

## What is the Get Organized Program?

Every neighborhood within Orange County is vital to the overall health of our community! The Orange County Neighborhood Preservation and Revitalization Division wants to help you and your neighborhood make our community the best possible place to live! As residents, we must step forward and take responsibility for our community, our neighborhood, and the quality of life therein; if we don't...who will?

This program is an Orange County initiative, designed to address the challenges confronting neighborhoods. Upon residents' request, Neighborhood Preservation and Revitalization Staff will provide the necessary resources to create and maintain a self-sufficient voluntary neighborhood organization.

The process begins with a few residents distributing and collecting a neighborhood survey. The information collected from this survey will provide a foundation for the organization. After the survey data collection, County Staff will conduct approximately three community meetings guiding residents through a course of action to construct organizational bylaws and elect organization leaders. Residents will learn how to effectively identify and address their neighborhood's concerns.

If this sounds like something your neighborhood could benefit from, the Orange Neighborhood Preservation and Revitalization Division today!

### What exactly is a Voluntary Neighborhood Organization?

A voluntary neighborhood organization is a group of neighbors who join efforts to improve their quality of life. This type of organization provides a local forum in which residents meet regularly to consider and resolve issues that are important to them as a neighborhood. These grassroots organizations also provide a recognized vehicle for communicating residents' views to local government.

### How is a Voluntary Neighborhood Organization Structured?

- Each organization is structured through bylaws established and maintained exclusively by the members.
- Membership is optional and open to all residents in the neighborhood; owners, renters and local businesses.
- Democratically elected executive officers work together with issue-focused committees, made up of residents, to achieve the organization's goals.
- Meetings are held monthly, bimonthly, or quarterly according to bylaws.



For more information please contact:

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Orange County  
Neighborhoods

Get Organized!  
(G.O.) Program



"Connecting Neighbors and Neighborhoods"

### What are some Neighborhood Organization Activities?

- Newsletter discussing local issues and concerns
- Beautification projects to clean-up entranceways and common areas
- Neighborhood watch programs
- Educational workshops to address neighborhood interests
- Social events, block parties, and family picnics
- Neighborhood garage sales

### What are the Benefits of a Voluntary Neighborhood Organization?

- Neighbors working together to revitalize and preserve their neighborhood and reduce crime, thereby enhancing property values
- Cultivating a community spirit whereby neighbors become friends, children are safer, elders are cared for, and homes are protected
- Empowers residents to mobilize resources so they can achieve needed neighborhood improvements

### Available Resources to Assist Neighborhood Organizations

#### NEIGHBORHOOD GRANTS

Each year, Orange County Government offers grant opportunities to neighborhoods. These grants provide funding to support residents' efforts in improving the physical and social quality of their neighborhood.

### NEIGHBORHOOD ORGANIZATION DIRECTORY

Comprised of numerous neighborhood organizations recognized by Orange County, the Neighborhood Organization Directory can provide your neighborhood with access to an extensive network of community groups and associations with varied and valuable experience. By registering your organization with Neighborhood Preservation and Revitalization Division, your neighborhood will receive notices about relevant workshops and neighborhood opportunities.



### COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

Neighborhood Preservation and Revitalization Division offers a workshop series on various topics throughout the year and hosts an Annual Orange County Community Conference, which provide a variety of learning opportunities. Our Community Connections Workshops provide valuable training that can help Orange County residents become well-rounded effective neighborhood leaders. These workshops provide an opportunity to develop leadership skills and learn about projects that truly improve the quality of life in any neighborhood. Connect with your community soon! Whether you are part of a neighborhood organization or just a neighbor, we welcome you to attend the workshops and the Annual Community Conference.



### Frequently Asked Questions

**Q. Will a voluntary neighborhood organization require me to pay mandatory dues?**

**A.** No, a voluntary organization cannot force residents to pay dues. Membership with a voluntary organization and any membership dues involved are completely voluntary.

**Q. Will a voluntary neighborhood organization impose any regulations regarding my home or property?**

**A.** No, a voluntary organization cannot make any decisions that will affect your property or your rights as a property owner. No one will be able to tell you what color to paint your house. A voluntary neighborhood organization cannot assess fines or impose liens against you or your property because there are neither deed restrictions nor covenants attached to your property, as

there are in neighborhoods that have mandatory homeowners associations.

**Q. Will I have to attend neighborhood meetings?**

**A.** Meeting attendance is up to each individual resident, but we encourage you to take part in making your community a better place to live by attending meetings regularly.

**Q. If I am a renter, can I participate in a voluntary neighborhood organization?**

**A.** Yes, all neighbors residing within the neighborhood boundaries are eligible and encouraged to participate in the organization.

**Q. What can a voluntary neighborhood organization accomplish that I can not do myself?**

**A.** A neighborhood organization provides an effective means of communication between your

neighborhood and County Government, including all County Service Departments. An organized neighborhood provides a united voice that empowers the community to influence public policy and decision-making. An alliance of neighbors is a much stronger force than one person alone.

**Q. Why is a neighborhood organization so important?**

**A.** Neighborhood organizations act as vehicles for making connections between people, forums for resolving local differences, and a means of looking after one another. Participation in a neighborhood organization builds on name recognition, cohesiveness, and a desire to preserve the tight-knit communities of the past.

