

COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

Staffing Guide

Which role to add next, what it takes off your managers' desks, and what never leaves them.



STAGE 1

One role

STAGE 2

Two roles

STAGE 3

First full pod

STAGE 4

The whole layer

HOW THIS GUIDE WORKS

Stage by the queue that's breaking, not by the size of the company

Most staffing guides tell you what to hire at a given size. That doesn't work in community association management. Two companies with the same number of associations can have nothing in common: portfolio mix, governing documents, board expectations and your own service model decide where the pressure lands. So this guide stages the build by the queue that is backing up. Each stage opens with the signal that tells you that's where you are. Find the stage that sounds like last Tuesday, and build that one.

THE RULE EVERY STAGE IS BUILT ON

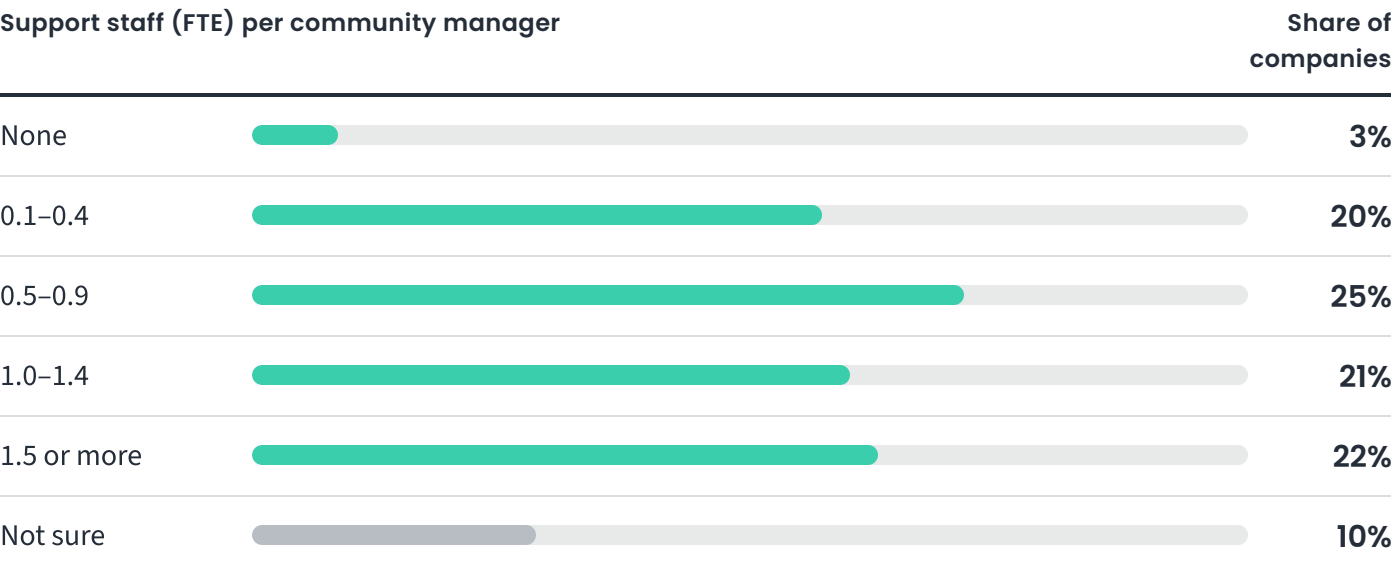
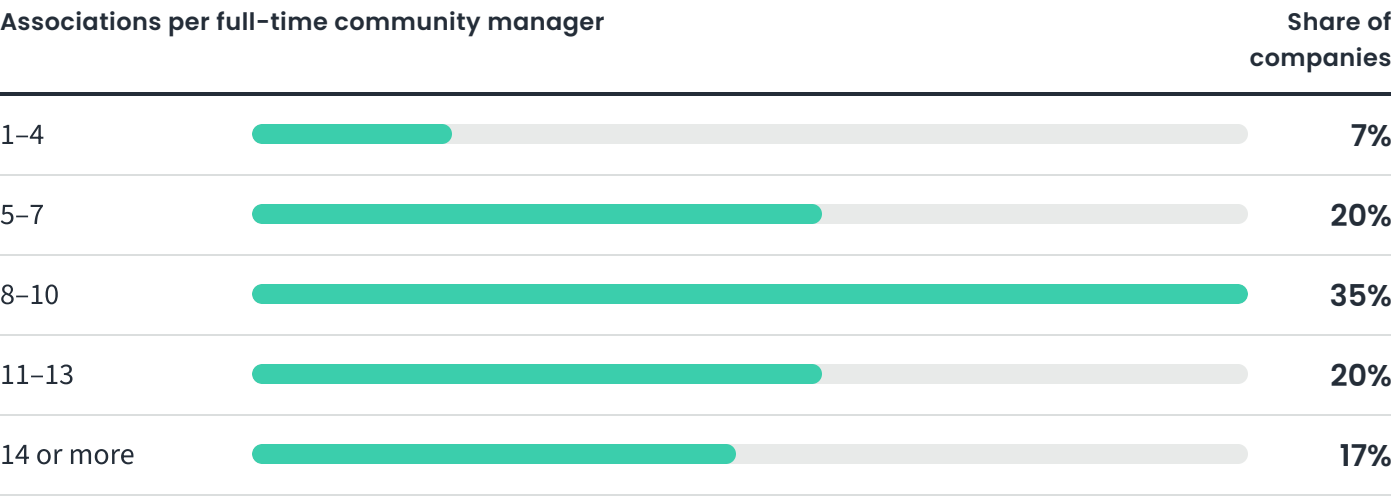
Every stage comes down to one question: who decides?

A support role prepares, tracks, documents, routes and escalates. Judgment, approval, fund release and the board relationship stay with the community manager. Write each role's does-not-own list before you write the job posting.

BENCHMARKS

Where your peers sit, as context only

The Foundation for Community Association Research asked management companies two separate questions in its Community Association Management Company Benchmarking Trends Snap Survey (October 2025, 94 respondents).



The Foundation did not cross-tabulate these. Nothing in this guide suggests a typical combination or an optimal ratio.

THE CHART

The four stages

☒ Role added at this stage ☐ Already in place

STAGE 1

One role

Community Manager

Manager Support
☒
1 role, new

Property & Transactions

Resident & Compliance

Finance

STAGE 2

Two roles, two pods

Community Manager

Manager Support
☐
1 role

Property & Transactions
☒
1 role, new

Resident & Compliance

Finance

STAGE 3

The first full pod

Community Manager

Manager Support
☐
1 role

Property & Transactions
☐
1 role

Resident & Compliance
☒ ☒ ☒
3 roles, new

Finance

STAGE 4

The whole layer

Community Manager

Manager Support
☐ ☒
2 roles, 1 new

Property & Transactions
☐ ☒
2 roles, 1 new

Resident & Compliance
☐ ☐ ☐
3 roles

Finance
☒ ☒ ☒
3 roles, new

Why the Assistant Community Manager is a strong first role: board season is the pressure every community manager feels at once, and packet work is high-volume, low-judgment and fully documentable. Why the Maintenance & Work Order Coordinator is a strong second role: vendor chasing needs no credential, consumes an afternoon, and is the easiest work to measure. Why Stage 3 is where the authority boundary earns its keep: every role in that pod sits next to a judgment call and stops short of it, which produces consistent, documented enforcement.

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STAGE 1

One role

THE SIGNAL

Board packets built the night before. Minutes drafted at 10 p.m. Action items from two meetings ago resurface because nobody owned the follow-up.

ROLES ADDED Manager Support

Assistant Community Manager

➤ WHAT MOVES OFF THE MANAGER'S DESK

Board packet assembly, meeting notice and logistics, minutes drafts, the action log and its chasing, the document archive

🔒 WHAT THE MANAGER KEEPS

What gets said and to whom; final content of the report and minutes; the agenda; interpreting governing documents

YOUR CONSTRAINT

Adoption. Make sure the first thing that moves is the packet, and that the manager sees it arrive finished

HOLD OFF ON

A generalist "help the managers with whatever" hire with no written lists

➔ WHAT BREAKS NEXT

The chase: vendor follow-up, COIs and bids eat the afternoons the first role freed.

2 STAGE 2 Two roles, two pods

THE SIGNAL

The fourth call to the same vendor. Nobody can tell a homeowner where a work order stands without the manager. A COI lapsed and nobody noticed. Bids pulled together the week of the meeting.

ROLES ADDED Property & Transactions

Maintenance & Work Order Coordinator

➤ WHAT MOVES OFF THE MANAGER'S DESK

Work order intake and routing, status chasing, COI tracking, bids against a written scope, after-hours triage

🔒 WHAT THE MANAGER KEEPS

Vendor selection and spend; the scope of work; change orders; declaring an emergency; accepting completed work

YOUR CONSTRAINT

Vendor lists, spending thresholds and escalation rules live in managers' heads. Write them down per association

HOLD OFF ON

A second role in either pod before the first has a documented queue and a scorecard

➔ WHAT BREAKS NEXT

The inbox, plus the two queues with a clock attached: violations and ARC submissions.

3 STAGE 3 The first full pod

THE SIGNAL

Every question, board request and vendor update arrives through one inbox, and the inbox is the bottleneck. Violation notices go out late or inconsistently. ARC submissions stall and a review clock gets missed.

ROLES ADDED Resident & Compliance

Customer Service Representative

Compliance & Violations Coordinator

Architectural Review (ARC) Coordinator

➤ WHAT MOVES OFF THE MANAGER'S DESK

The inbox and phones against a decision tree; violation intake, evidence and the approved notice sequence; ARC intake, completeness and committee packets

🔒 WHAT THE MANAGER KEEPS

Escalations and anything sensitive; whether something is a violation; waivers and cure extensions; approving, denying or conditioning ARC submissions

YOUR CONSTRAINT

Telling the board. Have a one-sentence answer for a board president, and offer the does-not-own list before anyone asks

HOLD OFF ON

A second Resident & Compliance pod before this one runs on documented process

➔ WHAT BREAKS NEXT

The money and the transactions: invoices waiting, month-end scrambles, delinquency found late.

4 STAGE 4 The whole layer

THE SIGNAL

You're growing by acquisition and each new association arrives with work but nobody to do it. Month-end is a cliff. Aging reports show up when someone has time. Resale requests wait on board season.

ROLES ADDED

Administrative Assistant

Association Bookkeeper

Accounts Payable Clerk

Collections & AR Coordinator

Resale & Transfer Coordinator



WHAT MOVES OFF THE MANAGER'S DESK

Coding, reconciliation prep and financial packages; invoice intake and approver chasing; assessment posting, aging and payment plans; resale packages and new owner setup; mailings and records



WHAT THE MANAGER KEEPS

Approval and release of funds; every approval in the invoice chain; waivers, liens and legal referral; certification and signature

YOUR CONSTRAINT

You. Move the standard out of your head into documented process, scorecards and a named owner for each pod

HOLD OFF ON

Any Finance role before preparation, approval and payment release are separated in writing, with read-only bank access



WHAT BREAKS NEXT

Where it lands: new communities arrive on a pod instead of a manager, and when someone leaves, the queue, its history and its rules stay with the company.

STRUCTURE

Four ways to structure the support layer

STRUCTURE	HOW IT WORKS	WHERE IT BREAKS
Roles attached to individual managers	Each manager gets an assistant	Repeats the problem one level down. When the manager leaves, the assistant's knowledge goes with the relationship, and service varies by pairing
A central service desk	All support work runs through one shared team by function	Ownership blurs. Every request is someone's ticket and no one's community, and managers learn to bypass the desk
Mixed and informal	Whoever has room picks up the work	Holds while the company is small and breaks as soon as growth arrives
Pods (BetterWho's pick)	Each pod owns a defined queue across a group of managers, with a named owner and a written authority boundary	Only holds when the process is written down first. A pod built on undocumented habits is a service desk with a better name

BEFORE ANY ROLE GOES REMOTE

Remote work isn't automatically permitted for every role in community association management. Before you place anyone, confirm these client by client:

- State licensing requirements for the work involved
- What each management agreement allows
- Any restrictions the board has set
- Insurance coverage
- Who holds final authority for each decision the role touches

If any of these is unclear for an association, that association's work stays put until it's resolved.

WHAT NEVER CHANGES

What always stays with the community manager

At every stage, in every structure:



What gets said, and to whom



Whether something is a violation



Approving, denying or conditioning an ARC submission



Vendor selection and spend



Waivers, liens and legal referral



Approval and release of funds



Certification and signature



The board relationship

FIRST ROLE

Where to start

Start with the queue your managers complain about first.

IF THIS IS THE LOUDEST QUEUE

START WITH

Board packets, minutes and meeting follow-up	Assistant Community Manager
Vendor chasing, work order status, COIs and bids	Maintenance & Work Order Coordinator
The homeowner inbox and phones	Customer Service Representative
Late or inconsistent violation notices	Compliance & Violations Coordinator
ARC submissions stalling or missing review clocks	Architectural Review (ARC) Coordinator
Invoices waiting on managers, or month-end scrambles	Accounts Payable Clerk or Association Bookkeeper
Delinquency discovered late	Collections & AR Coordinator
Resale turnaround slipping in board season	Resale & Transfer Coordinator
Mailings, records and small tasks landing on people who cost more	Administrative Assistant

If two queues are equally loud, start with the one that needs the least judgment and the most documentation. That role will be productive soonest, and it will show your managers what the layer is for.

THE NEXT STEP

This guide works without us.

If you'd rather design your first role against your managers' actual queues, governing documents and board expectations before you recruit, book a 30-minute consultation with BetterWho. We'll look at which queue is breaking, where the authority boundary sits for your company, and which role to add first.



Book your 30-minute consultation →

betterwho.com/services/staffing/community-associations



Work on your business, not in it.

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