

Basic Parliamentary Procedure For the Louisiana Developmental Disabilities Council

Parliamentary procedure helps meetings proceed in a courteous, orderly, and effective manner, and encourages engagement of members. The application of procedural rules should be applied only to the degree to ensure order and fairness as being overly strict may result in some members not participating.

Four principles of parliamentary procedure:

- Order; to facilitate action.
- Equality; all members have same voice.
- Majority rules; decisions reached reflect how most members vote.
- Minority opinions are heard.

Presenting and Disposing of Motions

1. Making and Seconding Motions

- In order for the group to discuss and vote on an issue, a member (other than the Presiding Officer) has to make a motion and must receive a 'second' by another member for that issue to be discussed.
 - Exception: Motions (recommendations) made by a committee do not require a second.
- Any member can make a motion directed toward the main motion, called a subsidiary motion. The most common subsidiary motion is to amend the original motion. Other motions may be to call for a vote ("call the question"), limit or extend debate, postpone the decision to a later time or indefinitely, or refer the issue to a committee. Like most motions, subsidiary motions must receive a second by another member to be considered. Discussion and decisions about subsidiary motions are handled before main motions. Once the group votes on a subsidiary motion attention is directed back to the original or amended main motion.

2. Discussion.

Speakers should:

- Wait to be recognized by the chair
- Limit their remarks to the pending issue and avoid redundancies.
 - Personal attacks are unacceptable. Issues, not people, are debated.
- Speak in a courteous tone.

3. Voting

The Presiding Officer should:

- State the motion in its current form.
- Ask if there are any abstentions from voting on the motion (staff notes any abstentions),
- Ask if there is any opposition to the motion.
 - If no member is in opposition, the motion passes.
 - If there is opposition, the Presiding Officer will call for a vote.