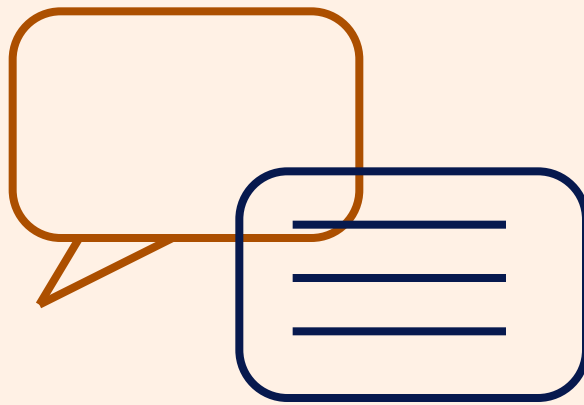


A resident communication playbook for clearer community updates

Replace scattered announcements with a dependable communication routine: identify the audience, explain the action, choose an appropriate channel, and keep a clear record of questions and follow-up.



A PRACTICAL GUIDE + WORKSHEET

Boards and managers communicating with owners and residents

Decide what each communication needs to do

Before drafting, identify the audience and the intended outcome. Is the message informing residents, requesting a response, announcing a decision, or providing a legally required notice? Those purposes need different preparation. A social post that reaches many people may still be the wrong method for a formal notice.

Use a small message brief: who is affected, what is changing, when it happens, what the reader should do, and where questions go. Include a source or decision reference when helpful. Avoid burying the action beneath a long history of committee discussion. Save detailed background in a linked, accessible document when appropriate.

Build a reliable channel map

Identify which channels serve routine updates, urgent operational information, individual account questions, and formal notices. Confirm contact preferences and applicable consent or delivery rules. Keep one authoritative version so that an email, portal post, and printed copy do not contradict each other.

Plan for residents who do not regularly use the chosen digital channel. Provide a practical way to request assistance or an accommodation. Illinois's civil-rights guidance highlights association accommodation issues; your board should confirm its own obligations with qualified advice. Do not request or publish sensitive personal information just to make a mailing list easier to manage.

Make questions easier to answer consistently

Publish clear contact routes and response expectations that the association can actually meet. Assign an intake owner and a backup. Acknowledgment can confirm receipt and explain the next step without promising a decision date the board has not approved. Consolidate repeated general questions into a shared explanation.

Distinguish the public explanation from a private case file. A resident's payment history, dispute, disability-related request, or complaint may require restricted handling. A community-wide update can explain a process without naming the people involved. Check applicable records and privacy rules before distributing attachments or forwarding an entire email chain.

Use feedback without confusing it with a vote

A poll can help identify concerns, but it should not be presented as a formal membership vote unless the verified requirements for that action are met. State what the board will do with the input, when the survey closes, and how the result will be summarized. Avoid collecting information with no clear use.

Keep a simple communication log: message purpose, audience, version, channel, send date, questions received, and responsible person. Review repeated confusion after a few cycles. The measure of a useful message is not only opens or clicks; it is whether residents know what is happening and how to act.

A repeatable working process

- 01 Write the audience, purpose, action, date, and question route before drafting.
- 02 Check whether the message is a formal notice with additional requirements.
- 03 Prepare one approved version and adapt its presentation to each appropriate channel.
- 04 Route private responses to an assigned person and acknowledge receipt.
- 05 Review common questions and update the explanation or process that caused confusion.

A worked example

Illustrative maintenance update: "The east gate will be unavailable Tuesday from 9 a.m. to noon while the approved hinge repair is completed. Please use the west entrance during that period. If the schedule changes, we will update this page. Questions: [contact]." The board confirms the actual scope, timing, alternate access, and notice obligations before sending. The message avoids promising an outcome the contractor has not confirmed.

Adapt the example to your documents, approved authority, service scope, and local requirements.

Make the plan your own

Use this writing space with your team. Keep private owner information and account secrets in an appropriately restricted system.

Audience / purpose / desired action

Approved message / source / version

Channel / contact preference / alternative

Question or concern / private route / owner

Result / repeated confusion / improvement

Before you call it complete

- ☐ Message purpose is explicit
- ☐ Action and relevant date are easy to find
- ☐ Formal notice rules checked
- ☐ One approved version maintained
- ☐ Accessible alternatives considered
- ☐ Private details restricted
- ☐ Response owner and backup assigned
- ☐ Repeated questions reviewed

Keep the evidence with the plan

Original EasyHOA editorial guide, edition 1.0. Published and sources consulted October 29, 2026. The workflows, fictional examples, and worksheets are our own; the sources below provide background and jurisdiction-specific reference material.

Illinois Department of Human Rights: association accommodation issues

Discusses disability-related accommodation issues for condominium and cooperative associations.

<https://dhr.illinois.gov/compliance/real-estate-and-housing/real-estate/reasonable-accommodations-and-modifications-guide/section-8-issues-unique-to-certain-housing-providers.html>

Washington Legislature: RCW 64.90.495

A jurisdiction-specific example of records, owner access, and protected information.

<https://app.leg.wa.gov/rcw/default.aspx?cite=64.90.495>

Minnesota Department of Commerce: rights and responsibilities

A state-specific example of board and owner roles; Minnesota rules do not automatically apply elsewhere.

<https://mn.gov/commerce/consumer/realestate/cic/rights-responsibilities.jsp>

Use the right professional for the question

This is general educational planning material, not legal, accounting, tax, engineering, or safety advice. State law, recorded documents, contracts, and association type can change the right process. Confirm legal and technical requirements with qualified advisers. Worksheets are not legal forms.

Choose one process to improve

Name an owner, agree on a next step, and review the result at your next working session. Preserve the sources and decisions so the next board can continue the work.

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