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<https://flhlmq.com/fr>



## List of services

- Promote and defend tenants' interests and work to improve their quality of life;
- Support the work of local tenants' associations
- Promoting tenants' involvement and empowerment in low-income housing projects
- - Represent tenants before political and administrative bodies

## News

## Petition for quality low-cost housing - Sept 11

[illegible]

The FLHLMQ will be taking advantage of the FRAPRU demonstration and camp organized to demand social housing, on September 14 and 15, to publicly launch its petition for quality low-cost housing.

### **The contempt has lasted long enough! - 11 Sept**



Radio Canada has just published an article on the scandalous situation at the Office d'habitation du lac Abitibi: laxity in renting out units.

### **Groundbreaking ceremony for Unitâinés in Rimouski - Sept 10**



On September 9, Radio Canada reported on the official groundbreaking of a 100-unit apartment building built by Mission Unitâinés, which will later be handed over to the Office d'habitation Rimouski-Neigette.

## Become a member



- By becoming a member of the FLHLMQ, you enable us to be representative of tenants throughout Quebec and to stay in touch with you to help you at all times. In the case of CCRs, you can ask your office to pay your FLHLMQ dues.

## Testimonials

Marie D., Montreal LIH tenant

"As an HLM tenant, I've often had trouble asserting my rights. Since discovering FLHLMQ, I've been able to take part in training courses and receive invaluable legal advice. Thanks to their support, I've been able to better understand my rights and make my voice heard."

Lucien R., CCR member in Quebec City

"FLHLMQ's support has been essential for our residents' advisory committee. They helped us organize meetings with tenants and facilitated our communication with the municipal office. Their team is always available and attentive to our needs. Thanks to them, we've been able to carry out several projects to improve our living environment."

Jeanne B., President of a tenants' association in Gatineau

"Being a member of FLHLMQ has given us an incredible support network. They offer tools and resources that help us organize activities and mobilize the tenants in our building. We've also received training on running an association and on tenants' rights. This has really strengthened our ability to defend our collective interests."

Ahmed K., LIH tenant in Sherbrooke

"After joining FLHLMQ, I saw a real change in our community. They helped us set up community garden projects and supported our initiatives to improve safety in our building."

## About us

<https://flhlmq.com/fr/presentation-de-la-flhlmq>

Founded in 1993, the Fédération des locataires d'habitations à loyer modique du Québec (FLHLMQ) brings together over 300 LIH tenants' associations and Residents Consultative Committees (CCR) across Quebec. The FLHLMQ's mission is :

- promote and defend tenants' interests and work to improve their quality of life;
  - support the work of local tenants' associations;
  - promote tenants' involvement and empowerment in low-income housing;
- represent tenants in political and administrative bodies. The FLHLMQ is governed by a Board of Directors made up of 18 tenants representing the various regions of Quebec. They are elected for a two-year term at the FLHLMQ convention. Each is responsible for liaising with the associations and CCRs in his or her region, as well as organizing FLHLMQ regional activities. If you'd like to find out more about how the FLHLMQ operates democratically, please consult our by-laws. Document [FLHLMQ GENERAL BYLAWS- 2021.pdf] The FLHLMQ employs 4 people: Robert Pilon, Élisabeth Pham, Patricia Viannay and Anik Leroux. The federation's offices are located in Montreal. [How the FLHLMQ works]. [FLHLMQ authorities]. [FLHLMQ team] [25 years of our federation (FLHLMQ history)].

## Become a member

<https://flhlmq.com/fr/publication/adhesion-et-abonnement>



Nearly 300 tenant associations and Residents' Consultative Committees (RCCs) renew their membership in the FLHLMQ every year. It's thanks to you that the federation can speak with a strong voice to the governments of Quebec and Ottawa to ensure that they

take care of our housing. The strength you give us by being a member of our federation has enabled us in recent years to advance the cause of low-cost housing in a number of ways: Obtaining a rent freeze and free use of laundry rooms for May to October 2020 due to containment;

- Tenant association subsidy increased from \$17 to \$26;

- Increase from \$400 to \$500 in the amount granted to tenants in the event of a compulsory housing transfer;

- Lower rents for families receiving child support;

- Free training available to all Quebec tenants, via the Internet on zoom, every Wednesday. By paying your dues to become a member of the FLHLMQ, you enable us to be representative of tenants throughout Quebec and to stay in touch with you to help you at all times. In the case of CCRs, you can ask your office to pay your FLHLMQ dues. Use this [form] to become a member or renew your membership. Rates\*\* for

- 25 per year for associations and CCRs with 40 units or less;

- 50 per year for associations and CCRs with 41 to 100 units.

- 75 per year for associations and CCRs with more than 100 units. Make out a cheque to the FLHLMQ and send it with your form to our offices at: FLHLMQ, 2520 Lionel-Groulx Ave., Suite 202, Montréal, QC, H3J 1J8 \*\* Arrangements can be made to modulate the membership fee for very small associations, with 10 units or less.

FLHLMQ membership form Together, we're stronger! Join the movement!

### Membership form

Name of association : 1st contact person :

Title (president, secretary, etc.) :

Address: City:

Postal code :

Tel:



E-mail :

2nd contact person :

Title (president, secretary, etc.) :

Address:

City:

Postal code :

Tel:

E-mail :

Type and number of units represented by your association Number of housing units for the elderly :

Number of family units :

Number of units for disabled people :

Annual subscription ☒

Association and/or CCR\* bringing together 40 units or less : 25 / year ☐

Association and/or CCR\* bringing together 41 to 100 units : 50 / year ☒

Association and/or CCR\* bringing together 101 dwellings and more : 75 / year \* CCR membership fees can be paid by your office.

2520, avenue Lionel-Groulx, local 202, Montréal (Québec) H3J 1J8 Tel.: 1-800-566-9662  
| Fax. (514) 521-6444 | [info@flhlmq.com] | [www.flhlmq.com]

## News

<https://www.flhlmq.com/fr/actualit%C3%A9>

### News 1

Petition for quality HLM





Implement a new HLM program allowing housing offices to build 5,000 housing units per year;

Fully index the budgets allocated to the administration and maintenance of HLMs.

If each association submits 10, 20 or 100 signatures, more than 10,000 signatures will be collected across Quebec and dozens of MNAs will submit them to the National Assembly.

The addition of all your petitions will make us strong!

[Letter Petition web.pdf]

[Petition web.pdf]

## Nouvelle 2

The contempt has gone on long enough!



Submitted by Rédaction on Wed 11/09/2024 - 11:41

Radio Canada has just published an article on the scandalous situation experienced at the Lac Abitibi housing office: laxity in the rental of housing, contempt for tenants who ask questions, threats against CCR members, etc.

The FLHLMQ is wholeheartedly with the tenants who are right to complain and we hope for a strong intervention from the SHQ to restore transparency and respect for the rules of participation in this office. Above all, and this is not mentioned in the report, all tenants who are members of the CCR received a formal notice from the OH in order to intimidate them. Unheard of!

How did we discover that social housing was empty in Abitibi-Ouest?

HLM tenants acted as whistleblowers in this case. Journalist Jean-Marc Belzile explains how he managed to confirm their information.

<https://ici.radio-canada.ca/info/videos/1-10172505/comment-a-t-on-decouvert-que-logements-sociaux-etaient-vides-en-abitibi-ouest>

Housings unoccupied for years in the midst of the housing crisis

By Jean-Marc Belzile

## Radio Cada Abitibi-Témiscamingue

In the midst of the housing crisis, several low-rent housing units (HLM) managed by the Office d'habitation du lac Abitibi are unoccupied in Abitibi-Ouest. A situation that has been going on for years and no solution has been found.

In the small municipality of La Reine, which has just over 300 residents, 11 low-rent housing units (HLM) are available, but only five are occupied. Many of these homes have been empty for several years.

Mayor Fanny Dupras-Rossier said she tried several times to get explanations, but without success. We ask questions, but it's hard to get clear answers, she explained.

In Palmarolle, 4 of the 10 low-cost housing units are unoccupied. For a long time. In Palmarolle, we can read in the municipality's 2015-2017 action plan that this was already a problem. The municipality called for changes by proposing to raise awareness among low-cost housing administrators so that they lower the eligibility age to 55.

Households living in low-cost housing pay 25% of their income for housing. To be eligible for low-rent housing in Abitibi-Ouest, a single person cannot earn more than \$25,000 and the household income must not exceed \$37,000 for a family of 4 or 5 people. Some low-rent housing also requires a minimum age, as is the case in Palmarolle.

These vacant housing units are expensive since the municipality pays part of the costs. The deficit is paid 90% by the Société d'habitation du Québec (SHQ), and 10% by the municipalities. Municipalities that, in most cases, do not have a lot of money.

The Lac Abitibi Housing Office (OH) manages the low-rent housing units in La Sarre, Palmarolle, La Reine, Normétal and Dupuy. According to officials, 15 out of 104 units are vacant. After checking, Radio-Canada was able to see that this figure is an underestimate.

There are more than twenty unoccupied housing units, including some near downtown La Sarre.

The OH's general manager, Mylène Joseph, specifies that these units are free since there are no requests in these municipalities.

Asked whether the criteria could be modified, she assures that all scenarios are being considered.

This situation is unfortunate, but is not exceptional when it comes to buildings that are a good distance from services. We continue to work with the Office in place to find solutions and allow these units to be rented as soon as possible. Flexibilities are also possible and also help encourage rentals, explains the Société d'habitation du Québec (SHQ) by email.

The Fédération des locataires des HLM du Québec believes that the criteria should have been modified.

In other offices, it has been seen, there is a possibility by decree to increase the ceiling of admissible income when we are unable to rent the housing. This has been done in several regions, including recently in Gaspésie. Steps must be taken so that these housing units do not remain empty while we are in the midst of a housing crisis, explains coordinator Patricia Viannay, who also says she receives calls from disgruntled citizens of Abitibi-Ouest.

I know that I receive calls from tenants who say they are eligible, but who cannot apply. They do not understand why they were not on the waiting list when there are vacant units.

A quote from Patricia Viannay, coordinator at the Fédération des locataires des HLM du Québec

Difficult to get answers

The general manager of the Office d'habitation du lac Abitibi, Mylène Joseph, believes that the relationship with the various villages is good, specifying that each municipality has a representative on the Board of Directors (CA) of the Office.

This same CA nevertheless adopted a resolution on June 13, 2023 to remind municipalities that they have no decision-making power.

It is resolved to send a letter to municipalities/cities explaining to them that despite their 10% contribution, decisions concerning HLMs are the sole responsibility of the OHLA, we can read in the minutes.

The Residents' Advisory Committee (CCR) created in 2019 to represent HLM residents on the OH Board of Directors also believes that information is difficult to obtain. President Jacques Mailhous says he decided to get involved to understand what could explain these uninhabited homes.

When we hear people tell us or call us to tell us: "We would like to have rent, but we are not able to contact the DG". It really gets on my nerves, I have a hard time accepting it, he explains.

Since March 2023, the committee has been trying to get answers from the general manager of the Office d'habitation du lac Abitibi, Mylène Joseph, but communication is very difficult.

In March 2023, the CCR first requested the minutes and agendas of the meetings of the board of directors of the Office municipal d'habitation. The general manager then told them that they had to go through the Access to Information Act.

We cannot send you the documents without respecting this process, she wrote on April 27, 2023.

During a telephone interview with Radio-Canada on September 9, she reiterated this position.

However, the CCR's request is legitimate and does not have to go through access to information.

It is written directly in the Act. What is written in black and white is that the CCR has the right to have access to the minutes, and to also meet with the board of directors once a year, explains Patricia Viannay, coordinator of the Fédération des locataires des HLM du Québec.

It was finally after months of efforts by CCR members and the intervention of the Fédération des locataires d'habitations à louer modique du Québec that they received the minutes in December 2023. However, to date, the committee has still not been able to consult, as required by law, the annual report and budget of the Office d'habitation du lac Abitibi.

#### Refusal to fund the CCR

The social housing management guide also provides that the Office d'habitation must fund the CCR at a rate of \$30 per unit per year to organize activities for the benefit of tenants, but the Office d'habitation du lac Abitibi refuses to provide this money to the committee.

There is no way to have our association money to operate. The tenants have to pay out of their own pockets for an activity and then they wait to be reimbursed, but that can take a long time, explains the committee secretary, Blaise Boisvert.

When asked about this, the OH's general manager, Mylène Joseph, did not want to answer, stating that it is a question related to internal management.

In theory, there is no reason for the Office to manage the money itself. In fact, the Office simply receives the money from the SHQ to give it to the associations, says Patricia Viannay.

No tenants on the board of directors

The current conflict between the members of the Residents' Committee and the general manager of the Housing Office means that residents are no longer represented on the board of directors, but there has also been no dialogue between the two parties for over a year.

The SHQ Act provides that two or three tenants sit on the board of directors of a housing office, but in the case of Lac Abitibi, no tenants are present.

Jacques Mailhoux and Blaise Boisvert specify that the elected members of their organization were never invited to participate.

Mylène Joseph says she refuses the CCR nominations because, according to her, their elections were not compliant. They prevented people from voting, who nevertheless had the right to vote, she explains.

For their part, Blaise Boisvert and Jacques Mailhoux assure that everything was done according to the rules. They also specify that they asked the Housing Office for the complete list of tenants, as required by law, but that the director refused to give them this information.

We tried with the Société d'habitation du Québec to sit them down together, but to date it has not yielded anything. The Société d'habitation du Québec has finally decided to really analyze the situation more, because the director feels harassed by the tenants who absolutely want to get involved and the tenants feel harassed by the director who clearly does not want to know anything, explains Patricia Viannay, who has been trying to act as a mediator in this conflict for over a year.



The MNA for Abitibi-Ouest, Suzanne Blais, says she has been informed of the occupancy rate of the HLM and the tensions between the residents and the general director of the OH, but has refused to comment.

I am aware of the problem and we are continuing to work with the stakeholders concerned to find solutions and allow the rental of these dwellings as soon as possible. Flexibilities are also possible and also help to encourage rentals, her office informed us by email.

The Abitibi-Ouest MRC also refused to comment on the situation. The MRC stated in an email that it had discussions with the two local housing offices, the Arc-en-ciel Municipal Housing Office and the Lac Abitibi Housing Office.

The MRC mentioned that the committee does not intervene in the internal management of the various developers.

The president of the CCR, Jacques Mailhous, said he filed a complaint with the Société d'habitation du Québec, but that it did not result in any change.

For the complaint to be valid, each person must file a complaint. These are seniors. Like the HLM in Normétal, one person in 20 rents has a computer, people don't want to touch that, it scares them. We are their representatives, we should be able to represent them, but no, they do it person by person, he said.

Jacques Mailhous deplores that in the current conflict between him and the Housing Office, it is the tenants who are paying the price.

Photo: Radio Canada - Jacques Mailloux, the president of the CCR with Blaise Boisvert, the secretary.

### News 3

Groundbreaking ceremony for Unitaînés in Rimouski



Submitted by Rédaction on Tue 10/09/2024 - 09:03

Radio Canada highlights, in a report on September 9, the official groundbreaking ceremony for a 100-unit building built by the Mission Unitaires that will then be entrusted to the management of the Office d'habitation Rimouski-Neigette. The FLHLMQ welcomes this initiative, which will make it possible in the next 24 months to make a thousand units available to housing offices in about ten cities to help the 34,000 households waiting for low-cost housing in Quebec.

At the same time, this initiative from a private foundation makes us realize how scandalous it is that housing offices, which have been the SHQ's main agents for 50 years, must depend on the efforts of others. This is why our federation is urging Minister Duranceau to implement a social housing construction program specific to OHs.

It's Day 1 of the construction of 100 new housing units for seniors in Rimouski

Gabriel Paré-Asatoory ([View profile](#))

Gabriel Paré-Asatoory

[Listen to the article](#) | 4 minutes

Speech synthesis, based on artificial intelligence, can generate a spoken text from a written text.

The Mission Unitaînés project is taking shape: 100 new affordable housing units for low-income seniors are about to see the light of day in Rimouski. A groundbreaking ceremony took place Monday morning.

[The six-storey building will be located on Corneau Street], near the Université du Québec à Rimouski. The first tenants are expected in early 2026.

Mission Unitaînés was created to respond to the [housing] crisis. We work urgently. We work quickly. [...] There are 24 months, all inclusive, between obtaining the grant and delivering the buildings, explains Caroline Sauriol, President and CEO of the organization.

It is a quality building that is efficiently built to meet the needs of low-income seniors.

A quote from Caroline Sauriol, President and CEO of Mission Unitaînés

Once erected, the building, which will be operated by the Office d'habitation Rimouski-Neigette (OHRN), will include 15 studios, 74 three-and-a-half and 11 four-and-a-half. Some apartments will cost \$600 per month, including electricity, heating and internet.

Mission Unitaînés is also committed to donating \$500,000 to the OHRN for its contingency fund. A donation that will allow the project to be financially independent for the next 35 to 50 years, according to the organization's president and CEO.

For the mayor of Rimouski, the start of construction on these housing units is a step in the right direction.

It is not enough, of course, to completely address the housing shortage, but it is really a good start to help us free up apartments, admits Guy Caron.

The elected official estimates that approximately 500 housing units will be started in 2024 in Rimouski and as many next year. This is 200 fewer than what he anticipated in June.

However, 150 more apartments could be added by the end of the year, the mayor points out. The financial framework for the Work Unit for the Implementation of Student Housing (UTILE) project is still not complete.

If the Quebec government can announce an investment, it will mean other units that could be started this year, he assures.

A concept repeated elsewhere in Quebec

Nine other projects, identical to the one in Rimouski, are planned across the province.

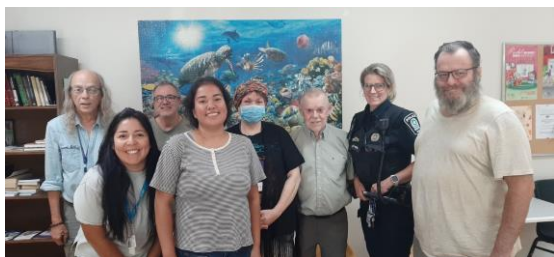
That's our concept. It's the simultaneous construction of identical buildings from one city to another. Sometimes, the exterior cladding, the color of the exterior cladding can vary, but otherwise, the entire interior is identical in the ten buildings that are built at the same time, specifies Caroline Sauriol.

In total, 1,000 housing units will be built by 2026.

With information from Isabelle Damphousse

#### News 4

Community safety in a Montreal low-cost housing project



Submitted by Rédaction on Thu 05/09/2024 - 15:16

The tenants of the Papineau housing project located in the Ville-Marie district of Montreal are regularly visited by homeless people seeking the warmth and quiet of the stairwells to spend the night. The committee members are regularly contacted by their members and want to propose concrete actions to mitigate the negative effects of this cohabitation.

On September 4, the tenants' association and its volunteers met with several stakeholders (the office, the community worker, the FLHLMQ and the SPVM) to discuss homelessness issues. The tenants want to set up a monitoring committee that would patrol the building and possibly neighboring buildings. Several points were also discussed: the entrance doors do not close completely and some cameras are faulty, tenants let non-residents into the building. In addition, meetings with the organization Spectre de rue will take place to raise awareness among tenants and help members of the security committee develop good practices for interventions with homeless people.

We are confident that these meetings as part of the CCR de Montréal community security project will provide an opportunity to build on everyone's strengths in order to find ways together to improve tenants' sense of security.

## News 5

Demonstration on September 15 in Quebec City



Submitted by Rédaction on Wed 04/09/2024 - 16:19

The housing crisis continues to rage. While rents have increased dramatically in recent years, while rental housing is ridiculously rare, the government has unveiled a very disappointing Exit Strategy: 23,300 social and affordable housing units (!) for 560,000 housing units built within 10 years. That's a tiny 4% of social and affordable housing. But how will the 34,000 households waiting on the housing office lists find housing? We

all know someone who is waiting for low-cost housing, so we need a program to build some.

The FLHLMQ feels the urgency to get the CAQ moving and will participate in the FRAPRU Camp for Housing Rights on September 14 and 15. The success of this mobilization and the chances of getting the government to act will depend on the number of people who will march in Quebec City in support of the Camp!

The FLHLMQ will host a kiosk at the camp to talk about the benefits of HLM and the need to build more. Above all, the federation will march on September 15. Because the Key is social housing, we need you behind our banner “I want HLM”.

To reserve a seat on a bus, you can call us at the FLHLMQ or contact your housing committee directly. A list of committees is available on the FRAPRU website, but please note that departures are organized from Montreal, Gatineau, Sherbrooke, Berthier, Trois-Rivières, Rimouski, Beauharnois, Châteauguay, La Prairie and Longueuil.

## News 6

Record demand for social housing in Saguenay



Submitted by Rédaction on Tue 03/09/2024 - 13:36

Article from the newspaper Le Quotidien, September 3, 2024

by Carolyn Labrie

More than 450 names on the list to obtain social housing in Saguenay

The team at the Office municipal d'habitation de Saguenay has never seen such a large number: 454 people are waiting on the list to obtain social housing. "The requests have exploded since the beginning of the summer. Normally, we are between 200 and 300 names," emphasizes the assistant director of the OMH Saguenay, Adam Boivin.

The vast majority of people, around 350, have applied for one of the three boroughs of Saguenay. The hundred others would like to be housed in a municipality in the MRC du Fjord-du-Saguenay. A 3 1/2-type social housing unit is available for a single person or a couple who earns less than \$25,000 per year. The household will then spend 25% of its income on housing. For a family of four or five people who want to live in a 4 1/2, the government sets the maximum income at \$38,000.

When it comes to social housing, it is HLM, specifies Mr. Boivin, but constructions of this type are no longer made in Quebec. From now on, affordable housing is built. "We do not keep a list, but we can imagine that there too, the number is exploding," laments our speaker.

According to the CMHC definition, housing is considered affordable when the household spends less than 30% of its income on it. At the OMH of Saguenay, tenants targeted for this type of apartment must earn between \$25,000 and \$45,000 per year.

"For a 3 1/2 in Saguenay right now, the median rent is \$655, but it's not uncommon to see more around \$1,200. So we're going to rent more around \$700 or \$800."

— Adam Boivin, Assistant Director OMH Saguenay

Which brings us back to people who need social housing. Even at \$700 or \$800 per month, it's too expensive. There's the rent supplement program (PSL) that sets the price at 25% of family income. "The person pays their share and the government absorbs the rest," explains Adam Boivin.

However, the calculation is based on the median price, which puts off many private landlords who currently have no trouble finding tenants with a vacancy rate of 1.3% in



Saguenay. In this context, the deputy director of the OMH is very eager to see the HLM Saint-Dominique, which will be rebuilt after the fire in 2002, back in its real estate portfolio. Delivery is scheduled for 2025.

It is also planned that 24 new affordable housing units will be built and delivered in La Baie in 2025. "We also have the renovation of rooms and student residences. All housing projects help reduce pressure on the market."

In Saguenay-Lac-Saint-Jean, nearly a third of the population is renter.

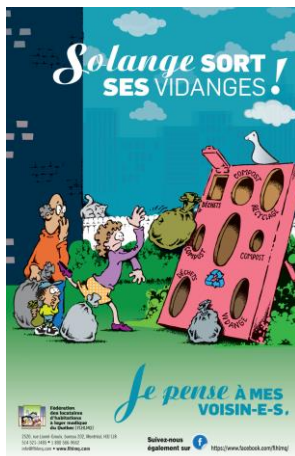
Photo: Journal le Quotidien

See also the report presented on NOOVO info:

[<https://www.noovo.info/video/du-jamais-vu-la-crise-des-logements-sociaux-et-abordables-saccentue-a-saguenay.html>]

## News 7

Solange takes out her garbage!



Submitted by Rédaction on Tue 03/09/2024 - 09:31

The FLHLMQ is launching its fourth humorous poster to promote living together and spark positive and constructive discussions on cohabitation issues. This week: garbage! This poster is available for free download or in paper format at our offices.

In order to have good discussions on this subject, we have also produced a discussion sheet on waste treatment and collection ([\[to download and print it, click here\]](#)).

In many low-cost housing, waste management can become a potential source of conflict between tenants. What could be more unpleasant than having to put up with bad smells, the presence of vermin or the uncleanness of storage areas?

Although it is essential to reduce our waste production to combat pollution, we must admit that over time, what we used to call garbage collection has become quite complex for various reasons:

- The introduction of selective sorting and the recovery of waste (household waste, recycling, compost and bulky items);
- The reduction in the frequency of garbage collection and the different collection times;
- The development of specific places for storage and collection, which are often done according to the needs of cities and waste management companies and not according to the needs of tenants.

These realities bring several changes that can complicate the lives of tenants, such as, for example: the closure of waste chutes, the installation of large-volume bins that are often heavier and less accessible, selective sorting that is difficult to understand and compost that is gradually becoming essential.

What useful role can your association or CCR play?

First, it is important that the office and tenants regularly discuss the efforts that are being made to properly manage residual materials. What actions can be taken to facilitate reduction at source, recycling, reuse and recovery in our social housing? It is not just a matter of deciding where to place garbage bins, but of setting goals and a plan to contribute positively to the fight against pollution.

Second, it is possible to support tenants in their efforts by leading initiatives to raise awareness of the 3Rs: reduction at source, reuse, recycling and recovery. Several associations and CCRs promote recycling, the reuse of clothing, furniture and other household items, and some install composting bins.

Questions to ask yourself:

1. What are our results in terms of waste reduction?
2. What actions would improve our collective performance?
3. How to rally the office and tenants to eco-responsible actions?
4. What physical adjustments can we make to our buildings to facilitate waste collection?

## News 8

A new fast track for developers



Submitted by Rédaction on Fri 08/30/2024 - 12:46

In the August 30 La Presse newspaper, Minister France-Élaine Duranceau announced a fast track for qualified developers who will benefit from administrative relief. The Société d'habitation du Québec (SHQ) will partner with companies or organizations that are solid, that are recognized for their efficiency, that are recognized for being able to deliver quality housing, in quantity, in a short time, within budget, described the Minister responsible for Housing, in a press conference.

Thus, an NPO, the Société de développement Angus, will receive \$193.5 million to develop 677 affordable housing units in Montreal and 324 in Rimouski.

Why aren't the housing offices, which have been the SHQ's main partners for over fifty years and have over 34,000 of the poorest households on their waiting lists, the beneficiaries of this fast track and administrative relief? Why not also grant them hundreds of millions of dollars to build public HLM?

This is unfair to the poorest households because no legislation forces other developers qualified by the SHQ to provide housing at 25% of their income to households on the HLM waiting lists.

This is why our federation is preparing, starting in September, to launch a general mobilization of the 65,000 HLM tenants to obtain a new HLM program for the housing offices.

Photo: La Presse

## News 9

### Floods in Lanaudière



Submitted by Rédaction on Tue 08/27/2024 - 10:54

Unfortunately, several low-cost housing units have been flooded due to the extraordinary rains of the last few weeks. At the FLHLMQ, we are in contact with several tenants in Lanaudière, a region that has been badly affected.

The tenants who had to leave their homes were supported by their office, which relocated them to a motel/hotel. Many are worried about having to pay for the motel or not being able to relocate if their housing requires major work.

However, the SHQ has confirmed that it will not abandon its tenants. They will be housed at the SHQ's expense until they can find alternative housing. The challenge of finding housing for the dozens of tenants concerned is very real. There are no empty low-cost housing units and housing on the private market is rare. Unfortunately, tenants will not have many choices for their relocation.

Such disasters remind us that it is essential to build new HLMs to have a housing stock that allows for a certain mobility and a response to emergencies. To do this, we need options.

Finally, the FLHLMQ supports the offices that will request budgets under the PRHLM to renovate these HLMs and better adapt them to environmental threats.

If you have been a victim of flooding and have questions, do not hesitate to call the FLHLMQ!

Photo: Info Lanaudière

## News 10

### Prefabricated HLM?



Submitted by Rédaction on Tue 08/27/2024 - 10:34

On August 27, the SHQ officially launched a call for qualifications for prefabricated housing companies to submit models of modular buildings. The selected firms will then have the opportunity to build 500 housing units in collaboration with cities that want to host such homes by 2026.

According to the SHQ press release, these prefabricated housing units will be financed under the Canada-Quebec Agreement with the aim of creating 8,000 social and affordable housing units in Quebec.

If the SHQ is serious about achieving this goal, it should ensure that these first 500 modular units are entrusted to housing offices to guarantee their accessibility to the

34,000 households waiting for social housing. This would be a first step towards creating a new social housing program and building real social housing.

Photo: Laprise

## News 11

A strategy that limits the number of future social housing units to 4%



Submitted by Rédaction on Thu 08/22/2024 - 2:08 PM

Minister France-Élaine Duranceau presented her Quebec Housing Strategy to address the housing crisis. The government's target is to increase the number of housing units built each year in Quebec from 45,000 to 56,000 to reach 560,000 new homes in ten years.

This strategy is explained in the following powerpoint presentation:

Document

[Présentation Stratégie vf\_DMS 20240821.pptx]

The killer question! How many of these will be social and affordable housing units? The minister announced 23,300, she hopes over six years, or 3,883 per year. So, at best, 4% of social and affordable housing will be built according to Minister Duranceau's ambitions. Since the current stock is around 10% and is clearly insufficient, the announced strategy aims to reduce the future percentage to 4%.



With such meager objectives to meet the crying needs of tens of thousands of households spending 30, 40 and 50% of their income on housing when they can, it should come as no surprise to see that the strategy contains no new measures and no new budget in favour of social and community housing.

If the announcement of the government strategy is first and foremost a public relations operation for the minister, since it only lists the measures that the government has already taken and that have proven clearly insufficient to counter the disappearance of the low-rent housing stock in Quebec, it also constitutes an obvious bias. Thus, the Minister is once again asking cities to simplify their rules to allow private developers to build as they please and is promising PSLs galore for those who agree to house households in need at a high price. This is at the heart of the Minister's strategy: those who are the cause of the skyrocketing rents on the rental market will, once again, be called upon to profit from it!

For social and community housing, not one more unit but an invitation to form an advisory committee to discuss the means to be put in place one day in the future.

While the National Assembly of Quebec created the Société d'habitation du Québec more than fifty years ago to provide citizens with social and affordable housing, it has proven incapable or handcuffed, in the midst of a housing crisis, to take bold initiatives in this regard.

We will have to find ways to give the SHQ wings again so that it can support housing offices in the development of new HLM. A first step, on September 14 and 15, during the FRAPRU camp and demonstration in Quebec!

## News 12

A radical construction plan in England



Submitted by Rédaction on Wed 08/21/2024 - 11:54

In England, the new Labour government has announced a plan it wants to be "radical" to combat the housing shortage affecting the country.

The Deputy Prime Minister for Housing, Angela Rayner, has promised "the biggest acceleration in social and affordable housing in a generation". She has committed to building 1.5 million new homes over the next 5 years, in particular by setting mandatory targets for cities.

More than 1.2 million families are waiting to obtain social housing and the number of homeless people reached a record last year in London.

If we made a comparison with Quebec, all things considered, this would mean a commitment to build 39,500 new homes per year. The CAQ promised less than 12,000 for the total duration of its four-year mandate, or barely 3,000 per year, ten times less than Angela Rayner.

### News 13

Demonstrate in Quebec City on September 14 and 15



Submitted by Rédaction on Tue 08/20/2024 - 1:30 PM

On September 14 and 15, FRAPRU will hold a Camp in Quebec City and a large demonstration to demand social housing. The FLHLMQ will be there and invites you to participate in large numbers in the demonstration on September 15 in Quebec City. Because unity is strength, let's be many to carry a sign "I want HLM".

While the housing crisis continues to worsen and tenant testimonies multiply, the government is slow to announce a major project for new social housing. We know that more than 34,000 households are waiting on the lists of the provincial offices and that is why we are demanding a program for a new generation of HLM.

The FLHLMQ invites you to participate in the large demonstration on Sunday, September 15. Departures are organized from Montreal, Lanaudière, the South Shore and the Lower St. Lawrence. Call us for more details at 1-800-566-9662 or 514-521-1485. You can also write to us at [info@flhlmq.com](mailto:info@flhlmq.com)

If you are hesitant to participate, click on the image to listen to the testimony of Chantal Daneau, one of the representatives on the FLHLMQ Board of Directors.

[<https://www.youtube.com/shorts/kAfa2229O2Q>]

## Services

<https://flhlmq.com/fr/vie-democratique>

### Democratic life

The FLHLMQ is a voluntary association of some 300 free and independent tenants' associations and CCRs. A great deal of effort goes into ensuring a strong and democratic associative life. In addition to meetings of the federation's Board of Directors, which brings together representatives from all regions of Quebec, there are regular regional meetings to enable exchanges between tenants and/or association Board members.

### Congress

The congress, usually held every June, is a crucial moment in the life of the association. Over 200 delegates come together to exchange views, vote on the federation's major orientations and elect the Board of Directors. Each association and CCR can submit proposals, which are discussed and voted on by the delegates. It is on the basis of the proposals adopted that the work of the federation, and in particular that of the Board and the work team, will be articulated for the coming year.

Each convention also provides an opportunity for exchanges between delegates and key government ministers - municipal affairs, employment and solidarity, Secrétariat aux aînés - or SHQ representatives.

Regional caucuses take advantage of the convention to choose their representatives on the FLHLMQ Board of Directors.

[Activity Report June 16, 2021]

[Activity report to June 30, 2020]

[Conference book June 14-15, 2019]

[Congress booklet June 8-9, 2018]

[Conference book June 9-10, 2017]

[Congress booklet June 10-11, 2016]

[Congress booklet June 5-6, 2015]

[Conference book June 13-14, 2014]

[Conference book June 7-8, 2013]

[Conference book June 14-15, 2012]

[Conference proceedings June 10-11, 2011]

[Conference proceedings June 4-5, 2010]

[Cahier de congrès 13-14 juin 2009]

[Conference book May 16-17, 2008]

[Conference book June 15-16, 2007]

## Our team

<https://flhlmq.com/fr/equipe-de-la-flhlmq>



The FLHLMQ office has four employees:

- Robert Pilon, community organizer - [[robert.pilon@flhlmq.com](mailto:robert.pilon@flhlmq.com)]
- Élisabeth Pham, Administrative Manager - [[elisabeth.pham@flhlmq.com](mailto:elisabeth.pham@flhlmq.com)]

- Patricia Viannay, Coordinator - [[patricia.viannay@flhlmq.com](mailto:patricia.viannay@flhlmq.com)]
- Anik Leroux, Community Organizer - [[anik.leroux@flhlmq.com](mailto:anik.leroux@flhlmq.com)]

## History

<https://flhlmq.com/fr/presentation-de-la-flhlmq>

The 25th anniversary of our federation (history of the FLHLMQ)

To mark its 25th anniversary, the FLHLMQ published a series of short articles on its history in the form of a weekly serial. Thanks to André Giroux for writing these articles.

In Quebec, HLMs really came into being in the 1970s to house citizens evicted from their homes to make way for the major revitalization projects of the time. We can recall the demolitions caused by the passage of Highway 40 through Trois-Rivières, by the construction of the Radio-Canada building in Montreal and Place du Portage on Hull Island, as well as by the closure of villages in the center of Gaspésie. To avoid protests, all displaced persons were invited to come and live in beautiful, brand new HLMs at a very low rent. It was therefore a diversity of populations that made up the first HLMs ensuring a right to housing for all.

In the 1980s, with social policies becoming more stringent, governments in Quebec decided to restrict access to low-cost housing to only the most deprived populations. By amending the regulations on rent setting and the rules for allocating housing, working households were gradually driven out. So much so that from 1978 to 1989, the proportion of tenants declaring work income dropped from 20% to 7%. To hammer another nail into the concept of social housing accessible to all, Brian Mulroney's Conservative government announced in 1993 that the federal government was unilaterally withdrawing from the construction of new low-cost housing. The shortage of social housing in the country had just begun.

It was in this context that the Front d'action populaire en réaménagement urbain (FRAPRU) had the good idea, in 1993, to encourage eight low-cost housing tenant associations to create the Fédération des locataires d'habitations à louer modique du Québec (FLHLMQ). Ironically, the only FRAPRU employee who voted against this project became the FLHLMQ coordinator and has been for 25 years.



From the beginning, the main objective that animated the Federation was democracy. In some offices such as those of Montreal, Quebec City and Trois-Rivières, the creation of tenants' associations was supported while in other cities, they were prohibited. It was therefore necessary to have the right of association of HLM tenants recognized to give them a voice against the managers of the OMH.

Quickly, other issues were added to the Federation's battles so that tenants feel at home in an HLM. As much small battles, on a daily basis, in particular on the right to own pets or simply to choose the color of the paint of one's dwelling, as larger battles to prevent the increase of our rents, obtain budgets for the renovation of our buildings or prevent the privatization of HLM.

Over the next few weeks, we will present the events and issues that have marked the history of the Federation over the past 25 years, in order to take stock of the achievements obtained and what awaits us in the coming years.

### Battles for democracy

As early as 1993, the first challenge that the Fédération des locataires d'habitations à louer modique du Québec (FLHLMQ) was faced with was the need to obtain recognition of the right to have a tenants' association. The theme of the first congress, held in 1995, was "A greater place for tenants". This theme particularly well reflected the spirit of the times.

"We felt that some HLM administrators, fortunately not all but there were several, acted as if the tenants were less than nothing," recalls Robert Pilon, coordinator of the Federation since the beginning. Their management was at best paternalistic, at worst very authoritarian. This reflected the fact that HLM tenants considered themselves failures: failure in employment, in life as a couple, in school, in leisure and in consumption. »

Hence the theme of the first congress to assert that HLM tenants are full citizens and capable of assuming their life in HLM.

The battle for democracy involved the right to be informed, consulted and to form associations. The reality was that in Longueuil, Chicoutimi and Bromont, the leaders

refused to recognize tenant associations. At the time, in practice, the recognition of associations was at the discretion of local leaders, who decided whether they would accept them with the funding and provision of premises that this entailed, tolerate them or reject them.

Some offices, such as the one in Montreal, accepted recreation committees, by building, but did not want them to form groups to negotiate. At the time, this was the most progressive practice. Many offices boasted about not having tenant associations and clearly stated that they did not want one, on the pretext that it would create disruption.

In Bromont, some formidable women tenants, including Isabelle Marrisal who would later become president of the FLHLMQ, had received letters from lawyers stating that they had to leave the following July 1 because they had tried to create an association.

In Longueuil, courageous women fought for seven years to have a tenant association. The OMH refused to recognize it under the leadership of Mayor Claude Gladu.

The Federation obtained its first victory in April 1998, after filing a petition with 30,000 names to obtain recognition of the right of association in low-cost housing and holding the largest demonstration of low-cost housing tenants, more than 700, in front of the National Assembly and the congress of the Regroupement des offices d'habitation du Québec. In June 1998, the SHQ issued a directive asking OMHs to recognize, finance and consult tenant associations. At the time, the president of the Federation, Claude Gelderblom, from Rivière-du-Loup, enthusiastically declared that this gain represented a "true quiet revolution for HLMs". And this, for two reasons:

Giving tenants who wish to do so the chance to be actively involved in the management of their building will improve the quality of services and will contribute to giving a more positive image of public housing, both in the eyes of politicians and the population;

This commitment by tenants gives them the opportunity to revalue themselves in their own eyes, thus reclaiming their dignity

Despite this initial gain, tenants are experiencing the hard way that offices ignore the administrative directive because it does not have the force of law. The FLHLMQ is therefore back on the offensive to have the tenants' right to association included in the Société d'habitation du Québec Act.

In April 2002, the SHQ Act was amended to include two new rights for HLM tenants: the obligation for offices to recognize all associations that comply with the SHQ's directives and the obligation for all offices to create a Residents' Advisory Committee (RAC). According to the president of the Federation at the time, Jean-Marie Doyon of Rock-Forest, "the establishment of advisory committees will give us the chance to change the face of HLM".

These achievements made it possible to create dozens of Residents' Advisory Committees (RACs) throughout Quebec over the next fifteen years. Several RACs are very proud of what they have accomplished since then. However, more than half of the offices have never set up a RAC.

According to Élisabeth Pham, who has worked at the FLHLMQ since 2003, "this shows us that it was much easier to obtain a legislative change than to obtain a real change in attitude on the ground. It's a daily battle. Even today, many active people are afraid of reprisals: fear of losing their housing, of displeasing administrators."

These fears are based on concrete facts: threats of being moved to a smaller place or to a neighborhood that the tenant doesn't like.

The power relationship still exists. In 2011, in a survey by the Société d'habitation du Québec (SHQ), 49% of office directors opposed tenant associations. However, HLM is a world where 70% of tenants are single women, while the managers are still mostly men.

It is therefore always a huge challenge for people excluded from everything to learn to occupy the democratic spaces that are nevertheless the fruit of their struggles.

This is why the Federation remains very present on the ground to support tenants who want to organize.

## The battle for the return of workers to public housing

Since the creation of the Federation in 1993, it was obvious to all residents that public housing had become a very difficult living environment. This is because in the early 1980s, the Quebec government had changed the rules in two ways:

By abolishing the Rogers scale, which established the rent according to a scale of 16% to 25% of the main income in the household, to replace it with a rent established at 25% of the two main incomes, with no ceiling.

By restricting the allocation rules through a weighting system aimed at prioritizing only the poorest, thereby excluding households working even at minimum wage.

As a result, large housing complexes of 200 to 400 housing units had only three or four working households. This created poverty ghettos where it was becoming more difficult to raise a family than in the 1970s and 1980s. A researcher, Paul Morin, coined the term social trap to indicate that it was also becoming more difficult to escape.

In 1993, the Minister of Municipal Affairs at the time, Claude Ryan, wanted to go further by considering all family incomes, including those of children. The outcry was such that it was the mobilization of tenants to maintain the rent of social housing that allowed the Front d'action populaire en réaménagement urbain (FRAPRU) to create the Federation. This battle resulted in a partial gain, namely the setting of a flat rate for young people aged 18 to 24 living with their parents. It is only at the age of 25 that the percentage rises to 25% of their income.

## Two significant gains

In the early 2000s, under the presidency of Isabelle Marissal, from Bromont, the Federation organized several demonstrations and press conferences in several major cities in Quebec to demonstrate that, due to rent policies, it was not advantageous to work for a low wage while remaining in low-cost housing. The Federation obtained from the Minister responsible for Housing, Louise Harel, an amendment to the regulations to

obtain a protected rent. This means that the rent of people who start working will gradually increase, thus allowing these people to remain in low-cost housing longer. Tenants of housing cooperatives and housing owned by non-profit organizations (NPOs) also benefited from this measure. The Federation's objective was to develop a certain diversity in low-cost housing.

It was also with the aim of increasing social diversity that in 2011, after 19 years of tenacious representations, the Federation obtained an amendment to the Regulation on the allocation of low-cost housing to take into account the seniority of the request. It was no longer just the poorest of the poor who had access to low-cost housing. It included people with diverse experiences, thus providing a living environment where it is more pleasant to live.

In 2011, the SHQ promised a study on the impact of this measure on social diversity for 2016. It is still expected in 2018.

#### Two setbacks avoided

When Lucien Bouchard became Premier of Quebec, in the aftermath of the 1995 referendum, he launched the fight for a zero deficit. With this obsession in mind, his government came within a hair's breadth of transferring responsibility for low-cost housing to municipalities, without the corresponding budgets. Which would have been a royal road to their privatization. In Ontario, for example, under the leadership of Mike Harris' common sense revolution, the transfer to municipalities led to the sale of HLMs to the private market. In Quebec, it was the public exit of the Federation, in alliance with FRAPRU, that made the government back down.

Subsequently, Rémi Trudel and the PQ announced the project to reduce the rent to 30% of income in HLMs over five years, at a rate of 1% per year. Through their mobilization, including a petition submitted to all MPs, HLM tenants obtained the rejection of this measure while almost everywhere else in Canada, this proportion has reached 30% for nearly twenty years.

#### The battles for renovations!

When Jean Charest came to power in 2003, the total budget allocated to HLMs was \$50 million per year to renovate and maintain 63,000 HLMs. The first decision of the new Minister responsible for Housing, Jean-Marc Fournier, was to reduce this budget to \$30 million.

There was not a single city, not a single social housing project, where tenants were able to get their old carpets changed or a new kitchen hood, much less the renovation of their 30-year-old kitchen or bathroom. Zero renovations, except for emergencies or the restoration required for relocation. Moreover, the SHQ estimated that the maintenance deficit accumulated for the renovation of all social housing in Quebec was close to \$4 billion.

Under the presidency of Nicole Sirois, from Estrie, the Federation initiated a petition that collected nearly 54,000 signatures. The document calls for the Liberals to increase the amounts allocated to the renovation of social housing to \$100 million per year. One hundred and ten MPs stood up in turn at the National Assembly to read the contents of the petition submitted by the HLM tenant associations in their county. Many MPs from all parties were sympathetic to our cause, but Minister Fournier remained intractable.

The year 2007-2008 saw the most serious global economic crisis since the Great Depression of the 1930s. Canada fared slightly better than other countries thanks to an infrastructure program that the federal government created at the same time.

To everyone's surprise, in December 2007, Jean-Marc Fournier's replacement, Nathalie Normandeau, invited FLHLMQ representatives to a press conference in a low-cost housing project next to our offices in the Little Burgundy district of Montreal. She announced a fifteen-year low-cost housing renovation program: this federal-provincial program, worth \$260 million per year, is indexed. So much so that in 2017, it totaled \$360 million. In ten years, \$3 billion was invested in low-cost housing renovations. According to the SHQ, we are 79% complete in the renovation work on the HLMs.

FLHLMQ coordinator Robert Pilon remembers that in the photo taken with the minister, he couldn't smile because it seemed too good to be true

According to him, it is "a historic victory that guarantees the survival of the HLMs because of the money invested. These are investments proportionally higher than in schools, for example. However, there are still a multitude of local battles to be fought to ensure that this money is spent to meet the real needs of tenants."

## Battles in the National Assembly of Quebec

In 25 years, the FLHLMQ has repeatedly defended the cause of the HLMs before the members of parliament in Quebec City. Here is a brief overview of the sometimes courageous or visionary positions that we have taken following debates at the congress.

March 4, 1995 - Let's take the risk of independence if the project is worth it! FLHLMQ presentation to the Commission des aînées et aînés sur l'avenir du Québec.

December 1, 2000 - Mergers can promote the management and development of social housing for disadvantaged populations in large cities. FLHLMQ presentation to the Commission de l'aménagement du territoire on Bill No. 70.

October 24, 2002 - For modern and transparent management of low-cost housing to encourage tenant participation. FLHLMQ presentation to the Commission sur l'aménagement du territoire on Bill No. 49.

February 6, 2004 - Four major projects to develop low-cost housing in Quebec. Presentation as part of the pre-budget consultations of the Ministère des Finances du Québec.

February 14, 2005 – The health of the population comes well before the health of the pharmaceutical industry. Presentation by the FLHLMQ before the Commission des Affaires sociales.

March 2013 – Work that changes the face of low-cost housing. Presentation by the FLHLMQ to the Quebec Ministry of Finance.

January 20, 2016 – To put an end to the dispersion of resources and offer better services to low-cost housing tenants in Quebec. Presentation by the FLHLMQ to the Minister of Municipal Affairs.

January 2016 - A proposal to reduce poverty in low-cost housing - Transferring maintenance to tenants. Presentation as part of the Solidarity and Social Inclusion public consultation.

2016-2017 – More than 300 tenants participated in the consultation tour organized by MNA Norbert Morin and the SHQ on a new approach to housing intervention in some twenty cities in Quebec.

Each time, it was a rich but demanding experience for the tenants who succeeded one another on the FLHLMQ board of directors to go and speak in the National Assembly with all its decorum.

#### The battle of the referendums

From the first months of its existence, in 1993, the issue of the presence of animals in low-rent housing preoccupied the Fédération des locataires d'habitations à louer modique du Québec (FLHLMQ). At the time, two Longueuil residents, Fleurette Trottier and Denise Blanchard, were fighting in court to keep one of her dog, the other her two cats. After losing before the Régie du logement, Ms. Trottier appealed her case and won before the Court of Québec for technical reasons.

In solidarity with their fight, the Federation asked the Société d'habitation du Québec (SHQ) to force OMHs to allow the presence of pets in low-rent housing. Even though the Association des OMH du Québec (now called the Regroupement des offices d'habitations du Québec) recommended at the time that its members show tolerance, only a few dozen cities, including Montreal and Quebec City, allowed animals.

It would take five years, and many pathetic cases of evicted tenants, including that of Ezzy the cat in Superior Court, for the FLHLMQ in 1998 to persuade the Minister of



Municipal Affairs, Louise Harel, to give the decision-making power to tenants to decide whether or not the presence of animals should be allowed. “The idea of giving tenants the power to hold a referendum on animals appealed to the minister, who was very familiar with the issue of referendums, having experienced two unfortunate ones very closely,” said Robert Pilon, coordinator of the FLHLMQ.

The adoption in 2002 of an amendment to the Act respecting the Société d’habitation du Québec requiring offices to have a Residents’ Advisory Committee (RAC) led the SHQ to amend its Social Housing Management Guide to mandate the RACs to “provide, in collaboration with the office, a secret ballot mechanism to allow tenants to decide on the presence of animals in HLM.” In addition, “if a majority of tenants are in favour of the presence of animals in HLM, the office will not be able to prohibit it in general and will have to issue guidelines to this effect and integrate them into the building regulations (...)”

“The issue of animals is the only issue on which tenants have obtained real decision-making power, but unfortunately it is still little known or sometimes hidden from residents,” emphasizes Robert Pilon. Since 2002, some fifty tenant associations have organized a referendum on animals. The FLHLMQ recommends the following wording for the referendum, to which it suggests voting YES:

Would you agree to

1. that the OMH authorize the presence of animals by requiring that tenants comply with the following conditions: A CAT, ON THE CONDITION THAT IT IS OPERATED, DECLAWS AND KEPT INSIDE THE ACCOMMODATION; or A DOG, ON THE CONDITION THAT IT DOES NOT BARK, IS ALWAYS ON A LEASH OUTSIDE AND THAT THE EXCREMENT IS PICKED UP.

2. that the office intervene firmly against tenants who do not comply with these new rules. Check your choice: YES\_\_\_ NO\_\_\_

To date, more than half of the 443 OMHs, including the one in Longueuil, allow cats or dogs. As you can see, the situation has changed a lot in Longueuil since 1993 regarding the right to own an animal. In many other cities too!

Monik Desjardins joined the Fédération des locataires d'habitations à louer modique du Québec (FLHLMQ) in 1994, a year after the Federation was founded. She then became a member of the board of directors, representing the HLM des Hirondelles, which she had joined in 1989. This was the beginning of a long experience that is still ongoing in 2018.

One of Monik's most memorable experiences was her meeting, in April 1998, with Jean Campeau, then the PQ MNA for Crémazie. Before his election, he had co-chaired the Bélanger-Campeau Commission, which focused on the political and constitutional future of Quebec. He was also Minister of Finance and Revenue (1994–1995) in the Jacques Parizeau government.

During her meeting with Jean Campeau, Monik was acting as spokesperson for the seven tenant associations in the Ahuntsic district, representing 600 households. She gave the MNA a petition with 500 names. The petition asked the government to remain the owner of the low-cost housing rather than transferring it to municipalities, not to increase their rent to 30% of their income as was increasingly being done in English Canada, to encourage low-income working households and to adopt a regulation promoting tenant participation in the management of their buildings. Over the years, the signatories would win their case, thanks to the petition that obtained 50,000 names in Quebec.

“Mr. Campeau is the only MNA who came to join us at the 700-person demonstration that the Federation organized in front of the National Assembly of Quebec,” emphasizes Monik Desjardins.

The following year, at the third congress of the Federation, she became secretary of the organization and vice-president of the Montreal OMH. “I used to think I was just a b.s., but I've gained confidence since I've been in low-cost housing,” she told Josée Boileau, a journalist for the daily newspaper Le Devoir, a few years later.

One of the events that gave Monik confidence was her intervention before the parliamentary committee on the possibility of merging housing offices, which the Federation proposed in 2001.

“The mayor of Sainte-Foy, Andrée Boucher, came before us,” recalls Monik. The coordinator of the Federation, Robert Pilon, suggested that I take inspiration from her. When it was my turn to speak, Louise Harel, then a PQ minister, congratulated me on being the first tenant to sit on the executive committee of an OMH. Mrs. Fatima Houda-Pepin, Liberal MP also congratulated me even though I had disagreements with her. I still remember it, 17 years later.”

A disagreement with the OMH of Montreal, which had refused to follow up on a decision made at a tenants' meeting, led Monik to resign from her elected office.

She returned to the Federation ten years later, in 2012, for at least two days a week, as a volunteer. She is the one who answers the phone and gives you her valuable advice, which is the fruit of her vast experience.

It is thanks to Monik and the two thousand volunteers involved in the HLM tenants' associations in Quebec that the FLHLMQ has existed for 25 years.

## Contact us

<https://flhlmq.com/fr/nous-joindre>

To contact the Quebec Federation of Low-Rent Housing Tenants (FLHLMQ).

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- [Robert Pilon] - Community organizer

- [Patricia Viannay] - Coordinator

- [Élisabeth Pham] - Administrative director

- [Anik Leroux] - Community organizer

## Frequently asked questions (FAQ)

No link

### **How is the FLHLMQ funded?**

- Its funding comes mainly from subsidies from the Government of Quebec and contributions from member associations.

### **How is the FLHLMQ managed?**

- The FLHLMQ is managed by a board of directors of 18 tenants elected for two years at annual conventions, representing the different regions of Quebec.

### **What activities does the FLHLMQ organize?**

- The FLHLMQ organizes annual conventions, regional activities, training sessions, and meetings with political representatives to defend the interests of tenants.

### **Who can become a member?**

- HLM tenant associations, residents' advisory committees (CCR), and organizations involved in HLM whose board of directors is composed of tenants can become members.

### **What are the benefits of becoming a member?**

- Members benefit from support, political representation, training, and the opportunity to participate in the democratic processes of the federation.

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