About unit titles and body corporate

If you have a unit title property, like an apartment or townhouse, or are thinking of buying one, it’s important to know what’s involved.

Unit title owners own a defined part of a building, such as an apartment, and share common areas such as lifts, lobbies or driveways with other owners.

Residential unit title properties are typically apartment blocks and townhouses. Commercial and industrial types include office blocks, industrial or retail complexes, and shopping malls.

This combination of individual and shared ownership of land and buildings means owning a unit title property involves a different set of rights and responsibilities than free-standing house and land ownership.

Before you buy

Buying a unit title property means sharing common property with other people, and will involve different obligations to other purchases of land. It’s important you know what you are committing to. There are a number of disclosure documents you can request before you buy.

Find out more about buying a unit title property (http://www.tenancy.govt.nz/buying-or-renting-a-unit-title/).

What is a body corporate?

When you purchase a unit, you automatically become a member of the body corporate. All unit owners in a unit title property make up the body corporate, and they must hold an AGM at least once a year to discuss body corporate matters and vote on decisions affecting the complex.

The body corporate is responsible for managing finance and administration relating to the common areas, and the property as a whole.

Find out more about:
- Body corporate meetings
- Operational rules
- Body corporate committees
- Body corporate chair

Levies and maintenance

The body corporate pays for any maintenance or repairs it carries out through levies on unit owners.

Levies (also called fees or contributions) cover all regular costs for common areas such as insurance, cleaning, gardening, fees for any contracted professionals, and ongoing maintenance.

Find out more about Money and maintenance (http://www.tenancy.govt.nz/body-corporate-money-and-maintenance/)
What is the Unit Titles Act 2010?

This is the law which governs all unit title properties, and sets out the rules and regulations so they can be managed effectively.

Find out more about how the Act is administered, and the rules and regulations ([http://www.tenancy.govt.nz/body-corporate-how-it-works/](http://www.tenancy.govt.nz/body-corporate-how-it-works/)).


How do I resolve a dispute?

If you have a disagreement with the body corporate or another unit owner, the first things to try are:

- Talking to the other parties to see if a solution can be found
- Checking whether the body corporate rules cover the situation
- Requesting a discussion at a body corporate general meeting.

You can call our Service Centre for information on 0800 864 884. We can help you understand your legal rights and responsibilities, but we cannot give advice on specific disputes.


Short Guide to Unit Titles

This guide outlines your rights and responsibilities, tells you where to find more information, and how to seek help if things go wrong.

Please note that this information is a general guide only, and may not be accurate for all situations. It should not be used as a substitute for legislation or for legal or other expert advice.