

TOWN OF CONCORD
TEMPORARY POLICY DIRECTIVE AND GUIDELINES FOR PUBLIC MEETINGS AND
PUBLIC HEARINGS CONDUCTED VIA REMOTE PARTICIPATION DUE TO COVID-19
STATE OF EMERGENCY

Original: April 1, 2020

Updated: May 7, 2020

In response to Governor Baker's Executive Order of March 12, 2020, entitled "Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law, G.L. c.30A, §20" ("Open Meeting Order"), Governor Baker's Executive Order of March 23, 2020, entitled "Order Assuring Continued Operations of Essential Services in the Commonwealth, Closing Certain Workplaces, and Prohibiting Gatherings of More than Ten People," and the recent public health emergency declarations by the Governor and the Select Board, and to reduce the possibility of exposure and proliferation of COVID-19, Town offices shall, until further notice, be open for essential Town employees only.

On April 1, 2020, the Town issued Temporary Policy Directive and Guidelines for Public Meeting and Public Hearings Conducted via Remote Participation Due to the COVID-19 State of Emergency. This is an update to the policy directive and guidelines. This updated policy directive and guidelines shall remain in place until suspended or terminated by the Town Manager.

On April 28, 2020, Governor Baker extended the essential services emergency order to May 18 and announced that the stay at home advisory remained in effect and gatherings of 10 or more people remained prohibited until May 18. The Town issued its original directive to provide guidance to active committees/boards/commissions during the pandemic. This updated policy directive provides guidance to the Town's committees/boards/commissions contemplating meeting once the emergency order expires on May 18.

I. GENERAL PROVISIONS

To limit the potential for increased community spread of COVID-19 in Town buildings and to preserve Town resources, boards and committees meetings shall be conducted only virtually using the Town's Zoom account. Each committee chair shall be responsible for requesting zoom services from the Town Manager's Office. Agenda items should continue to be essential business and minimize the need for Town staff support as Town departments remained closed to the public and most employees are working remotely. Boards/Committees should adhere to the following instructions effective immediately and until further notice:

- Executive Committees: Select Board, the Concord Carlisle Regional School District Committee, and the School Committee may continue to meet but agendas should be limited to essential items.
- Regulatory Boards/Committees: the Zoning Board of Appeals, the Planning Board, the Board of Assessors, the Board of Health, the Board of Registrars, the Historic Districts Commission, the Light Board, the Natural Resources Commission, and the

Public Works Commission should meet only if there is pending business that is essential.

- Non-Regulatory Boards and Committees: All other boards and committees should meet only to discuss essential agenda items and, if resources are limited, non-regulatory board/committee meetings may need to be rescheduled to accommodate Executive and Regulatory boards/committees.

II. PUBLIC BODY REMOTE PARTICIPATION GUIDELINES

Minuteman Media Network will simulcast Executive committee meetings when requested. All other meetings will be recorded and posted on the web for viewing or rebroadcast on Channel 9.

Public comment during committee meetings will be recognized only by the chair of the committee/board/commission. For virtual meetings incorporating public participation, the Town will post instructions in the meeting agenda to access and participate remotely in the meeting or meetings in advance on the Town's website. Each meeting attendee is expected to adhere to a standard of respect and courtesy towards the committee members and Town staff. The committee/board/commission chair reserves the right to recognize members of the public during the meeting and, if necessary, mute or remove an attendee, or disable the attendee's audio/visual functionality if an attendee fails to meet the basic meeting standards of courtesy and respect. These standards include but are not limited to waiting to be recognized by the chair, not interrupting another speaker, and not yelling or harassing the chair, committee members, or town staff.

All board and committee members, and relevant staff shall participate in the meeting remotely. At the start of the meeting, all present will announce their presence by name. When speaking, each member will state their name before speaking. During the course of the meeting, all votes will be conducted by roll call.

Participants in the Zoom meeting should use the video option whenever possible. Additionally, they should be in a well-lit room so their face is clearly visible, sitting close enough to the microphone to be heard, and use their real full name in the "name" box. To check if you are close enough to the microphone, please use the "test microphone" feature through Zoom before you enter the meeting.

Other Open Meeting Law requirements including those regarding the posting of meeting notices, keeping of minutes, identifying and maintaining documents used at the meeting, and going into executive session continue to apply.

If an executive session is convened for a valid purpose under the Open Meeting Law, it will be held by web/video conferencing using one meeting number and password and then enter into executive session using a meeting number and password made known only to the members of the public body, and to Town staff and other individuals invited to the executive session by the public body consistent with the purpose of the executive session. At the conclusion of the

executive session, the public body will return to open session to the web/video conferencing bridge for the public meeting to conduct further business or to adjourn.