

**515B.3-115 ASSESSMENTS FOR COMMON EXPENSES.**

(a) The association shall approve an annual budget of common expenses at or prior to the conveyance of the first unit in the common interest community to a purchaser and annually thereafter. The annual budget shall include all customary and necessary operating expenses and replacement reserves for the common interest community, consistent with this section and section 515B.3-114. For purposes of replacement reserves under subsection (b), until an annual budget has been approved, the reserves shall be paid based upon the budget contained in the disclosure statement required by section 515B.4-102. The obligation of a unit owner to pay common expenses shall be as follows:

(1) If a common expense assessment has not been levied by the association, the declarant shall pay all common expenses of the common interest community, including the payment of the replacement reserve component of the common expenses for all units in compliance with subsection (b).

(2) If a common expense assessment has been levied by the association, all unit owners, including the declarant, shall pay the assessments levied against their units, except as follows:

(i) The declaration may provide for an alternate common expense plan whereby the declarant's common expense liability, and the corresponding assessment lien against the units owned by the declarant, is limited to: (A) paying when due, in compliance with subsection (b), an amount equal to the full share of replacement reserves allocated to units owned by the declarant, as set forth in the association's annual budget approved as provided in this subsection, and (B) paying when due all accrued expenses of the common interest community in excess of the aggregate assessments payable with respect to units owned by persons other than a declarant, provided that the alternate common expense plan shall not affect a declarant's obligation to make up any operating deficit pursuant to item (iv), and shall terminate upon the termination of any period of declarant control unless terminated earlier pursuant to item (iii).

(ii) The alternate common expense plan may be authorized only by including in the declaration and the disclosure statement required by section 515B.4-102 provisions authorizing and disclosing the alternate common expense plan as described in item (i), and including in the disclosure statement either (A) a statement that the alternate common expense plan will have no effect on the level of services or amenities anticipated by the association's budget contained in the disclosure statement, or (B) a statement describing how the services or amenities may be affected.

(iii) A declarant shall give notice to the association of its intent to utilize the alternate common expense plan and a commencement date after the date the notice is given. The alternate common expense plan shall be valid only for periods after the notice is given. A declarant may terminate its right to utilize the alternate common expense plan prior to the termination of the period of declarant control only by giving notice to the association and the unit owners at least 30 days prior to a selected termination date set forth in the notice.

(iv) If a declarant utilizes an alternate common expense plan, that declarant shall cause to be prepared and delivered to the association, at the declarant's expense, within 90 days after the termination of the period of declarant control, an audited balance sheet and profit and loss statement certified to the association and prepared by an accountant having the qualifications set forth in section 515B.3-121(b). The audit shall be binding on the declarant and the association.

(v) If the audited profit and loss statement shows an accumulated operating deficit, the declarant shall be obligated to make up the deficit within 15 days after delivery of the audit to the association, and the association shall have a claim against the declarant for an amount equal to the deficit until paid. A declarant who does not utilize an alternate common expense plan is not liable to make up any operating deficit. If more than one declarant utilizes an alternate common expense plan, all declarants who utilize the plan are jointly and severally liable to the association for any operating deficit.

(vi) The existence and amount, if any, of the operating deficit shall be determined using the accrual method of accounting applied as of the date of termination of the period of declarant control, regardless of the accounting methodology previously used by the association to maintain its accounts.

(vii) Unless approved by a vote of the unit owners other than the declarant and its affiliates, the operating deficit shall not be made up, prior to the election by the unit owners of a board of directors pursuant to section 515B.3-103(d), through the use of a special assessment described in subsection (c) or by assessments described in subsections (e), (f), and (g).

(viii) The use by a declarant of an alternate common expense plan shall not affect the obligations of the declarant or the association as provided in the declaration, the bylaws or this chapter, or as represented in the disclosure statement required by section 515B.4-102, except as to matters authorized by this chapter.

(b) The replacement reserves required by section 515B.3-114 shall be paid to the association by each unit owner for each unit owned by that unit owner in accordance with the association's annual budget approved pursuant to subsection (a), regardless of whether an annual assessment has been levied or whether the declarant has utilized an alternate common expense plan under subsection (a)(2). Replacement reserves shall be paid with respect to a unit commencing as of the later of (1) the date of creation of the common interest community or (2) the date that the structure and exterior of the building containing the unit, or the structure and exterior of any building located within the unit boundaries, but excluding the interior finishing of the structure itself, are substantially completed. If the association has not approved an annual budget as of the commencement date for the payment of replacement reserves, then the reserves shall be paid based upon the budget contained in the disclosure statement required by section 515B.4-102.

(c) After an assessment has been levied by the association, assessments shall be levied annually, based upon an annual budget approved by the association. In addition to and not in lieu of annual assessments, an association may, if so provided in the declaration, levy special assessments against all units in the common interest community based upon the same formula required by the declaration for levying annual assessments. Special assessments may be levied only (1) to cover expenditures of an emergency nature, (2) to replenish underfunded replacement reserves, (3) to cover unbudgeted capital expenditures or operating expenses, or (4) to replace certain components of the common interest community described in section 515B.3-114(a), if such alternative method of funding is approved under section 515B.3-114(a)(5). The association may also levy assessments against fewer than all units as provided in subsections (e), (f), and (g), subject to the requirements of section 515B.3-114(a)(5), with respect to assessments under section 515B.3-115(e)(2).

(d) Except as modified by subsections (a)(1) and (2), (e), (f), and (g), all common expenses shall be assessed against all the units in accordance with the allocations established by the declaration pursuant to section 515B.2-108.

(e) Unless otherwise required by the declaration:

(1) any common expense associated with the maintenance, repair, or replacement of a limited common element shall be assessed against the units to which that limited common element is assigned, equally, or in any other proportion the declaration provides;

(2) any common expense or portion thereof benefiting fewer than all of the units may be assessed exclusively against the units benefited, equally, or in any other proportion the declaration provides;

(3) the costs of insurance may be assessed in proportion to risk or coverage, and the costs of utilities may be assessed in proportion to usage;

(4) reasonable attorneys fees and costs incurred by the association in connection with (i) the collection of assessments and, (ii) the enforcement of this chapter, the articles, bylaws, declaration, or rules and regulations, against a unit owner, may be assessed against the unit owner's unit; and

(5) fees, charges, late charges, fines and interest may be assessed as provided in section 515B.3-116(a).

(f) Assessments levied under section 515B.3-116 to pay a judgment against the association may be levied only against the units in the common interest community at the time the judgment was entered, in proportion to their common expense liabilities.

(g) If any damage to the common elements or another unit is caused by the act or omission of any unit owner, or occupant of a unit, or their invitees, the association may assess the costs of repairing the damage exclusively against the unit owner's unit to the extent not covered by insurance.

(h) Subject to any shorter period specified by the declaration or bylaws, if any installment of an assessment becomes more than 60 days past due, then the association may, upon ten days' written notice to the unit owner, declare the entire amount of the assessment immediately due and payable in full.

(i) If common expense liabilities are reallocated for any purpose authorized by this chapter, common expense assessments and any installment thereof not yet due shall be recalculated in accordance with the reallocated common expense liabilities.

(j) An assessment against fewer than all of the units must be levied within three years after the event or circumstances forming the basis for the assessment, or shall be barred.

**History:** 1993 c 222 art 3 s 15; 1995 c 92 s 12; 1999 c 11 art 2 s 22; 2000 c 260 s 76; 2005 c 121 s 30; 2006 c 221 s 13; 2010 c 267 art 3 s 12