

# Economic Solidarity Guidelines

The High Falls Food Co-op invites you to choose your member share option based on your income and financial situation, so we can build economic solidarity within our community. All shares cost \$200. However, the Co-op invites members to select the option that best reflects their financial situation.

**Please keep in mind that your equity purchase is a one-time cost, not an annual fee.**

## OPTION A

I am able to buy a Co-op member share for \$200, upfront or over time with a payment plan.

## OPTION B

At this time, I'm not able to buy a Co-op member share for \$200, but I can contribute something.

## OPTION C

I am able to buy a Co-op member share for \$200, and I also want to contribute to the Co-op's Solidarity Fund\* to help a fellow Co-operator join the Co-op.

**Everyone's financial situation is unique. We have assembled the following guidelines to describe different kinds of financial situations. This is not meant to be used as a checklist, but it may help you determine what level of membership support you can provide. Our goal is to create an inclusive and supportive community.**

## OPTION A

- I may stress about meeting my basic needs but still regularly achieve them.
- I have some debt but it does not prohibit me from meeting my basic needs.
- Rent is a significant expense but I am able to pay it regularly.
- I have access to daily, reliable transportation.
- I have savings or access to family/friend financial support in times of need.
- I occasionally have discretionary income.
- I can afford health care and some ongoing medical expenses.
- I can take a vacation or time off from work without financial burden.
- My earning power is not impeded by my immigration status, gender, race, disability, incarceration history, level of education, and/or class background.

## OPTION B

- My income level makes it difficult to meet my basic needs.
- I have debts that prohibit me from meeting my basic needs.
- I receive public assistance.
- I have significant educational expenses and/or student debt.
- Housing is my biggest expense, or I have unstable housing.
- I find it difficult to afford reliable, necessary transportation.
- I have limited or no savings and I support dependents.
- I have limited or no discretionary income.
- I have ongoing medical expenses and limited access to health care.
- I am a senior or a person with a disability solely supported by a fixed income from SSI or SSDI.
- I cannot afford to take time off from work.
- My earning power is impeded by my immigration status, gender, race, disability, incarceration history, level of education, and/or class background.

## OPTION C

- I can comfortably meet all my basic needs.
- I have no or manageable debt.
- I own or rent my home and can make my payments without stress.
- I own/lease a car or have access to transportation without financial stress.
- I have savings, investments, a retirement account, or access to family/friend financial support.
- I have discretionary income.
- I can easily afford healthcare and medical expenses.
- I can afford to regularly travel and/or take vacations.
- I have a relatively high degree of earning power unimpeded by my immigration status, gender, race, disability, incarceration history, level of education, and/or class background.

### Option C Examples

- \* I want to pay \$250, which includes a 1/4 of a fellow member's share.
- \* I want to pay \$300 which includes 1/2 of a fellow member's share.
- \* I want to pay \$400, which includes the full cost of a fellow member's share.

Additional considerations: According to the US Census from 2020, the median household income in Marbletown, the township in which the Co-op is located, was \$64,880, with median per capita income at \$38,315. The census estimates 10.5% of Marbletown's population lives in poverty. Where do you fall within these estimates, economically?

**Please use these guidelines when filling out your share application.**

By purchasing at these this levels, and higher, we can work towards making Co-op membership accessible to all.