Rules of Procedure

RULES OF PROCEDURE
FOR INTERIM, STATUTORY, AND STANDING COMMITTEES
OPERATING DURING THE INTERIM,
BEGINNING IN 2018

Preamble

The rules provide an orderly procedure for each committee to conduct the business of the committee, protect the minority from unfair treatment and the majority from obstructive tactics, and serve the will of the committee rather than restrain it.

1. A majority of the committee members constitute a quorum, and a majority of the quorum may act on any matter within the scope of the committee's assignment. A committee recommendation on a bill or resolution requires a majority vote of the members present.

2. The rules of procedure in a committee limiting debate are relaxed to allow free discussion and to facilitate the work of the committee. Discussion and debate may be permitted by the chair on an amendment that has not been moved. However, a motion shall be debated after it has received a second. Following the second of a debatable motion, the chair shall first recognize the member making the motion. A member may not make introductory remarks before making a motion. When a motion is made and seconded, it shall be restated by the chair. After a motion is stated by the chair, it may not be withdrawn without consent of the members who made and seconded the motion.

3. The chair of a committee may designate a subcommittee and the scope of the subcommittee's assignment, the members to serve on each subcommittee, the chair of each subcommittee, and the period the subcommittee shall serve.

4. Subject to Article III, Section 15 of the Constitution, all committee or subcommittee meetings are open to the public.

5. Committee agendas shall be posted on the bulletin boards of the House of Representatives and the Senate. The committee agenda shall also be posted on the Legislative Research Council's information system at least five days before the meeting date. A two-thirds majority of the committee members present may bring a matter up for consideration at any time.

6. Final disposition on any matter before a committee requires a majority vote of the committee quorum taken by roll call.

7. Each committee shall report to the Executive Board of Legislative Research Council a summary of its actions during the interim, and the final committee action on each proposed bill or legislative proposal. The chair of a committee shall sign the report of the committee and present the report to the Executive Board. The chair is responsible for the accuracy and propriety of the chair's statements and shall answer any questions pertaining to the report.

8. If the members of a committee cannot agree on its report, the majority and minority may each make a report to the Executive Board of the Legislative Research Council. The member dissenting in whole or in part from the reasoning and conclusions of the majority report may present a statement of the member's reasoning and conclusions to the committee for review. The member's dissenting report must be decorous in language and respectful to the committee. A report that is not decorous or respectful may be rejected by a majority vote of the quorum of committee. The member of a committee proposing a dissenting report may revise the dissenting report and resubmit it to the committee for review. A report that is rejected by the committee may not be presented to the Executive Board.

9. The minutes of all committees shall be available on the Legislative Research Council's information system.

10. The minutes of a committee may contain a summary of testimony received; a reference for each proposal considered; the title or a summary of each proposal's major provisions; the committee's action, if any, on each proposal; a record of how each committee member voted when action was taken; and a list of all persons testifying before the committee on each proposal and the interest each person represents. A committee member may offer an amendment to the minutes, and if approved by a quorum of the committee, may be part of the minutes. Minutes shall be open to the public for inspection.

11. Chairs of standing committees operating and voting as joint committees shall serve as co-chairs of the joint committees.

12. When a question is under debate, only the following motions may be made:
    a. Adjourn;
    b. Recess;
    c. Call the previous question;
    d. Recommend and refer to the Executive Board;
    e. Lay on the table;
    f. Amend;
    g. Appoint a subcommittee;
    h. Approve or amend minutes.

13. A motion to lay on the table which effects a disposition on the merits of any matter before the committee requires vote of a majority of the committee quorum to carry and shall be decided without debate. A committee member may not make introductory remarks before making a motion to lay on the table. No other motion may be made until the members have voted on the motion to lay on the table. A motion to lay on the table may be made to apply either to the main question or to a proposed committee action, and the motion shall clearly state to which it is intended to apply.

14. Whenever any matter is laid on the table or deferred to another day, it requires a majority vote of the quorum to take it from the table or to reconsider the matter which was deferred. The motion to take from the table or to reconsider is debatable.

15. A motion for the previous question shall be decided immediately by a majority of the committee quorum and without debate. The motion shall clearly indicate the question to which it applies. A committee member may not make introductory remarks before making a motion to call the previous question. The effect of adopting a motion to call the previous question is to close debate, to prevent the moving of amendments or other subsidiary motions, and to bring to vote immediately the question to be voted upon. The effect of defeating a motion to call the previous question is to allow continuation of debate on the question before the committee.

16. After a motion to call the previous question has prevailed, it is not in order to move to adjourn, prior to a decision of the question before the committee.

17. When a motion or proposition is under consideration, a motion to amend and a motion to amend that amendment is in order. It is also in order to offer a further amendment as a substitute, but such substitute is not subject to amendment.

18. Any member may call for a division of the question. The chair may divide the question if it contains questions so distinct that, one being taken away, the rest may stand as a separate proposition.

19. The chair of a committee may permit a person to appear from a remote site and give testimony before the committee by electronic audio or video means.

20. If authorized by the Executive Board of the Legislative Research Council, a committee may administer oaths; issue summons to appear; issue a subpoena to compel the attendance of a witness or the production of papers, books, document, accounts, or other things.

Adopted November 13, 2017.