

Rules of Procedure
House Committee on Judiciary

(In addition to the Rules of Order of the House of Representatives)

I. Meetings; Location & Time

Meetings will be held in House Committee Room 1, unless another room is designated by the chairman. The committee meets on Fridays unless otherwise prescribed in the schedule adopted by the House on the first day of the session.

II. Quorum

If no quorum has been obtained within 30 minutes immediately following the posted time of the meeting, the committee may adjourn until a time set by the chairman on that same legislative day.

III. Committee Decorum

All members and witnesses shall conduct themselves in a decorous manner. Upon commencement of the meeting, no person other than legislators or staff may come on the platform where the committee members are seated. Cell phones or other electronic devices with audible tones must be turned off or muted during a committee meeting. Cell phone use is not allowed during committee. Members should step out of the committee room to place or receive a call.

IV. Authorization to Present Instrument

Any person, other than a co-author of a bill presenting the bill on behalf of the author, shall first obtain and deliver to the committee administrative assistant written authorization containing the date, bill number, presenter's name, and the author's signature.

V. Witness, Testimony, and Documentation

A. No person shall be allowed to address the committee without first signing and delivering to the committee administrative assistant a witness card stating his name, agency, organization or other interest represented, address, and the bill number for which he is appearing.

B. All testimony shall be delivered from the witness table after being recognized by the chairman. All written testimony should be summarized and presented to the committee. Prepared statements, in accordance with House Rule 14.33, may be submitted and filed in the committee records. Any such statement containing statistical information shall cite the source thereof.

C. All handouts for presentation to the committee shall be of sufficient number for distribution to each committee member, two staff members, the committee administrative assistant, and additional copies for members of the public.

VI. Amendments

Lengthy or complicated amendments shall be requested or prepared and delivered to staff at least twenty-four hours in advance of the meeting. If not timely submitted and made available, the chair may refuse the amendments and proceed with the hearing on the instrument or cause the instrument to be voluntarily deferred. Any member of the committee may object to enforcement of this rule by the chair. Staff is authorized to make purely technical corrections to amendments adopted by the committee, subject to review by the chair.

VII. Hearing Procedure

Unless otherwise determined by the chairman, instruments on the agenda will be heard under the following procedure:

1. Determination of the necessity of a fiscal note or technical amendments.
2. The author or his designee will be heard on the instrument. At the author's request, discussion of the bill may include any amendments proposed by the author. Thereafter, committee members may question the author on the legislation.
3. Proponents of the legislation will be heard as nearly as practicable in the order in which they submitted witness cards followed by questions by committee members.
4. Opponents of the legislation will be heard as nearly as practicable in the order in which they submitted witness cards followed by questions by committee members.
5. Amendments submitted by the author will be considered before other amendments. Otherwise, amendments will be considered in the order submitted.
6. Discussion and comments by committee members only.
7. Closing or rebuttal by the author; questions by the committee members at the discretion of the chairman.
8. Motions relative to reporting the instrument.
9. Motions relative to calendar placement or to recommend special order.

VIII. Motions

It is within the discretion of the chairman to entertain motions while testimony is pending.

IX. Voting

A. During a roll call vote, each member must cast his vote when his name is called and the committee administrative assistant must repeat the member's vote as either "yes" or "no".

B. No member may withhold his vote or "pass" unless, in his discretion, he was not present for part of the testimony or committee discussion sufficient to make an informed decision; or he has declared a conflict of interest and recused himself from the proceeding regarding the matter in controversy.

X. Time Limitations

A. At the discretion of the chairman or upon majority vote of its members, the committee may adopt time limitations on members or witnesses, or both.

B. The chair may designate the subject matter of a particular instrument or instruments as complex. The chair, at his discretion, may establish certain total time periods for the hearing of testimony of all proponents and all opponents on instruments containing such complex subject matter.

XI. Committee Rules

The Rules of Order of the House govern all questions of committee procedure. In the absence of an applicable House Rule, these Committee Rules shall govern. All other questions shall be decided by the chairman who may consult Mason's Manual of Legislative Procedure.

Adopted February 20, 2024
Revised April 5, 2024