract for the sale of a lot that is entered into before July 1, 1987, the provisions of §§ 11B-105, 11B-106, 11B-107, and 11B-108 of this title do not apply.

§ 11B-103. Variance of title's provisions and waiver of rights conferred thereby, and evasion of title's requirements, limitations, or prohibitions prohibited. Except as expressly provided in this title, the provisions of this title may not be varied by agreement, and rights conferred by this title may not be waived. A declarant or vendor may not act under a power of attorney or use any other device to evade the requirements, limitations, or prohibitions of this title.

§ 11B-104. Building code or zoning laws, ordinances, and regulations to be given full force and effect; local laws; ordinances, or regulations.

(a) The provisions of all laws, ordinances, and regulations concerning building codes or zoning shall have full force and effect to the extent that they apply to a development and shall be construed and applied with reference to the overall nature and use of the property without regard to whether the property is part of a development.

(b) A local government may not enact any law, ordinance, or regulation which would:

(1) Impose a burden or restriction on property which is part of a development because it is part of a development;

(2) Require that additional disclosures relating to the development be made to purchasers of lots within the development, other than the disclosures required by § 11B-105, § 11B-106, or § 11B-107 of this title;

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(3) Provide that the disclosures required by § 11B-105, § 11B-106, or § 11B-107 of this title be registered or otherwise subject to the approval of any governmental agency;

(4) Provide that additional cancellation rights be provided to purchasers, other than the cancellation rights under § 11B-108(b) and (c) of this title;

(5) Create additional implied warranties or require additional express warranties on improvements to common areas other than those warranties described in § 11B-110 of this title; or

(6) Expand the open meeting requirements of § 11B-111 of this title or open record requirements of § 11B-112 of this title.

(c) Subject to the provisions of this title, a code home rule county located in the Southern Maryland Class, as identified in Article 25B, § 2 of the Code, may establish a homeowners association commission with the authority to hear and resolve disputes between a homeowners association and a homeowner regarding the enforcement of the recorded covenants or restrictions of the homeowners association by providing alternative dispute resolution services, including binding arbitration.

§ 11B-105. Initial sale of lots in developments containing more than 12 lots.

(a) A contract for the initial sale of a lot in a development containing more than 12 lots to a member of the public who intends to occupy or rent the lot for residential purposes is not enforceable by the vendor unless:

(1) The purchaser is given, at or before the time a contract is entered into between the vendor and the purchaser, or within 7 calendar days of entering into the contract, the disclosures set forth in subsection (b) of this section;

(2) The purchaser is given notice of any changes in mandatory fees and payments exceeding 10 percent of the amount previously stated to exist or any other substantial and material amendment to the disclosures after the same becomes known to the vendor; and

(3) The contract of sale contains a notice in conspicuous type, which shall include bold and underscored type, in a form substantially the same as the following:

“This sale is subject to the requirements of the Maryland Homeowners Association Act (the “Act”). The Act requires that the seller disclose to you at or before the time the contract is entered into, or within 7 calendar days of entering into the contract, certain information concerning the development in which the lot you are purchasing is located. The content of the information to be disclosed is set forth in § 11B-105(b) of the Act (the “MHAA information”) as follows:

(The notice shall include at this point the text of § 11B-105(b) in its entirety).

If you have not received all of the MHAA information 5 calendar days or more before entering into the contract, you have 5 calendar days to cancel this contract after receiving all of the MHAA information. You must cancel the contract in writing, but you do not have to state a reason. The seller must also provide you with notice of any changes in mandatory fees exceeding 10% of the amount previously stated to exist and copies of any other substantial and material amendment to the information provided to you. You have 3 calendar days to cancel this contract after receiving notice of any changes in mandatory fees, or copies of any other substantial and material amendment to the MHAA information which adversely affects you. If you do cancel the contract you will be entitled to a refund of any deposit you made on account of the contract. However, unless you return the MHAA information to the seller when you cancel the contract, the seller may keep out of your deposit the cost of reproducing the MHAA information, or \$100, whichever amount is less.

By purchasing a lot within this development, you will automatically be subject to various rights, responsibilities, and obligations, including the obligation to pay certain assessments to the homeowners association within the development. The lot you are purchasing may have restrictions on:

- (1) Architectural changes, design, color, landscaping, or appearance;
- (2) Occupancy density;
- (3) Kind, number, or use of vehicles;
- (4) Renting, leasing, mortgaging, or conveying property;
- (5) Commercial activity; or
- (6) Other matters.

You should review the MHAA information carefully to ascertain your rights, responsibilities, and obligations within the development.”

(b) The vendor shall provide the purchaser the following information in writing:

(1) (i) The name, principal address, and telephone number of the vendor and of the declarant, if the declarant is not the vendor; or

(ii) If the vendor is a corporation or partnership, the names and addresses of the principal officers of the corporation, or general partners of the partnership;

(2) (i) The name, if any, of the homeowners association; and

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(ii) If incorporated, the state in which the homeowners association is incorporated and the name of the Maryland resident agent;

(3) A description of:

(i) The location and size of the development, including the minimum and maximum number of lots currently planned or permitted, if applicable, which may be contained within the development; and

(ii) Any property owned by the declarant or the vendor contiguous to the development which is to be dedicated to public use;

(4) If the development is or will be within or a part of another development, a general description of the other development;

(5) If the declarant has reserved in the declaration the right to annex additional property to the development, a description of the size and location of the additional property and the approximate number of lots currently planned to be contained in the development, as well as any time limits within which the declarant may annex such property;

(6) A copy of:

(i) The articles of incorporation, the declaration, and all recorded covenants and restrictions of the primary development and of other related developments to the extent reasonably available, to which the purchaser shall become obligated on becoming an owner of the lot, including a statement that these obligations are enforceable against an owner and the owner's tenants, if applicable; and

(ii) The bylaws and rules of the primary development and of other related developments to the extent reasonably available, to which the purchaser shall become obligated on becoming an owner of the lot, including a statement that these obligations are enforceable against an owner and the owner's tenants, if applicable;

(7) A description or statement of any property which is currently planned to be owned, leased, or maintained by the homeowners association;

(8) A copy of the estimated proposed or actual annual budget for the homeowners association for the current fiscal year, including a description of the replacement reserves for common area improvements, if any, and a copy of the current projected budget for the homeowners association based upon the development fully expanded in accordance with expansion rights contained in the declaration;

(9) A statement of current or anticipated mandatory fees or assessments to be paid by owners of lots within the development for the use, maintenance, and operation of common

areas and for other purposes related to the homeowners association and whether the declarant or vendor will be obligated to pay the fees in whole or in part;

(10) (i) A brief description of zoning and other land use requirements affecting the development; or

(ii) A written disclosure of where the information is available for inspection;

(11) A statement regarding:

(i) When mandatory homeowners association fees or assessments will first be levied against owners of lots;

(ii) The procedure for increasing or decreasing such fees or assessments;

(iii) How fees or assessments and delinquent charges will be collected;

(iv) Whether unpaid fees or assessments are a personal obligation of owners of lots;

(v) Whether unpaid fees or assessments bear interest and if so, the rate of interest;

(vi) Whether unpaid fees or assessments may be enforced by imposing a lien on a lot under the terms of the Maryland Contract Lien Act; and

(vii) Whether lot owners will be assessed late charges or attorneys' fees for collecting unpaid fees or assessments and any other consequences for the nonpayment of the fees or assessments;

(12) If any sums of money are to be collected at settlement for contribution to the homeowners association other than prorated fees or assessments, a statement of the amount to be collected and the intended use of such funds; and

(13) A description of special rights or exemptions reserved by or for the benefit of the declarant or the vendor, including:

(i) The right to conduct construction activities within the development;

(ii) The right to pay a reduced homeowners association fee or assessment; and

(iii) Exemptions from use restrictions or architectural control provisions contained in the declaration or provisions by which the declarant or the vendor intends to maintain control over the homeowners association.

(c) Except as provided in subsection (d) of this section, the requirements of subsection (b) of this section shall be deemed to have been fulfilled if the information required to be

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disclosed is provided to the purchaser in writing in a clear and concise manner. The disclosure may be summarized or produced in a collection of documents, including plats, the declaration, or the organizational documents of the homeowners association, provided those documents effectively convey the required information to the purchaser.

(d) (1) (i) Subject to the provisions of subparagraph (ii) of this paragraph, if any of the information required to be disclosed by subsection (b) of this section concerns property that is subjected to a declaration by a person who is not affiliated with the vendor, within 20 calendar days after receipt of a written request from the vendor of such property, and receipt of a reasonable fee therefor not to exceed the cost, if any, of reproduction, an unaffiliated declarant shall notify the vendor in writing of the information that is contained in the depository, and furnish the information necessary to enable the vendor to comply with subsection (b) of this section; and

(ii) An unaffiliated declarant may not be required to furnish information regarding a homeowners association over which the unaffiliated declarant has no control, or with respect to any declaration which the unaffiliated declarant did not file.

(2) A vendor is not liable to the purchaser for any erroneous information provided by an unaffiliated declarant, so long as the vendor provides the purchaser with a certificate stating the name of the person who provided the information along with an address and telephone number for contacting such person.

(e) (1) In satisfying the requirements of subsection (b) of this section, the vendor shall be entitled to rely upon the disclosures contained in the depository after June 30, 1989.

(2) In satisfying a vendor's request for any information described under subsection (b) of this section, a homeowners association:

(i) Shall be entitled to direct the vendor to obtain such information from the depository for all disclosures contained in the depository after June 30, 1989; and

(ii) May not be required to supply a vendor with any information which is contained in the depository.

(f) The provisions of this section do not apply to a sale of a lot in an action to foreclose a mortgage or deed of trust.

§ 11B-106. Resale of lot; initial sale of lot in development containing 12 or fewer lots.

(a) A contract for the resale of a lot within a development, or for the initial sale of a lot within a development containing 12 or fewer lots, to a member of the public who intends to occupy or rent the lot for residential purposes, is not enforceable by the vendor unless:

(1) The purchaser is given, on or before entering into the contract for the sale of such lot, or within 20 calendar days of entering into the contract, the disclosures set forth in subsection (b) of this section;

(2) The purchaser is given any changes in mandatory fees and payments exceeding 10 percent of the amount previously stated to exist and any other substantial and material amendment to the disclosures after they become known to the vendor; and

(3) The contract of sale contains a notice in conspicuous type, which shall include bold and underscored type, in a form substantially the same as the following:

“This sale is subject to the requirements of the Maryland Homeowners Association Act (the “Act”). The Act requires that the seller disclose to you at or before the time the contract is entered into, or within 20 calendar days of entering into the contract, certain information concerning the development in which the lot you are purchasing is located. The content of the information to be disclosed is set forth in § 11B-106(b) of the Act (the “MHAA information”) as follows:

(The notice shall include at this point the text of § 11B-106(b) in its entirety).

If you have not received all of the MHAA information 5 calendar days or more before entering into the contract, you have 5 calendar days to cancel this contract after receiving all of the MHAA information. You must cancel the contract in writing, but you do not have to state a reason. The seller must also provide you with notice of any changes in mandatory fees exceeding 10% of the amount previously stated to exist and copies of any other substantial and material amendment to the information provided to you. You have 3 calendar days to cancel this contract after receiving notice of any changes in mandatory fees, or copies of any other substantial and material amendment to the MHAA information which adversely affects you. If you do cancel the contract you will be entitled to a refund of any deposit you made on account of the contract. However, unless you return the MHAA information to the seller when you cancel the contract, the seller may keep out of your deposit the cost of reproducing the MHAA information, or \$100, whichever amount is less.

By purchasing a lot within this development, you will automatically be subject to various rights, responsibilities, and obligations, including the obligation to pay certain assessments to the homeowners association within the development. The lot you are purchasing may have restrictions on:

- (1) Architectural changes, design, color, landscaping, or appearance;
- (2) Occupancy density;
- (3) Kind, number, or use of vehicles;
- (4) Renting, leasing, mortgaging, or conveying property;

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(5) Commercial activity; or

(6) Other matters.

You should review the MHAA information carefully to ascertain your rights, responsibilities, and obligations within the development.”

(b) The vendor shall provide the purchaser the following information in writing:

(1) A statement as to whether the lot is located within a development;

(2) (i) The current monthly fees or assessments imposed by the homeowners association upon the lot;

(ii) The total amount of fees, assessments, and other charges imposed by the homeowners association upon the lot during the prior fiscal year of the homeowners association; and

(iii) A statement of whether any of the fees, assessments, or other charges against the lot are delinquent;

(3) The name, address, and telephone number of the management agent of the homeowners association, or other officer or agent authorized by the homeowners association to provide to members of the public, information regarding the homeowners association and the development, or a statement that no agent or officer is presently so authorized by the homeowners association;

(4) A statement as to whether the owner has actual knowledge of:

(i) The existence of any unsatisfied judgments or pending lawsuits against the homeowners association; and

(ii) Any pending claims, covenant violations actions, or notices of default against the lot; and

(5) A copy of:

(i) The articles of incorporation, the declaration, and all recorded covenants and restrictions of the primary development, and of other related developments to the extent reasonably available, to which the purchaser shall become obligated on becoming an owner of the lot, including a statement that these obligations are enforceable against an owner's tenants, if applicable; and

(ii) The bylaws and rules of the primary development, and of other related developments to the extent reasonably available, to which the purchaser shall become obligated on becoming an owner of the lot, including a statement that these obligations are enforceable against an owner and the owner's tenants, if applicable.

(c) (1) Within 30 calendar days of any resale transfer of a lot within a development, the transferor shall notify the homeowners association for the primary development of the transfer.

(2) The notification shall include, to the extent reasonably available, the name and address of the transferee, the name and forwarding address of the transferor, the date of transfer, the name and address of any mortgagee, and the proportionate amount of any outstanding homeowners association fee or assessment assumed by each of the parties to the transaction.

(d) The requirements of subsection (b) of this section shall be deemed to have been fulfilled if the information required to be disclosed is provided to the purchaser in writing in a clear and concise manner. The disclosures may be summarized or produced in any collection of documents, including plats, the declaration, or the organizational documents of the homeowners association, provided those documents effectively convey the required information to the purchaser.

(e) In satisfying the requirements of subsection (b) of this section, the vendor shall be entitled to rely upon the disclosures contained in the depository after June 30, 1989.

(f) The provisions of subsections (a), (b), (d), and (e) of this section, do not apply to the sale of a lot in an action to foreclose a mortgage or deed of trust.

§ 11B-107. Initial sale of lot not intended to be occupied or rented for residential purposes.

(a) A contract for the initial sale of a lot in a development of any size to a person who does not intend to occupy or rent the lot for residential purposes is not enforceable by the vendor unless:

(1) The purchaser is given, at or before the time a contract is entered into between the vendor and the purchaser, or within 7 calendar days of entering into the contract, the disclosures set forth in subsection (b) of this section;

(2) The purchaser is given notice of any change in mandatory fees and payments exceeding 10 percent of the amount previously stated to exist or any other substantial and material amendment to the disclosures after the same becomes known to the vendor; and

(3) The purchaser is given at or before the time a contract is entered into between the vendor and the purchaser, a notice in a form substantially the same as the following:

“NOTICE

The seller is required by law to furnish you at or before the time a contract is entered into, or within 7 calendar days of entering into the contract, all of the information listed in § 11B-107(b) of the Maryland Homeowners Association Act. The information is as follows: (The notice shall include at this point the text of § 11B-107(b) in its entirety).”

(b) The vendor shall provide the purchaser the following information in writing:

(1) The name, principal address, and telephone number of the vendor and of the declarant, if the declarant is not the vendor;

(2) A description of:

(i) The location and size of the development, including the minimum and maximum number of lots currently planned or permitted, if applicable, which may be contained within the development; and

(ii) Any property owned by the declarant or the vendor contiguous to the development which is to be dedicated to public use; and

(3) A copy of the bylaws and rules of the primary development, and of other related developments to the extent available, to which the purchaser shall become obligated on becoming an owner of the lot, including a statement that these obligations are enforceable against an owner and the owner’s tenants, if applicable.

(c) In satisfying a vendor’s request for any information described under subsection (b) of this section, a homeowners association:

(1) Shall be entitled to direct the vendor to obtain the information from the depository for all disclosures contained in the depository after June 30, 1989; and

(2) May not be required to supply a vendor with any information which is contained in the depository.

(d) The provisions of this section do not apply to a sale of a lot in an action to foreclose a mortgage or deed of trust.

§ 11B-108. Cancellation of contract.

(a) A person who enters into a contract as a purchaser but who has not received all of the disclosures required by § 11B-105, § 11B-106, or § 11B-107 of this title, as applicable, shall, prior to settlement, be entitled to cancel the contract and to the immediate return of deposits made on account of the contract.

(b) (1) Any purchaser who has not received all of the disclosures required under § 11B-105 or § 11B-106 of this title, as applicable, 5 calendar days or more before the contract was entered into, within 5 calendar days following receipt by the purchaser of the disclosures required by § 11B-105(a) and (b) or § 11B-106(a) and (b) of this title, as applicable, may cancel in writing the contract without stating a reason and without liability on the part of the purchaser.

(2) The purchaser shall be entitled to the return of any deposits made on account of the contract, except that the vendor shall be entitled to retain the cost of reproducing the information specified in § 11B-105(b), § 11B-106(b), or § 11B-107(b) of this title, as applicable, or \$100, whichever amount is less, if the disclosures are not returned to the vendor at the time the contract is cancelled.

(c) Any purchaser may within 3 calendar days following receipt by the purchaser of a change in mandatory fees and payments exceeding 10 percent of the amount previously stated to exist or any other substantial and material amendment to the disclosures required by § 11B-105 or § 11B-106 of this title, as applicable, which adversely affects the purchaser, cancel in writing the contract without stating a reason and without liability on the part of the purchaser, and the purchaser shall be entitled to the return of deposits made on account of the contract.

(d) The rights of a purchaser under this section may not be waived in the contract and any attempted waiver is void. However, if any purchaser proceeds to settlement, the purchaser's right to cancel under this section is terminated.

(e) In satisfying the requirements of subsection (b) of this section, the vendor shall be entitled to rely upon the disclosures contained in the depository after June 30, 1989.

(f) The provisions of this section do not apply to a sale of a lot in an action to foreclose a mortgage or deed of trust.

§ 11B-109. Untrue statements or omissions by vendor.

(a) Any vendor, required under § 11B-105, § 11B-106, or § 11B-107 of this title to disclose information to a purchaser, who makes an untrue statement of a material fact, or who omits to state a material fact necessary in order to make the statements made, in the light of the circumstances under which they were made, not misleading, shall be liable for damages proximately caused by the untrue statement or omission to the person purchasing a lot from that vendor. However, an action may not be maintained to enforce a liability created under this section unless brought within one year after the facts constituting the cause of action have or should have been discovered.

(b) A vendor may not be liable under subsection (a) if the vendor had, after reasonable investigation, reasonable grounds to believe, and did believe, at the time the information

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required to be disclosed under § 11B-105, § 11B-106, or § 11B-107 of this title was provided to the purchaser, that the statements were true and that there was no omission to state a material fact necessary to make the statements not misleading.

(c) The provisions of this section do not apply to trustees, mortgagees, assignees of mortgagees or other persons selling a lot in an action to foreclose a mortgage or deed of trust.

§ 11B-110. Warranties; notice of defect.

(a) (1) In addition to the implied warranties on private dwelling units under § 10-203 of this article and the express warranties on private dwelling units under § 10-202 of this article, there shall be an implied warranty to the homeowners association that the improvements to common areas are:

(i) Free from faulty materials;

(ii) Constructed in accordance with sound engineering standards; and

(iii) Constructed in a workmanlike manner.

(2) (i) Subject to the provisions of subparagraph (ii) of this paragraph, if the improvements to the common areas were constructed by the vendor, its agents, servants, employees, contractors, or subcontractors, then the warranty on improvements shall be from the vendor of the lots within the development.

(ii) If the improvements to the common areas were constructed on the common areas prior to its conveyance to the homeowners association, then the warranty on improvements shall be from the grantor of the common areas.

(3) The warranty on improvements to the common areas begins with the first transfer of title to a lot to a member of the public by the vendor of the lot. The warranty on improvements to common areas not completed at that time shall begin with the completion of the improvement or with its availability for use by lot owners, whichever occurs later. The warranty extends for a period of one year.

(4) Suit for enforcement of the warranty on improvements to the common areas may be brought by either the homeowners association or by an individual lot owner.

(b) Notice of a defect shall be given within the warranty period and suit for enforcement of the warranty shall be brought within one year of the expiration of the warranty period.

(c) Warranties shall not apply to defects caused through abuse or failure to perform maintenance by a lot owner or the homeowners association.

§ 11B-111. Meetings of homeowners association or its governing body. Except as provided in this title, and notwithstanding anything contained in any of the documents of the homeowners association:

(1) Subject to the provisions of paragraph (4) of this section, all meetings of the homeowners association, including meetings of the board of directors or other governing body of the homeowners association or a committee of the homeowners association, shall be open to all members of the homeowners association or their agents;

(2) All members of the homeowners association shall be given reasonable notice of all regularly scheduled open meetings of the homeowners association;

(3) (i) This paragraph does not apply to any meeting of a governing body that occurs at any time before the lot owners, other than the developer, have a majority of votes in the homeowners association, as provided in the declaration;

(ii) Subject to subparagraph (iii) of this paragraph and to reasonable rules adopted by a governing body, a governing body shall provide a designated period of time during a meeting to allow lot owners an opportunity to comment on any matter relating to the homeowners association;

(iii) During a meeting at which the agenda is limited to specific topics or at a special meeting, the lot owners' comments may be limited to the topics listed on the meeting agenda; and

(iv) The governing body shall convene at least one meeting each year at which the agenda is open to any matter relating to the homeowners association;

(4) A meeting of the board of directors or other governing body of the homeowners association or a committee of the homeowners association may be held in closed session only for the following purposes:

(i) Discussion of matters pertaining to employees and personnel;

(ii) Protection of the privacy or reputation of individuals in matters not related to the homeowners association's business;

(iii) Consultation with legal counsel;

(iv) Consultation with staff personnel, consultants, attorneys, or other persons in connection with pending or potential litigation;

(v) Investigative proceedings concerning possible or actual criminal misconduct;

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(vi) Consideration of the terms or conditions of a business transaction in the negotiation stage if the disclosure could adversely affect the economic interests of the homeowners association;

(vii) Compliance with a specific constitutional, statutory, or judicially imposed requirement protecting particular proceedings or matters from public disclosure; or

(viii) On an individually recorded affirmative vote of two-thirds of the board or committee members present, some other exceptional reason so compelling as to override the general public policy in favor of open meetings; and

(5) If a meeting is held in closed session under paragraph (4) of this section:

(i) An action may not be taken and a matter may not be discussed if it is not permitted by paragraph (4) of this section; and

(ii) A statement of the time, place, and purpose of a closed meeting, the record of the vote of each board or committee member by which the meeting was closed, and the authority under this section for closing a meeting shall be included in the minutes of the next meeting of the board of directors or the committee of the homeowners association.

§ 11B-111.1. Family day care homes.

(a) (1) In this section, the following words have the meanings indicated.

(2) “Day care provider” means the adult who has primary responsibility for the operation of a family day care home.

(3) “Family day care home” means a unit registered under Title 5, Subtitle 5 of the Family Law Article.

(4) “No-impact home-based business” means a business that:

(i) Is consistent with the residential character of the dwelling unit;

(ii) Is subordinate to the use of the dwelling unit for residential purposes and requires no external modifications that detract from the residential appearance of the dwelling unit;

(iii) Uses no equipment or process that creates noise, vibration, glare, fumes, odors, or electrical or electronic interference detectable by neighbors or that causes an increase of common expenses that can be solely and directly attributable to a no-impact home-based business; and

(iv) Does not involve use, storage, or disposal of any grouping or classification of materials that the United States Secretary of Transportation or the State or any local governing body designates as a hazardous material.

(b) (1) The provisions of this section relating to family day care homes do not apply to a homeowners association that is limited to housing for older persons, as defined under the federal Fair Housing Act.

(2) The provisions of this section relating to no-impact home-based businesses do not apply to a homeowners association that has adopted, prior to July 1, 1999, procedures in accordance with its covenants, declaration, or bylaws for the prohibition or regulation of no-impact home-based businesses.

(c) (1) Subject to the provisions of subsections (d) and (e)(1) of this section, a recorded covenant or restriction, a provision in a declaration, or a provision of the bylaws or rules of a homeowners association that prohibits or restricts commercial or business activity in general, but does not expressly apply to family day care homes or no-impact home-based businesses, may not be construed to prohibit or restrict:

(i) The establishment and operation of family day care homes or no-impact home-based businesses; or

(ii) Use of the roads, sidewalks, and other common areas of the homeowners association by users of the family day care home.

(2) Subject to the provisions of subsections (d) and (e)(1) of this section, the operation of a family day care home or no-impact home-based business shall be:

(i) Considered a residential activity; and

(ii) A permitted activity.

(d) (1) (i) Except as provided in subparagraph (ii) of this paragraph and subject to the provisions of paragraphs (2) and (3) of this subsection, a homeowners association may include in its declaration, bylaws, or recorded covenants and restrictions a provision expressly prohibiting the use of a residence as a family day care home or no-impact home-based business.

(ii) A homeowners association may not include a provision described under subparagraph (i) of this paragraph expressly prohibiting the use of a residence as a family day care home in its declaration, bylaws, or recorded covenants and restrictions until the lot owners, other than the developer, have 90% of the votes in the homeowners association.

(iii) A provision described under subparagraph (i) of this paragraph expressly prohibiting the use of a residence as a family day care home or no-impact home-based

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business shall apply to an existing family day care home or no-impact home-based business in the homeowners association.

(2) A provision described under paragraph (1)(i) of this subsection expressly prohibiting the use of a residence as a family day care home or no-impact home-based business may not be enforced unless it is approved by a simple majority of the total eligible voters of the homeowners association, not including the developer, under the voting procedures contained in the declaration or bylaws of the homeowners association.

(3) If a homeowners association includes in its declaration, bylaws, or recorded covenants and restrictions a provision prohibiting the use of a residence as a family day care home or no-impact home-based business, it shall also include a provision stating that the prohibition may be eliminated and family day care homes or no-impact home-based businesses may be approved by a simple majority of the total eligible voters of the homeowners association under the voting procedures contained in the declaration or bylaws of the homeowners association.

(4) If a homeowners association includes in its declaration, bylaws, or recorded covenants and restrictions a provision expressly prohibiting the use of a residence as a family day care home or no-impact home-based business, the prohibition may be eliminated and family day care or no-impact home-based business activities may be permitted by the approval of a simple majority of the total eligible voters of the homeowners association under the voting procedures contained in the declaration or bylaws of the homeowners association.

(e) A homeowners association may include in its declaration, bylaws, rules, or recorded covenants and restrictions a provision that:

(1) Requires day care providers to pay on a pro rata basis based on the total number of family day care homes operating in the homeowners association any increase in insurance costs of the homeowners association that are solely and directly attributable to the operation of family day care homes in the homeowners association; and

(2) Imposes a fee for use of common areas in a reasonable amount not to exceed \$50 per year on each family day care home or no-impact home-based business which is registered and operating in the homeowners association.

(f) (1) If the homeowners association regulates the number or percentage of family day care homes under subsection (e)(1) of this section, in order to assure compliance with this regulation, the homeowners association may require residents to notify the homeowners association before opening a family day care home.

(2) The homeowners association may require residents to notify the homeowners association before opening a no-impact home-based business.

(g) (1) A day care provider in a homeowners association:

(i) Shall obtain the liability insurance described under §§ 19-106 and 19-202 of the Insurance Article in at least the minimum amount described under that statute; and

(ii) May not operate without the liability insurance described under item (i) of this paragraph.

(2) A homeowners association may not require a day care provider to obtain insurance in an amount greater than the minimum amount required under paragraph (1) of this subsection.

(h) A homeowners association may restrict or prohibit a no-impact home-based business in any common areas.

§ 11B-111.2. Candidate sign.

(a) In this section, “candidate sign” means a sign on behalf of a candidate for public office or a slate of candidates for public office.

(b) Except as provided in subsection (c) of this section, a recorded covenant or restriction, a provision in a declaration, or a provision in the bylaws or rules of a homeowners association may not restrict or prohibit the display of:

(1) A candidate sign; or

(2) A sign that advertises the support or defeat of any question submitted to the voters in accordance with the Election Law.

(c) A recorded covenant or restriction, a provision in a declaration, or a provision in the bylaws or rules of a homeowners association may restrict the display of a candidate sign or a sign that advertises the support or defeat of any proposition:

(1) In the common areas;

(2) In accordance with provisions of federal, State, and local law; or

(3) If a limitation to the time period during which signs may be displayed is not specified by a law of the jurisdiction in which the homeowners association is located, to a time period not less than:

(i) 30 days before the primary election, general election, or vote on the proposition; and

(ii) 7 days after the primary election, general election, or vote on the proposition.

§ 11B-111.3. Distribution of information or materials.

(a) This section does not apply to the distribution of information or materials at any time before the lot owners, other than the developer, have a majority of votes in the homeowners association, as provided in the declaration.

(b) In this section, the door-to-door distribution of any of the following information or materials may not be considered a distribution for purposes of determining the manner in which a governing body distributes information under this section:

(1) Any information or materials reflecting the assessments imposed on lot owners in accordance with a recorded covenant, the declaration, bylaw, or rule of the homeowners association; and

(2) Any meeting notices of the governing body.

(c) Except for reasonable restrictions to the time of distribution, a recorded covenant or restriction, a provision in a declaration, or a provision of the bylaws or rules of a homeowners association may not restrict a lot owner from distributing written information or materials regarding the operation of or matters relating to the operation of the homeowners association in any manner or place that the governing body distributes written information or materials.

§ 11B-111.4. Meeting of lot owners.

(a) This section does not apply to any meetings of lot owners occurring at any time before the lot owners, other than the developer, have a majority of the votes in the homeowners association, as provided in the declaration.

(b) Subject to reasonable rules adopted by the governing body, lot owners may meet for the purpose of considering and discussing the operation of and matters relating to the operation of the homeowners association in any common areas or in any building or facility in the common areas that the governing body of the homeowners association uses for scheduled meetings.

§ 11B-112. Books and records of homeowners association; disclosures to be deposited into depository.

(a) (1) Subject to the provisions of paragraph (2) of this subsection, all books and records kept by or on behalf of the homeowners association shall be made available for examination and copying by a lot owner, a lot owner's mortgagee, and their respective duly authorized agents or attorneys, during normal business hours, and after reasonable notice.

(2) Books and records kept by or on behalf of a homeowners association may be withheld from public inspection to the extent that they concern:

- (i) Personnel records;
- (ii) An individual's medical records;
- (iii) An individual's financial records;
- (iv) Records relating to business transactions that are currently in negotiation; or
- (v) The written advice of legal counsel.

(b) The homeowners association may impose a reasonable charge upon a person desiring to review or copy the books and records.

(c) (1) Each homeowners association that was in existence on June 30, 1987 shall deposit in the depository by December 31, 1988, and each homeowners association established subsequent to June 30, 1987 shall deposit in the depository by the later of the date 30 days following its establishment, or December 31, 1988, all disclosures, current to the date of deposit, specified:

(i) By § 11B-105(b) of this title except for those disclosures required by paragraphs (6)(i), (8), (9), and (12);

(ii) By § 11B-106(b) of this title except for those disclosures required by paragraphs (1), (2), (4), and (5)(i); and

(iii) By § 11B-107(b) of this title.

(2) Beginning January 1, 1989, within 30 days of the adoption of or amendment to any of the disclosures required by this title to be deposited in the depository, a homeowners association shall deposit the adopted or amended disclosures in the depository.

(3) If a homeowners association fails to deposit in the depository any of the disclosures required to be deposited by this section, or by § 11B-105(b)(6)(ii) or § 11B-106(b)(5)(ii) of this title, then those disclosures which were not deposited shall be unenforceable until the time they are deposited.

§ 11B-112.1. Late charges

The Declaration or Bylaws of a homeowners association may provide for a late charge of \$15 or one-tenth of the total amount of any delinquent assessment or installment, whichever is greater, provided the charge may not be imposed more than once for the same delinquent payment and may be imposed only if the delinquency has continued for at least 15 calendar days.

§ 11B-113. Homeowners association depository.

(a) There is a homeowners association depository in the office of the clerk of the court in each county and the City of Baltimore.

(b) Consistent with the duties of a clerk of a court as enumerated in § 2-201 of the Courts and Judicial Proceedings Article, the clerk of the court shall establish and thereafter maintain a depository for the purpose of making available to the public upon request the information to be deposited by homeowners associations.

(c) The depository shall:

(1) Be established and maintained in each county and the City of Baltimore as a document file separate from the land records of the county or City;

(2) Contain a record of the names of all homeowners associations for each county and the City of Baltimore;

(3) Contain all disclosures deposited by a homeowners association; and

(4) Be available to the public for viewing and for obtaining copies during the regular business hours of the office of the clerk.

(d) (1) The clerk of the court is authorized to regulate the form and manner of documents deposited into the depository and to collect fees for a deposit.

(2) The clerk of the court shall permit the deposit of copies of disclosures, however reproduced.

(3) The clerk of the court may adopt regulations as necessary or desirable to implement the depository.

(4) The State Court Administrator shall establish, so as to cover the reasonable and ordinary expenses of maintaining the depository, the amount of the fees that the clerk of the court may charge for deposits in the depository.

(5) (i) The clerk of the court shall maintain a depository index; and

(ii) All disclosures shall be filed under the name of the homeowners association.

(e) Material contained in the depository may not be viewed as recordation under Title 3 of this article.

§ 11B-113.1. Electronic Notice of Meeting

(a) Notwithstanding language contained in the governing documents of a homeowners association, the homeowners association may provide notice of a meeting or deliver information to a lot owner by electronic transmission if:

(1) The board of directors or other governing body of the homeowners association gives the homeowners association the authority to provide notice of a meeting or deliver information by electronic transmission;

(2) The lot owner gives the homeowners association prior written authorization to provide notice of a meeting or deliver information by electronic transmission; and

(3) An officer or agent of the homeowners association certifies in writing that the homeowners association has provided notice of a meeting or delivered material or information as authorized by the lot owner.

(B) Notice or delivery by electronic transmission shall be considered ineffective if:

(1) The homeowners association is unable to deliver two consecutive notices; and

(2) The inability to deliver the electronic transmission becomes known to the person responsible for the sending of the electronic transmission.

(C) The inadvertent failure to deliver notice by electronic transmission does not invalidate any meeting or other action.

§ 11B-113.2. Vote or Proxy by Electronic Transmission

(a) Notwithstanding language contained in the governing documents of the homeowners association, the board of directors or other governing body of the homeowners association may authorize lot owners to submit a vote or proxy by electronic transmission if the electronic transmission contains information that verifies that the vote or proxy is authorized by the lot owner or the lot owner's proxy.

(b) If the governing documents of the homeowners association require voting by secret ballot and the anonymity of voting by electronic transmission cannot be guaranteed, voting by electronic transmission shall be permitted if lot owners have the option of casting anonymous printed ballots.

§ 11B-113.3. Restricting Ownership

(a) This section applies to any recorded covenant or restriction that restricts ownership based on race, religious belief, or national origin, including a covenant or restriction that is part of a uniform general scheme or plan of development.

(b) Except as provided in subsection (c) of this section, a homeowners association may delete a recorded covenant or restriction that restricts ownership based on race, religious belief, or national origin from the deeds or other declarations of property in the development if at least 85% of the lot owners in the development agree to the deletion of the recorded covenant or restriction from the deeds or other declarations.

(c) If the deeds or other declarations of property in the development expressly provide for a method of amendment or deletion of a recorded covenant or restriction, a recorded covenant or restriction that restricts ownership based on race, religious belief, or national origin may be deleted as provided for in the deeds or declarations or in accordance with subsection (b) of this section.

(d) After the lot owners in the development agree to the deletion of a recorded covenant or restriction that restricts ownership based on race, religious belief, or national origin as provided in subsection (a) of this section, the governing body of the homeowners association shall record with the clerk of the court in the jurisdiction where the development is located an amendment to the deeds or other declarations that include the recorded covenant or restriction, executed by at least 85% of the lot owners in the development, that provides for the deletion of the recorded covenant or restriction from the deeds or declaration of the property in the development.

§ 11B-113.4. Preventing Unfair Treatment

(a) It is the intent of the General Assembly to prevent unfair treatment of property owners by a homeowners association when annual charges based on the assessed value of property imposed by the homeowners association increase at such a rate that it creates an unexpected windfall for the homeowners association.

(b) In this section, the term “annual charge” means a charge based on the current assessment value of property for county and state property taxes that is levied by a homeowners association on property in a development.

(c) This section only applies to a development that:

(1) Contains at least 13,000 acres of land and has a population of at least 80,000; and

(2) Is governed by a homeowners association that levies an annual charge on property within the development.

(d) A homeowners association shall base the annual charge for the revalued properties on the phased in value of property as provided under § 8-103 of the tax – property article.

(2) If the value of an improved property has been reduced by the state or county assessments office after, or by reason of, a protest, appeal, credit, or other adjustment, the

homeowners association shall reduce the annual charge on the property based on the reduced value.

(e) Until the annual charge for the revalued property is based on the phased in value of property as required under subsection (d) of this section, if the value of the properties revalued as of the most recent date of finality as provided in § 8-104 of the tax – property article exceeds the prior valuation by more than 10%.

(1) The increase shall be considered an unexpected windfall to the homeowners association that should be offset, and

(2) Beginning with the first year following the revaluation of the property for the state property tax purposes, the homeowners association shall provide to the owner of the revalued property a rebate or credit in an amount equal to the portion of the annual charge that is attributable to the growth in the value of the revalued property in excess of 10%.

(f) Subsections (d) and (e) of this section do not apply if a governing body certifies on or before April 1 in the first year following the revaluation of property values for state property tax purposes that the revenues from the annual charges are insufficient to meet the debt service requirements during the next taxable year on all bonds that the governing body anticipates will be outstanding during that year.

(g) Notwithstanding any provision of the law to the contrary, when calculating an annual charge, a homeowners association may not consider the rate of assessed value of property to have increased by more than 10% in a taxable year.

§ 11B-114. Electronic Payments.

(A) In this section, “electronic payment” means payment by credit card or debit card.

(B) A homeowners association may require a person from whom payment is due to pay a reasonable electronic payment fee if the person elects to pay the homeowners association by means of electronic payment.

(C) An electronic payment fee may not exceed the amount of any fee that may be charged to the homeowners association in connection with use of the credit card or debit card.

(D) If a homeowners association elects to charge an electronic payment fee under this section, the homeowners association shall specify on or include notice with each bill and other invoices for which electronic payment is authorized that an electronic payment fee will be charged.

§ 11B-115. Short Title. This title may be cited as the Maryland Homeowners Association Act.

