

12 session shall not continue beyond the hour of midnight, unless by unanimous consent of the
13 members present. The House shall then return to the pending business; and if no matter was
14 pending, to the next order of business. However, if the vote is in the negative, the Speaker shall
15 forthwith, and without further debate, adjourn or recess the House to a time not earlier than ten
16 o'clock A.M. on the next succeeding calendar day.

17 [Adopted Jan. 12, 1983; Amended Jan. 11, 1985; Jan. 12, 1987; Jan. 14, 1997; May 16,
18 2000.]

19 2. The Speaker shall preserve decorum and order in the House Chamber. While in the House
20 Chamber, members, staff and guests shall be required to dress in proper and appropriate attire
21 and be courteous and professional when using electronic devices.

22 Members, staff and guests shall not take photographs or videos of, or in, the House Chamber
23 during formal or informal sessions unless otherwise permitted by this Rule. Members may take
24 photographs at their assigned seats in the chamber during formal or informal sessions; provided,
25 however that any photographs taken by members during formal or informal sessions shall not
26 include images of any other member, staff or guest without their express written consent.

27 The Speaker may permit photographs or videos during special occasions, which shall include,
28 but shall not be limited to, swearing-in ceremonies and addresses by constitutional officers or
29 other dignitaries.

30 The use of audio-visual aids including, without limitation, videos, computers, posters, displays or
31 charts shall be permitted only upon approval of the Speaker.

32 The Speaker also may speak to points of order in preference to other members; and shall decide
33 all questions of order, subject to an appeal to the House. [2.] (2.) [With regard to appeals, see
34 Rule 77.]

35 [Amended Jan. 11, 1985; Jan. 9, 2003; Jan. 20, 2011; Jan. 29, 2015.]

36 3. The Speaker shall declare all votes, subject to verification as hereinafter provided. [3.] (55.)
37 [See Rules 49 to 53, inclusive.]

38 [Amended Jan. 11, 1985.]

39 4. In all cases the Speaker may vote. [4.] (3.)

40 [Amended Jan. 11, 1985.]

41 4A. The Speaker shall appoint a Speaker pro Tempore. The Speaker pro Tempore shall
42 assist the Speaker in the coordination of policy development and the ceremonial functions of the
43 House and shall perform such duties assigned to him by the Speaker. Upon a vacancy in the
44 office of Speaker, the office of Speaker pro Tempore shall be considered vacant.

45 [Adopted Jan. 26, 2005, Amended, Jan. 23, 2007.]

46 4B. (a) As used in this Rule, the following words shall have the following meanings:-

47 “Earned income”, income derived from salaries, wages, tips and commissions for performing
48 services as an employee of an employer.

49 “Unearned income”, all other income that is not earned income.

50 (b) The Speaker shall not receive earned income for:

- 51 (1) affiliating with or being employed by a firm, partnership, association, corporation or other
52 entity that provides professional services involving a fiduciary relationship;
- 53 (2) permitting his name to be used by such a firm, partnership, association, corporation or other
54 entity;
- 55 (3) receiving compensation for practicing a profession that involves a fiduciary relationship; or
- 56 (4) serving as an officer or member of the board of an association, corporation or other entity.
- 57 (c) The provisions of this rule shall take effect on August 1, 2017.

58 5. The Speaker may appoint a member to perform the duties of the Chair. In the event the
59 Speaker fails to appoint a member to perform the duties of the Chair, the Speaker pro Tempore
60 shall be the Acting Speaker until the Speaker otherwise provides or until a vacancy in the office
61 of Speaker occurs. In the event that the Speaker pro Tempore is absent or is unable to perform
62 the duties of Acting Speaker, the Majority Leader, the Assistant Majority Leader, the Second
63 Assistant Majority Leader or other designee shall be the Acting Speaker. [7.] (4.)

64 [Amended April 18, 1979; Jan. 11, 1985; Jan. 14, 1997; Jan. 26, 2005.]

65 6. In case of a vacancy in the office of Speaker, or in case the Speaker or the member named
66 by said Speaker in accordance with the preceding rule is absent at the hour to which the House
67 stands adjourned, the senior member present shall call the House to order, and shall preside until
68 a Speaker is elected, which shall be the first business in order. [8.] (5.)

69 [Amended Jan. 11, 1985, Amended, Jan. 23, 2007.]

70 7. At the beginning of the first year of the two-year General Court, the Speaker may, unless
71 the House otherwise directs, appoint a Chaplain; and the Speaker shall promptly fill any vacancy
72 in the office of Chaplain. [7A.] (4.)

73 [Amended Jan. 11, 1985; Jan. 29, 2015.]

74 SCHEDULING.

75 7A. There shall be appointed a standing committee on Steering, Policy and Scheduling
76 consisting of eleven members. The committee shall not be subject to the provisions of Rule 17A,
77 but shall be authorized to meet from time to time at the call of the Chair for the purpose of
78 assisting the members of the House of Representatives in identifying the major matters pending
79 before the General Court, the relative urgency and priority for consideration of such matters, and
80 alternative methods of responding to such matters by the General Court. Said committee shall
81 schedule legislative matters in a manner that will provide for an even distribution and orderly
82 consideration of reports of legislative committees on the daily Calendar.

83 The committee on Steering, Policy and Scheduling shall not be authorized to recommend
84 changes or amendments to legislation or recommend that a matter ought to pass or ought not to
85 pass, but shall only report asking to be discharged from further consideration of a bill, and
86 recommending that it be referred or recommitted to another committee; provided, however, that
87 it shall not recommend that a matter be referred or recommitted to the committee on Rules or the
88 committees on Rules of the two branches, acting concurrently, or what date a matter shall be
89 scheduled for consideration by the House and placed in the Orders of the Day. All reports by the
90 committee on petitions filed or approved by the voters of a city or town, or by the mayor and city
91 council, or other legislative body of a city or the town meeting of a town with respect to a law

92 relating to that city or town shall be read and considered by the House at a formal or informal
93 session before being accepted, rejected or otherwise acted upon. Any such petition and any
94 attachment to the petition shall be filed in both paper and electronic format approved by the
95 Clerk.

96 All matters received from the Senate or reported from standing committees of the House and
97 joint standing committees of the General Court shall, unless subject to provisions of any other
98 House or joint rules, be referred to the committee on Steering, Policy and Scheduling. All
99 matters reported by said committee on Steering, Policy and Scheduling recommending that a
100 matter shall be scheduled for consideration by the House shall be placed in the Orders of the Day
101 for the next sitting. Said committee may report on a legislative matter within thirty days
102 following the day the matter was referred. If the committee fails to report a matter within thirty
103 days following the date of its reference, the Clerk shall place the matter on the Calendar of the
104 House as if it had been scheduled for consideration by said committee on Steering, Policy and
105 Scheduling.

106 [Adopted Jan. 14, 1997; Amended Jan. 26, 1999; Jan. 24, 2001; Jan. 9, 2003; Jan. 26, 2005.]

107 7B. The committee on Rules shall be authorized to originate and report special orders for the
108 scheduling and consideration of legislation on the floor of the House. Said committee shall not
109 be subject to the notification provisions contained in Rule 17A but may hold public hearings and
110 shall accept testimony only from the members of the House. A majority of the members
111 appointed to the committee shall constitute a quorum. When reported, such orders may be
112 amended by a two-thirds vote of the members present and voting, and shall be subject to
113 approval by a majority of the members of the House present and voting. Debate on the question

114 on adoption of such orders shall be limited to one hour. No orders adopted pursuant to this
115 paragraph shall limit the powers of the Speaker as provided in Rules 1 to 6, inclusive. Such
116 orders shall not be subject to reconsideration.

117 [Adopted Jan. 14, 1997; Amended Jan. 24, 2001; Feb. 11, 2009.]

118 7C. The committee on Rules may consider and make recommendations designed to improve
119 and expedite the business and procedures of the House and its committees, and to recommend to
120 the House any amendments to the Rules deemed necessary; provided that a majority of the
121 members of the House present and voting shall be required to approve such recommendations.

122 The committee shall be privileged to report at any time.

123 [Adopted Jan. 14, 1997.]

124 7D. The Speaker shall, in consultation with the committee on Rules and the committee on
125 Steering, Policy and Scheduling, establish a committee scheduling system that would minimize
126 to the greatest extent possible scheduling conflicts for members of committees.

127 The Speaker shall determine a schedule for the House for each week relative to formal and
128 informal sessions and shall make such schedule available to the members by Thursday of the
129 preceding week; provided, however, that the Speaker may make, notwithstanding the provisions
130 of Rule 7A, changes in the schedules to facilitate the business of the House in an efficient and
131 timely fashion. The Speaker shall communicate notice of any such scheduling change to the
132 members in writing or by way of electronic mail as soon as practicable, and whenever possible,
133 the Speaker shall provide such notice not less than twenty-four hours before the event so
134 rescheduled is set to commence.

135 [Adopted Jan. 14, 1997; January 9, 2003.]

136 MONITORS.

137 8. Two monitors shall be appointed by the Speaker for each division of the House, whose
138 duty it shall be to see to the due observance of the rules, and, on request of the Speaker, to return
139 the number of votes and members in their respective divisions. [9.]

140 9. If a member transgresses any of the rules after being notified thereof by a monitor, it shall
141 be the duty of such monitor to report the case to the House.

142 It shall be the duty of a monitor to report his or her knowledge of the occurrence of a member
143 voting for another member, in his or her division of the House, to the Speaker of the House and
144 to the Minority Leader. [10.] [See Rules 16 and 16A.]

145 [Amended Jan. 9, 1991; May 5, 1993; Feb. 11, 2009.]

146 9A. There shall be established a Floor Division Committee for each of the four divisions of
147 the House. The Speaker shall appoint a Floor Division chairperson for each of the four divisions.
148 Said committee shall consist of the members assigned to the respective divisions.

149 In order to create a continuous flow of debate, each chairperson shall be responsible for
150 reviewing the daily Calendar and providing advance notice to committee members in the
151 respective divisions of all matters scheduled for consideration in the Orders of the Day. Said
152 committee chairpersons shall provide information to members of their committees on pending
153 legislation and other matters of business before the House.

154 In addition to the legislative duties, chairpersons shall oversee the physical appearance of the
155 Chamber and the various areas under the jurisdiction of the House of Representatives. Said

156 chairpersons shall be authorized to act as a committee and may meet at any time at the request of
157 at least two chairpersons. Said chairpersons, as a committee, shall be authorized to meet with the
158 appropriate agencies and historical commissions of the Commonwealth for the purpose of
159 requesting expeditious appraisals and necessary repairs and renovations to the interior and
160 exterior of the State House. The committee of chairpersons shall report directly to the Speaker
161 the results of all consultations.

162 [Adopted Jan. 14, 1997.]

163 CLERK.

164 10. The Clerk shall keep the Journal of the House. The Clerk shall enter therein a record of
165 each day's proceedings and, whenever practicable, submit it to the Speaker and the Minority
166 Leader before the hour fixed for the next sitting, and shall cause the same to be available daily in
167 a format to be determined by the Clerk; and provided further that a copy of said Journal shall
168 also be made available to each member of the House. Any objection to the Journal shall be made
169 before the House proceeds to the consideration of the Orders of the Day. [11.] (6.)

170 [Amended Jan. 12, 1981; Jan 11, 1985; Jan. 17, 1995; Jan. 9, 2003.]

171 10A. The Clerk shall be the official parliamentarian of the House of Representatives.

172 [Adopted Jan. 9, 1991.]

173 10B. The Clerk shall be the official keeper of records of the House of Representatives for
174 legislative records that remain in the office of said Clerk at the end of each biennial session, and
175 until such time as said records are transferred to the State Archives or destroyed in accordance
176 with law. [Adopted Jan. 29, 2015.]

177 11. Every question of order with the decision thereof shall be entered at large in the Journal,
178 and shall be noted in an appendix, which shall also contain the rules of the House and of the two
179 branches. [12.] (6.)

180 12. The Clerk shall prepare and make available on each day of formal session a Calendar of
181 matters in order for consideration and such other memoranda as the House or the Speaker may
182 direct. The Clerk shall prepare a Calendar on which shall appear any question on passage of a
183 bill or resolve notwithstanding the objections of His Excellency the Governor which may be
184 considered forthwith at the direction of the House or Speaker.

185 When, in the determination of the Clerk, a volume of matters exists for the next legislative
186 day, the Clerk shall be authorized to prepare and cause to be made available an advance calendar
187 of the matters in order of consideration for the next legislative day and such other memoranda as
188 the House or Speaker may direct. The Clerk may indicate on the advance calendar that the
189 matters contained therein are subject to change.

190 The Clerk shall be authorized to dispense with preparing and making available a Calendar for
191 designated formal sessions of the House only after two-thirds of the members present and voting
192 consent thereto on a recorded yea and nay vote. Debate on this question shall be limited to fifteen
193 minutes, no member shall speak more than three minutes, and such question shall not be subject
194 to reconsideration.

195 The Clerk shall dispense with preparing and making available a Calendar for designated
196 Informal Sessions of the House.

197 As soon as practicable whenever the Clerk prepares a Calendar or advance Calendar under
198 this rule, he also shall cause a true copy thereof to be posted on the Legislative Web Page that is

199 generally available to all members and their staff, and reasonably promptly thereafter he shall
200 cause the members and their staff to be notified of the same by way of electronic mail. [13.] (7.)

201 [Amended Jan. 12, 1983; Jan. 11, 1985; Jan. 12, 1987; May 5, 1993; Jan. 17, 1995; Jan. 24,
202 2001; Jan. 9, 2003; Jan. 26, 2005, Jan. 23, 2007.]

203 13. Any objection to the Calendar shall be made and disposed of before the House proceeds to
204 the consideration of the Orders of the Day. [14.]

205 13A. The Clerk shall make available to all members electronically and, to the public via the
206 Internet, the text of all bills introduced and admitted for consideration in the House.

207 [Adopted, Feb. 11, 2009.]

208 MEMBERS.

209 14. No member shall stand up, to the inconvenience of others, while a member is speaking; or
210 be involved in disturbing conversation while another member is speaking in debate; or pass
211 unnecessarily between the Speaker of the House and the member speaking; or stand in the
212 passages, or in the area in front of the Chair; or stand at the Clerk's desk while a roll call is in
213 progress. [16.] [Amended Jan. 12, 1987; Jan. 9, 1989; Jan. 26, 1999.]

214 14A. [Adopted Feb. 11, 2009; Omitted Jan. 29, 2015.]

215 15. When it appears to the Chair that the presence of a quorum is endangered, the Chair shall
216 order the doors closed. If a quorum is doubted the Chair shall order the doors closed and
217 thereafter no member shall enter or leave the House until an initial determination has been made
218 as to the presence of a quorum or lack thereof; and thereafter, provided that no quorum is

219 present, no member shall leave the House unless by permission of the Chair , but members shall
220 be admitted, at any time.

221 Upon the doubting of a quorum and after ascertaining that a quorum is not present, the
222 Speaker may order a recorded attendance roll call to be taken by use of the electronic roll call
223 system.

224 Said roll call, if ordered, shall be taken at a time determined by the Speaker.

225 Members answering a quorum call shall vote “YES” on the roll call system. [17.] (11.)

226 [Amended Jan. 12, 1981; Feb. 22, 1982; Jan. 12, 1983; Jan. 12, 1987; Jan. 9, 1991.]

227 ETHICS.

228 16. There shall be appointed a committee on Ethics as authorized by Rule 17. The committee
229 shall consist of 11 members, 7 of whom shall be appointed by the Speaker, 4 of whom shall be
230 appointed by the Minority Leader.

231 A member appointed to the committee shall not be considered to be a member of the committee
232 subsequent to the declaration of candidacy for any other state or federal elective office.

233 The committee shall investigate and evaluate, at the direction of the Speaker, by a sworn written
234 complaint filed and delivered by a member, officer or employee to the chairman, or by a majority
235 vote of the members appointed to the Ethics committee, any matters relative to alleged violations
236 of Rule 16A by a member, officer or employee.

237 Upon the receipt of said sworn written complaint, at the direction of the Speaker or by a
238 majority vote of the members appointed to the Ethics committee, the committee shall notify any

239 person named of the nature of the alleged violation and a list of prospective witnesses, and also
240 shall notify said person of the final disposition and the recommendations, if any, of the
241 committee.

242 Any member, officer, or employee of the House named relative to an alleged violation shall
243 be afforded the opportunity to appear before the committee on Ethics with counsel.

244 All proceedings including the filing of the initial complaint shall be considered confidential
245 information.

246 If the alleged violation received in the manner described above is deemed to have merit by a
247 majority vote of the members appointed to the committee, the committee shall file a report with
248 the Clerk of the House. Said report shall be a public document. The committee shall not disclose
249 any allegation deemed to be frivolous or without merit.

250 If a majority appointed finds that any member, officer, or employee of the House has violated
251 any provision of Rule 16A, a majority appointed may, in the case of a member, recommend a
252 reprimand, censure, removal from a chairmanship or other position of authority, or expulsion;
253 and in the case of an officer or employee, a majority appointed may recommend a reprimand,
254 suspension, or removal from employment.

255 Should such an alleged violation be filed with the committee regarding a member or members
256 of the House Ethics committee, said member or members shall not participate in the committee
257 deliberations on said alleged violation.

258 Any member, officer, or employee of the House may request from the House committee on
259 Ethics or from the Legal Counsel to the House appointed pursuant to section 51 of chapter 3 of

260 the General Laws a confidential advisory opinion on the requirements of chapters 268A and
261 268B of the General Laws as well as an opinion on any other general or special law, rule or
262 regulation applicable to their official position or concerning any contemplated personal action
263 which may conflict with their official position. The committee on Ethics or the Legal Counsel to
264 the House shall issue confidential advisory opinions and clarification in response to said written
265 request.

266 No member, officer or employee of the House shall be penalized in any manner for having
267 acted within the guidelines of an advisory opinion from the House committee on Ethics or from
268 the Legal Counsel to the House appointed pursuant to section 51 of chapter 3 of the General
269 Laws, provided that all pertinent facts are stated in the request for an advisory opinion.

270 An opinion from the House committee on Ethics or from the Legal Counsel to the House
271 appointed pursuant to section 51 of chapter 3 of the General Laws shall be a defense in any
272 proceeding arising from said opinion or advice unless material facts were omitted or misstated by
273 the person in the request of the opinion.

274 The chairman of the Ethics committee may convene the committee at any time.

275 The chairman shall also convene the committee at the written request of at least 5 members of
276 the committee.

277 The Committee may, upon the written and signed report of two-thirds of the members of the
278 committee, file a special report containing legislation without said legislation being founded
279 upon petition which shall be referred under the provisions of Rule 24 and consistent with the
280 provisions of Joint Rule 13, to the appropriate joint standing committee. Any special report
281 containing legislation filed pursuant to this paragraph shall be germane to subject matters

282 regularly considered by the committee. The committee shall not include in any such special
283 report a bill that would have a fiscal impact as described in Rule 33.

284 Upon convening of the first annual session of the General Court and after the adoption of
285 rules, all members, officers and employees of the House shall be provided with a current copy of
286 the Code of Ethics contained in Rule 16A. [19.] (12A.)

287 [Amended Jan. 12, 1987; May 5, 1993; Jan. 17, 1995; Mar. 6, 1995; Jan. 14, 1997; Jan. 20,
288 2011; Feb. 11, 2009; Jan. 29, 2015.]

289 **CODE OF ETHICS.**

290 16A. (1.) While members, officers and employees should not be denied those opportunities
291 available to all other citizens to acquire and retain private, economic and other interests;
292 members, officers, and employees should exercise prudence in any and all such endeavors and
293 make every reasonable effort to avoid transactions, activities, or obligations, which are in
294 substantial conflict with or will substantially impair their independence of judgment.

295 (2.) No member, officer or employee shall solicit or accept any compensation or political
296 contribution other than that provided for by law for the performance of official legislative duties.

297 (3.) No member, officer or employee shall serve as a legislative agent as defined in Chapter 3
298 of the General Laws regarding any legislation before the General Court.

299 (4.) No member, officer or employee shall receive any compensation or permit any
300 compensation to accrue to his or her beneficial interest by virtue of influence improperly exerted
301 from his or her official position in the House.

302 (5.) No member, officer or employee shall accept employment or engage in any business or
303 professional activity, which will require the disclosure of confidential information gained in the
304 course of, and by reason of, his or her official position.

305 (6.) No member, officer or employee shall willfully and knowingly disclose or use
306 confidential information gained in the course of his or her official position to further his or her
307 own economic interest or that of any other person.

308 (7.) Except as provided in Rule 49, no member shall cast a vote for any other member, nor
309 shall any officer or employee vote for any member, except that the Clerk or an assistant Clerk
310 may record a vote for a member who votes late under the provisions of Rule 52, or is prohibited
311 from voting from his desk due to a malfunction of the electronic roll call voting system; provided
312 the Clerk's action shall not be construed as voting for said member.

313 (8.) No member shall use profane, insulting, or abusive language in the course of public
314 debate in the House Chamber or in testimony before any committee of the General Court.

315 (9.) No member, officer or employee shall employ anyone from public funds who does not
316 perform tasks which contribute substantially to the work of the House and which are
317 commensurate with the compensation received; and no officer or full-time employee of the
318 House shall engage in any outside business activity during regular business hours, whether the
319 House is in session or not. All employees of the House are assumed to be full-time unless their
320 personnel record indicates otherwise.

321 (10.) No member, officer or employee shall accept or solicit compensation for non-legislative
322 services which is in excess of the usual and customary value of such services.

323 (11.) No member, officer or employee shall accept or solicit an honorarium for a speech,
324 writing for publication, or other activity from any person, organization or enterprise having a
325 direct interest in legislation or matters before any agency, authority, board or commission of the
326 Commonwealth which is in excess of the usual and customary value of such services.

327 (12.) No member, officer or employee shall knowingly accept any gifts from any legislative
328 or executive agent as prohibited by law. No member, officer or employee shall accept any gift
329 from any person or entity having a direct interest in legislation before the General Court as
330 prohibited by law. (For the purposes of this paragraph, the terms “gift” and “person” shall be the
331 same as their definitions in section 1 of chapter 268B of the General Laws).

332 (13.) No member shall convert campaign funds to personal use in excess of reimbursements
333 for legitimate and verifiable campaign expenditures. Members shall consider all proceeds from
334 testimonial dinners and other fundraising activities as campaign funds.

335 ((14.) No member shall serve on any committee or vote on any question in which his/her
336 private right is immediately concerned, distinct from the public interest. [19.]

337 (15.) No member, officer or employee shall violate the confidentiality of any proceeding
338 before the Ethics committee. [19A.]

339 [Amended Jan. 12, 1981; May 5, 1993; Jan. 24, 2001; Feb. 11, 2009; Jan. 29, 2015.]

340 16B. The Committee on Personnel and Administration shall develop and conduct an ethics
341 law training program for every member, officer and employee of the House; provided further,
342 that said training program shall include, without limitation, a review of the requirements and
343 prohibitions of chapter 268A and chapter 268B of the General Laws, and the regulations of the

344 State Ethics Commission, as they apply to legislators and legislative staff; and provided further,
345 that said training program shall be offered no later than July 1 of the first biennial session of the
346 General Court and shall be mandatory for all members, officers and employees.

347 [Adopted Jan. 9, 2003, Amended Feb. 11, 2009; Jan 20, 2011.]

348 16C. Bills involving lobbyists' reporting laws, and laws pertaining to the ethical conduct of
349 public officials shall, after their first reading, be referred to the committee on Ethics, for report
350 on their relation to the ethics laws of the Commonwealth. No new provisions shall be added to
351 such measures by the committee, unless directly pertaining to ethics. [Adopted Feb. 11, 2009.]

352 COMMITTEES.

353 17. At the beginning of the first year of the two year General Court, standing committees
354 shall be appointed as follows:

355 A committee on Rules;

356 (to consist of 15 members).

357 A committee on Ways and Means;

358 (to consist of 35 members).

359 A committee on Bills in the Third Reading;

360 (to consist of 3 members).

361 A committee of each Floor Division;

362 (to consist of the members of each division).

363 A committee on Ethics;

364 (to consist of 11 members).

365 A committee on Personnel and Administration;

366 (to consist of 13 members).

367 A committee on Post Audit and Oversight;

368 (to consist of 11 members).

369 A committee on Steering, Policy and Scheduling;

370 (to consist of 11 members).

371 A committee on Bonding, Capital Expenditures and State Assets;

372 (to consist of 11 members).

373 A committee on Global Warming and Climate Change;

374 (to consist of 11 members).

375 A committee on Redistricting;

376 (to consist of 11 members).

377 A committee on Technology and Intergovernmental Affairs;

378 (to consist of 11 members).

379 Committee meetings, insofar as practicable, shall not be scheduled in conflict with formal

380 sessions of the House of Representatives. [20.] (12, 12A, 12B.)

381

382 [Amended March 6, 1979; Sept. 16, 1981; Jan. 11, 1985; Jan. 12, 1987; May 5, 1993; Oct. 6,
383 1993; May 23, 1996; Jan. 14, 1997; Jul. 17, 2003; Jan. 26, 2005, Feb. 11, 2009; Jan. 29, 2015.]

384 17A. (a) For the purposes of this rule, the following terms shall, unless the context clearly
385 requires otherwise, have the following meanings:

386 “Deliberation”, a verbal exchange between a quorum of members of a committee attempting
387 to arrive at a decision on any public business within its jurisdiction.

388 “Emergency”, a sudden generally unexpected occurrence or set of circumstances demanding
389 immediate action.

390 “Executive conference”, any meeting or part of a meeting of a committee which is closed to
391 certain persons for deliberation on certain matters.

392 “Executive session”, any meeting or part of a meeting of a committee wherein the committee
393 is voting on legislation and where public participation is limited to observance.

394 “Meeting”, any corporal convening and deliberation of a committee for which a quorum is
395 required in order to make a decision at which any public policy matter over which the committee
396 has supervision, control, jurisdiction or advisory power is discussed or considered; provided,
397 however, that “meeting” shall not include an on-site visitation or inspection of any project or
398 program.

399 “Quorum”, a simple majority of a committee unless otherwise defined by constitution, rule or
400 law applicable to such committee; provided further, that a quorum shall be presumed to be
401 present unless otherwise doubted.

402 (b) All meetings, except executive conferences, of House standing and special committees,
403 shall be open to the public and any person shall be permitted to attend any meeting except as
404 otherwise provided pursuant to this rule or Rule 7A.

405 No quorum of a committee shall meet in private for the purpose of deliberation except as
406 provided pursuant to this rule.

407 No executive session shall be held until: (i) the committee has first convened in an open
408 session for which notice has been given; (ii) the presiding officer has stated the authorized
409 purpose of the executive session; (iii) a majority of the members of the committee present have
410 voted to go into executive session and the vote of each member has been recorded on a roll call
411 vote and entered into the minutes: and (iv) the presiding officer has stated before the executive
412 session if the committee will reconvene after the executive session.

413 (c) Executive conferences shall be held only for the following purposes: (i) to discuss the
414 reputation, character, physical condition or mental health rather than the professional
415 competence of a member, officer or employee;

416 (ii) to consider the discipline or dismissal of, or to hear complaints or charges brought against
417 a member, officer or employee; (iii) to discuss strategy with respect to litigation if an executive
418 session or other open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the legal position of the
419 committee; or (iv) to consider the purchase, exchange, lease or value of real property, if such
420 discussions may have a detrimental effect on the negotiating position of the Commonwealth or a
421 person, firm or corporation.

422 A member, officer or employee subject to an executive conference pursuant to clause (i) or
423 clause (ii) shall be notified in writing no less than 48 hours prior to the proposed executive

424 conference; provided, however, that upon agreement of the parties involved, the notification
425 requirements of clause (i) and clause (ii) may be waived. Upon request of the member, officer or
426 employee subject to an executive conference pursuant to clause (i) or clause (ii) the executive
427 conference shall be open to the public.

428 A member, officer or employee subject to an executive conference pursuant to clause (i) or
429 clause (ii) shall have the right to: (a) be present at such executive conference during discussions
430 or considerations which involve that member, officer or employee; (b) have counsel or a
431 representative of his/her own choosing present and attending for the purpose of advising said
432 member, officer or employee; provided, however, that said counsel or representative shall not
433 actively participate in the executive conference; and (c) to speak on his/her own behalf to the
434 committee assembled in executive conference.

435 (d) This rule shall not apply to any chance meeting or social meeting at which matters relating
436 to official business are discussed so long as no final agreement is reached. No chance meeting or
437 social meeting shall be used in circumvention of the spirit or requirements of this section to
438 discuss or act upon a matter over which the committee has supervision, control, jurisdiction, or
439 advisory power.

440 (e) Except pursuant to an emergency, a notice and agenda of every meeting of a committee
441 subject to this rule shall be filed with the Clerk of the House, publicly posted by the Clerk on the
442 bulletin board outside the Clerk's Office and in such other places as are designated in advance
443 for such purpose by said Clerk, made available to all members electronically and made available
444 to the public via the Internet at least forty-eight hours, including Saturdays, but not Sundays and
445 legal holidays, prior to the time of such meeting and a list of the bills, petitions, and resolutions

446 to be considered for a vote or other action by the committee. The notice shall include the date,
447 time and place of such meeting. Such filing and posting shall be the responsibility of the
448 committee scheduling such meeting. The notice and posting requirements shall not apply to
449 executive conferences held pursuant to clause (i) or clause (ii) of part (c) of this rule unless the
450 member, officer or employee subject to the executive conference requests that the executive
451 conference be open to the public.

452 (f) A committee shall maintain accurate records of its meetings and hearings setting forth the
453 date, time and place thereof, and recording any action taken at each meeting, hearing, executive
454 conference or executive session. All votes requested to be taken in executive sessions shall be
455 recorded roll call votes and shall become a part of the record of said executive sessions. The
456 record of each meeting shall become a public record and be available to the public; provided,
457 however, that the records of any executive conference shall remain secret as long as publication
458 may defeat the lawful purposes of the executive conference.

459 (g) Upon prior notification and approval of the chair, a meeting of a committee may be
460 recorded by a person in attendance by means of a recorder or any other means of audio/visual
461 reproduction; provided, however, that said recording shall not interfere with the conduct of the
462 meeting. Executive conferences conducted pursuant to clause (i) or clause (ii) of part (c) of this
463 rule shall not be recorded unless upon the request of the member, officer or employee who is
464 subject to said executive conference, and then only at such member's, officer's or employee's
465 expense. Executive conferences conducted pursuant to clause (iii) or (iv) of part (c) of this rule
466 may be recorded at the discretion of the chair.

467 (h) Copies of all redrafted bills that are to be voted on at an executive session by the House
468 Ways and Means Committee shall be available to all members of the committee electronically in
469 the form they will be considered no less than twenty-four hours prior to their consideration;
470 provided, however, that said committee may vote on a bill that has not been available for said
471 period of time by vote of a majority of the committee members present.

472 [Adopted Nov. 17, 1983; Amended Jan. 12, 1987; Jan. 9, 1991; May 5, 1993; Jan. 17, 1995;
473 Jan. 14, 1997; Jan. 9, 2003, Jan. 23, 2007, Feb. 11, 2009.]

474 17B. Whenever any member of a House committee present at the committee meeting so
475 requests, the vote to give any legislation a favorable or adverse report shall be a recorded vote of
476 the full committee. Such votes shall be recorded on appropriate forms that show all votes for and
477 against the particular committee action; provided that votes may also be recorded in LAWS. The
478 record of all such roll calls shall be kept in the offices of the committee and shall be posted on
479 the website of the General Court within 48 hours of the vote for public inspection.

480 No report of a House committee on any legislation shall be final until those members of the
481 committee present and voting with the majority have been given the opportunity to sign such
482 appropriate forms before the report is made to the House. No signature shall be valid unless the
483 forms to which the signatures are affixed include the substantially complete text of the legislation
484 being reported.

485 [Adopted Nov. 17, 1983; Amended Jan. 12, 1987, Amended Jan. 29, 2015.]

486 17C. There shall be a committee on Personnel and Administration on the part of the House
487 consisting of thirteen members. Said committee shall be responsible for the allocation of office

488 space as equitably as possible among the various members and joint and standing committees on
489 the part of the House and their respective staff.

490 The committee shall allocate space among the various committees on the part of the House
491 taking into account the work load, duties and responsibilities and size of staff of each.

492 The Speaker may make temporary office assignments in accordance with the foregoing
493 principles.

494 The committee on Personnel and Administration may from time to time make changes in the
495 assignment of office space for committees and the various staffs in accordance with the
496 established standards.

497 Said committee shall establish the staffing levels and positions for each joint and standing
498 committee of the House together with a classification plan for all employees of the House of
499 Representatives.

500 For each person who is employed or is to be employed by a joint or standing committee on
501 the part of the House, each committee chairman shall nominate each such person and the House
502 members of the committee by a majority vote shall vote on whether to approve each said
503 nominee. The House members of the committee shall approve such persons whose character and
504 qualifications are acceptable to the majority of the House members of the committee and are in
505 accordance with the qualifications established by the Personnel and Administration committee.

506

507 The House staff members of each committee shall be appointed solely on the basis of fitness
508 to perform the duties of their respective positions and consistent with section 4 of chapter 151B
509 of the General Laws. The committee staff shall not:

510 (1) engage in any work other than legislative business during business hours; and

511 (2) be assigned any duties other than those pertaining to legislative business.

512 The committee shall meet on request of the chairman or any 3 members of the committee.

513 Any such meeting requested shall be convened on or within the fifth business day following such
514 request. All such requests shall be in writing and forwarded to the chairman and each member of
515 the committee.

516 Funds shall be allocated from the budget to carry out the determination of the committee.

517 [Adopted Jan. 11, 1985; Amended Jan. 16, 1985; Jan. 12, 1987; Jan. 9, 1991; Feb. 11, 2009;
518 Jan. 29, 2015.]

519 17D. [Omitted Jan. 26, 2005.]

520 17E. [Omitted Jan. 26, 2005.]

521 17F. [Omitted Jan. 26, 2005.]

522 17G. The committee on Bonding, Capital Expenditures and State Assets shall review all
523 legislation providing for the giving, loaning or pledging of the credit of the Commonwealth (see
524 Article LXII of the Amendments to the Constitution, as amended by Article LXXXIV). Said
525 committee shall be responsible for evaluating such legislation and determining the
526 appropriateness of enacting legislation containing increased bond authorizations for the

527 Commonwealth. The committee shall periodically review and hold open public hearings,
528 accepting oral and written testimony on the status of the bonds and notes of the Commonwealth,
529 including (1) general obligation debt; (2) dedicated income tax debt; and (3) special obligation
530 debt. The committee shall also, in its continuing study of the state's bonding practices, review
531 the Commonwealth's liabilities relative to (a) state-supported debt; (b) state-guaranteed debt; and
532 (3) indirect obligations.

533 Any bill providing for borrowing for new projects, and requiring the Commonwealth to issue
534 bonds for such purpose, shall, prior to its reference to the committee on Ways and Means, be
535 referred to the committee on Bonding, Capital Expenditures and State Assets for report on its
536 relationship to the finances of the Commonwealth. A measure may initially be referred to a joint
537 committee with jurisdiction over the subject matter before being referred to the committee on
538 Bonding, Capital Expenditures and State Assets.

539 The committee on Bonding, Capital Expenditures and State Assets shall consult with the various
540 agencies of the executive branch and the office of the Treasurer and Receiver-General relative to
541 project expenditures, availability of funds, the sale of new bonds and the resultant debt
542 obligations, federal reimbursements and other related funding and bonding issues.

543 The committee on Bonding, Capital Expenditures and State Assets shall be authorized to
544 conduct hearings relative to the statutory authority of the executive branch and the Treasurer and
545 Receiver-General in the issuance and sale of bonds and notes and the expenditure of capital
546 funds by the various agencies and authorities of the Commonwealth. The committee shall
547 determine whether such laws, administrative regulations and programs are being implemented in
548 accordance with the intent of the General Court. The committee shall be authorized to make

549 recommendations for statutory changes and changes in the Constitution which would grant
550 discretion to the General Court over the allotment and expenditure of funds authorized by capital
551 appropriations.

552 The committee on Bonding, Capital Expenditures and State Assets shall be authorized to report
553 to the General Court from time to time on the results of its hearings and to file drafts of
554 legislation and proposals for amendments to the Constitution necessary to carry its
555 recommendations into effect.

556 Messages from the Governor setting terms of bonds and notes, or for the de-authorization or
557 authorization of bonds and notes shall be referred to the committee on Bonding, Capital
558 Expenditures and State Assets.

559 [Adopted Feb. 11, 2009.]

560 18. The Speaker shall appoint, and may recommend the removal of, the Speaker pro
561 Tempore, the Majority Floor Leader, Assistant Majority Floor Leader and two Second Assistant
562 Majority Floor Leaders. The Minority Leader shall appoint, and may recommend the removal of,
563 the Assistant Minority Floor Leader, Second Assistant Minority Floor Leader, and two Third
564 Assistant Minority Floor Leaders, Ranking minority member of Ways and Means, Assistant
565 Ranking minority member of the Ways and Means committee, Ranking minority member of the
566 committee on Rules, Ranking minority member of the committee on Financial Services, Ranking
567 minority member of the committee on Health Care Financing, Ranking minority member of the
568 committee on the Judiciary, Ranking minority member of the committee on Bonding, Capital
569 Expenditures, and State Assets, Ranking minority member of the committee on Public Safety
570 and Homeland Security, Ranking minority member of the committee on Transportation and

571 Ranking minority member of the committee on Economic Development and Emerging
572 Technologies. The Minority Leader shall be that member of the minority party who is selected
573 for that position by the members of his/her party.

574 Each of the foregoing appointments and/or removals shall be ratified by a majority vote of the
575 respective party caucus. In the event that an appointment is rejected by such caucus another
576 appointment shall be made by the person designated to make the initial appointment, which shall
577 also be subject to ratification in the same manner.

578 The Speaker shall appoint, and may recommend the removal of, the chair of each standing
579 committee. The Speaker shall appoint, and may recommend the removal of, the vice chair and
580 assistant vice chair of the Ways and Means committee, the vice chair of the Post Audit and
581 Oversight committee, the vice chair of the committee on Rules, the vice chair of the committee
582 on Revenue, the vice chair of the committee on Financial Services, the vice chair of the
583 committee on Health Care Financing, the vice chair of the committee on Bonding, Capital
584 Expenditures, and State Assets, the vice chair of the committee on State Administration and
585 Regulatory Oversight, and the vice chair of the committee on Economic Development and
586 Emerging Technologies.

587 The majority party shall then vote to accept or reject each such appointment and/or
588 recommendation for removal by a majority vote.

589 In the event that any such appointment is rejected by the caucus, the procedure of this rule
590 shall be repeated until an appointment for the said position has been approved by the caucus. A
591 vacancy in any position to which the provisions of this section apply shall be filled in the same
592 manner as provided in this section for original appointment.

593 No member shall receive more than one stipend pursuant to section 9B of chapter 3 of the
594 General Laws.

595 The Speaker and the Minority Leader may, without a majority vote of their respective
596 parties, remove a member appointed to a leadership position from said position pursuant to this
597 rule if the member has been criminally indicted by a court of competent jurisdiction.

598 [Amended Jan. 16, 1979; Nov. 17, 1983; Jan. 11, 1985; Jan. 9, 1991; Jan. 14, 1997; Jan. 23,
599 2007; Feb. 11, 2009; Jan 23, 2013; Jan. 29, 2015; Feb. 19, 2015.]

600 18A. There shall be 1 member of the minority party on all committees of conference and 1 on
601 the committee on Bills in the Third Reading. On all other standing and joint committees, the
602 percent of minority party membership shall be at least equal to the percent of minority party
603 membership in the House of Representatives as of the first day of the session; provided, further,
604 that where such percentage results in a fraction of a number, the fraction shall be rounded off to
605 the nearest whole; provided, however, that the minority party shall under no circumstances have
606 less than 4 members on the committee on Ethics, 4 on the committee on Personnel and
607 Administration, 3 on the committee on Rules and 7 on the committee on Ways and Means. In no
608 case shall minority party representation be less than 2 members on all other standing and joint
609 committees.

610 The Speaker and the Minority Leader shall appoint the members of their respective party
611 caucuses to be assigned to each standing committee. The Speaker shall appoint the vice chair of
612 each standing committee. The appointments, except those to which Rule 18 applies, shall be
613 voted upon together and shall be subject to ratification by majority vote of the appropriate party
614 caucus.

615 No member shall be removed from a standing committee except upon the recommendation of the
616 Speaker or Minority Leader, as the case may be, subject to the ratification by their respective
617 caucuses; provided, however, that the Speaker and the Minority Leader may, without a majority
618 vote of their respective parties, remove a member appointed to a standing committee pursuant to
619 this rule if the member has been criminally indicted by a court of competent jurisdiction; and
620 provided further, that if any vacancy occurs in a position to which Rule 18 does not apply,
621 subsequent to the initial ratification, the Speaker or Minority Leader shall fill such vacancy.

622 The Speaker shall announce committee appointments of majority party members, and the
623 member first named shall be chairman, and the second named member shall be vice-chairman.
624 The Minority Leader shall announce committee appointments of minority party members. (13.)

625 [Adopted Jan. 11, 1985; Amended Jan. 12, 1987; Jan. 9, 1991; Jan. 14, 1997; Feb. 11, 2009.]

626 18B. All votes on ratification by the caucus required by these rules shall be by written ballot
627 and shall require a majority of those present and voting; provided, however, that if a motion to
628 ratify the appointments by acclamation is made and seconded, no written ballot shall be required.
629 [Adopted Jan. 11, 1985.]

630 18C. [Adopted, Jan. 11, 1985, Omitted Jan. 24, 2001.]

631 19. A majority and minority party caucus may be called by the Speaker or Minority Leader,
632 respectively, or upon petition of 25 percent of the members of the respective party caucus. A
633 caucus may entertain resolutions, motions, or other means of ascertaining the sense of the
634 respective party members on any subject. (13B.)

635 [Adopted Nov. 17, 1983; Amended Jan. 11, 1985; Jan. 29, 2015.]

636 19A. The majority party and minority party shall establish caucus rules that shall dictate the
637 procedures of each caucus.

638 [Adopted Nov. 17, 1983; Amended Jan. 14, 1997.]

639 20. The committee on Ways and Means shall report in appropriation bills the total amount
640 appropriated. The General Appropriation Bill shall be available to the members at least 7
641 calendar days prior to consideration thereof by the House. [25.] (27A.)

642 [Amended Jan. 11, 1985; Mar. 24, 1986; Jan. 14, 1997; Jan. 26, 2005; Jan. 29, 2015.]

643 20A. Notwithstanding the provisions of Rule 33A, amendments to the General Appropriation
644 Bill shall be filed with the Clerk of the House in a format to be determined by the Clerk by 5
645 o'clock P.M. within the close of 3 business days of said General Appropriation bill being made
646 available in a format to be determined by the Clerk and release of said document by said Clerk if
647 the release of said document occurs by 2 o'clock P.M. Otherwise, the day following the release
648 shall be considered the first business day. The Clerk, with the assistance of the committee on
649 Ways and Means, shall categorize the subject-matter of the amendments and arrange such
650 amendments for consideration sequentially by subject as appearing in the published version of
651 the General Appropriation Bill, or the Clerk, with the assistance of the committee on Ways and
652 Means, shall categorize the subject-matter of the amendments and arrange such subject matters
653 for consideration as determined by the committee on Ways and Means. Debate on the General
654 Appropriation Bill shall not commence until a date and time to be determined by the House
655 which is subsequent to the designated time established for filing of amendments.

656 Before the main question on the General Appropriation Bill is placed before the House, an
657 amendment may be postponed or withdrawn at the request of the primary sponsor of the

658 amendment or postponed by the committee on Ways and Means; provided, that further
659 consideration of any amendment so postponed shall take place immediately subsequent to
660 consideration of the amendments within the particular subject-matter to which the postponed
661 amendment was assigned according to the provisions of paragraph one of said rule; provided,
662 that if more than one amendment is so postponed, subsequent consideration of said amendments
663 shall be in the order determined by the committee on Ways and Means; provided further, an
664 amendment so postponed shall not be subsequently considered outside of its assigned subject-
665 matter; and provided further, that notwithstanding the provisions of Rule 33A, amendments
666 submitted to the Clerk shall be in a format to be determined by the Speaker in consultation with
667 said Clerk and shall include an original copy only; and provided further, that perfecting or
668 substitute amendments, including, but not limited to an amendment consolidating more than one
669 amendment, may be submitted by the committee on Ways and Means during consideration of the
670 subject category to which the amendment or amendments were assigned; provided, however, that
671 an amendment may be removed from the consolidated amendment at the request of the sponsor
672 of said amendment for the purpose of it being offered as a further amendment to the consolidated
673 amendment.

674 [Adopted Jan. 24, 2001; Amended Jan. 9, 2003; Jan. 26, 2005, Jan. 23, 2007; Jan 20, 2011;
675 Jan. 29, 2015.]

676 20B. When the General Appropriation Bill is reported by the committee on Ways and Means, it
677 shall be made available to all members electronically and to the public via the Internet in a
678 format to be determined by the Speaker in consultation with the Clerk. The committee on Ways
679 and Means shall provide the membership with a copy of its proposed text of said General
680 Appropriation Bill, and an executive summary which shall include a list of outside sections, and

681 a short summary of each outside section prior to full House consideration of such bill. When the
682 House considers said General Appropriation Bill, it shall be read a second time and forthwith
683 ordered to a third reading without any amendments. The bill shall be immediately read a third
684 time and then be open to amendments as previously determined by the House.

685 [Adopted Jan. 9, 2003, Jan. 23, 2007; Feb. 11, 2009.]

686 21. Whenever the committee on Ways and Means reports an appropriation bill or capital
687 outlay bill, it shall make available to the members a report which includes an explanation of any
688 increase or decrease of five percent or more which results in an increase or decrease of one
689 million dollars or more for any item for which the Governor has made a recommendation, and an
690 explanation for the deletion of an item recommended by the Governor, and for the addition of an
691 item for which the Governor has made no recommendation. [25A.] (27A.)

692 22. Bills and resolves when ordered to a third reading shall be referred forthwith to the
693 committee on Bills in the Third Reading, which shall examine and correct them, for the purpose
694 of avoiding repetitions and unconstitutional provisions, and insuring accuracy in the text and
695 references, and consistency with the language of existing statutes; but any change in the sense or
696 legal effect, or any material change in construction, shall be reported to the House as an
697 amendment.

698 The committee may consolidate into 1 bill any 2 or more related bills referred to it, whenever
699 legislation may be simplified thereby.

700 Resolutions received from and adopted by the Senate or introduced or reported into the House,
701 after they are read and before they are adopted, shall be referred to the committee on Bills in the
702 Third Reading.

703 Amendments of bills, resolves and resolutions adopted by the Senate and sent to the House
704 for concurrence, shall, subsequently to the procedure required by Rule 35 in respect to
705 amendments, also be referred, in like manner, to the committee on Bills in the Third Reading.

706 When a bill, resolve or resolution has been so referred, no further action shall be taken until a
707 report thereon has been made by the committee. Accompanying said report shall be a written
708 explanation prepared by the committee defining any changes made in a bill, resolve or resolution
709 so as to facilitate the proceedings of the House.

710 If a bill or resolve referred to the committee on Bills in the Third Reading requires a two-
711 thirds vote because it contains an emergency preamble, or if it provides for the borrowing of
712 money by the Commonwealth and comes within the provisions of Section 3 of Article LXII of
713 the Amendments to the Constitution, or provides for the giving, loaning or pledging of the credit
714 of the Commonwealth and comes within the provisions of Section 1 of Article LXII (as amended
715 by Article LXXXIV) of the Amendments to the Constitution, or provides, upon recommendation
716 of the Governor, for a special law relating to an individual city or town and comes within the
717 provisions of clause (2) of Section 8 of Article LXXXIX of the Amendments to the Constitution
718 or provides for environmental protection within the provisions of Article XLIX as amended by
719 Article XCVII, the committee shall plainly indicate the fact on the outside of the bill or resolve,
720 or on a wrapper or label attached thereto. [26.] (33.)

721 [Amended Jan. 12, 1983; Jan. 11, 1985; May 5, 1993; Jan. 29, 2015.]

722 23. Bills and resolves prepared for final passage shall be certified by the Clerk of the House,
723 after comparison, to be the same as the bills or resolves passed to be engrossed; and if found to
724 be properly prepared, the Clerk shall so endorse on the envelope thereof; and the question on

725 enactment or final passage or adopting an emergency preamble shall be taken thereon, without
726 further reading, unless specifically ordered.

727 When a bill prepared for final passage contains an emergency preamble or when it provides
728 for the borrowing of money by the Commonwealth and comes within the provisions of Section 3
729 of Article LXII of the Amendments to the Constitution, or provides for the giving, loaning or
730 pledging of the credit of the Commonwealth and comes within the provisions of Section 1 of
731 Article LXII (as amended by Article LXXXIV) of the Amendments to the Constitution, or
732 provides, upon recommendation of the Governor, for a special law relating to an individual city
733 or town and comes within the provisions of clause (2) of Section 8 of Article LXXXIX of the
734 Amendments to the Constitution, or provides for environmental protection within the provisions
735 of Article XLIX as amended by Article XCVII, the Clerk shall plainly indicate the fact on the
736 envelope thereof. [27.] (34.) [See Rule 40.]

737 [Amended Jan. 12, 1983; Jan. 29, 2015.]

738 23A. No member of the House, except the Speaker, Speaker pro Tempore, Majority Leader,
739 Assistant Majority Leader, Second Assistant Majority Leader, Minority Leader, Assistant
740 Minority Leader, Second Assistant Minority Leader, Third Assistant Minority Leader, Vice-
741 Chairperson of the Committee on Ways and Means, Assistant Vice-Chairperson of the
742 Committee on Ways and Means and committee chairmen with respect to committee business,
743 shall receive privileges or compensation for postage which is greater than seventy-five percent of
744 the amount allowed as standard practice during the 186th biennial session of the General Court,
745 as determined by the House Business Manager.

746 [Adopted Jan. 11, 1985; Amended Jan. 24, 2001; Jan. 26, 2005; Jan. 20, 2011.]

747 24. (1) Petitions, recommendations and reports of state officials, departments, commissions
748 including legislative commissions, and boards, special reports including legislation initiated by
749 the Committee on Ethics Pursuant to Rule 16, legislation initiated by the committee on Bonding,
750 Capital Expenditures and State Assets pursuant to Rule 17G and reports of special committees
751 and commissions including legislative commissions, shall be filed with the Clerk in a format to
752 be determined by said Clerk, who shall, unless they are subject to other provisions of these rules
753 or the rules of the two branches, refer them, with the approval of the Speaker, to the appropriate
754 committees, subject to such change of reference as the House may make. The reading of all such
755 documents may be dispensed with, but they shall be entered in the Journal of the same or the
756 next legislative day after such reference except as provided in Joint Rule 13.

757 (2) All orders, including motions or orders proposed for joint adoption, resolutions and other
758 papers intended for presentation, except those hereinbefore mentioned, shall be filed with the
759 Clerk in a format to be determined by said Clerk, who shall, prior to the procedure required by
760 other provisions of these rules or of the rules of the two branches, refer them to the committee on
761 Rules.

762 (3) Petitions and other papers so filed which are subject to the provisions of Joint Rule 7A,
763 7B, or 9 shall be referred by the Clerk to the committee on Rules. Petitions and other papers so
764 filed, which are subject to the provisions of the second paragraph of Joint Rule 12, shall, prior to
765 the procedure required by said rule, be referred by the Clerk to the committee on Rules. The
766 reading of all such papers may be dispensed with, but they shall be entered in the Journal of the
767 same or the next legislative day after such reference.

768 (4) Matters which have been placed on file during the preceding year may be taken from the
769 files by the Clerk upon request of any member or member-elect; and matters so taken from the
770 files shall be referred or otherwise disposed of as provided above.

771 (5) Recommendations and special reports of state officials, departments, commissions and
772 boards, reports of special committees and commissions, bills and resolves accompanying
773 petitions, recommendations and reports, and resolutions shall be made available under the
774 direction of the Clerk, who may cause to be made available, with the approval of the Speaker,
775 any other documents filed as herein provided.

776 (6) All such legislation and reports filed with the Clerk shall be submitted in a format
777 prescribed by said Clerk. Said documents shall contain the name or names of the primary
778 sponsors and a list of the names of all petitioners praying for the legislation. Additional names
779 may be added to the list of the petitioners; provided, however, that, such additional names shall
780 be submitted in a format to be determined by the Clerk.

781 (7) Any petition so submitted that is a refile of a measure submitted in a previous session shall
782 include, in the appropriate space provided, the session year for which the measure was filed and
783 the House or Senate bill number or docket number assigned to such measure in such previous
784 session.

785 (8) Debate upon the suspension of this rule shall be limited to 10 minutes, 3 minutes for each
786 member, and the Speaker shall recognize the member presenting the order, resolution or petition
787 first; provided, however, that suspension of this rule shall require unanimous consent of the
788 members present. Any order, except such order that would amend the Rules of the House,
789 resolution or petition referred to the committee on Rules after the question of suspension of this

790 rule has been negatived, or any order, resolution or petition filed after the beginning of the
791 session and referred to the committee on Rules, shall not be discharged from said committee
792 except by unanimous consent of the House. Motions to discharge the committee on Rules shall
793 be subject to the provisions of paragraph 2 of Rule 28. [28.] (20.) [See Rules 36 and 85.]

794 [Amended April 27, 1981; Jan. 9, 1989; Jan. 9, 1991; Jan. 26, 2005; Feb. 11, 2009; Jan. 29,
795 2015.]

796 25. Every petition for legislation shall be accompanied by a bill or resolve embodying the
797 legislation prayed for. [29.] [See Joint Rule 12.]

798 26. When the object of an application can be secured without a special act under existing
799 laws, or, without detriment to the public interests, by a general law, the committee to which the
800 matter is referred shall report such general law or ought not to pass, as the case may be. The
801 committee may report a special law on matters referred to it upon (1) a petition filed or approved
802 by the voters of a city or town, or the mayor and city council, or other legislative body, of a city,
803 or the town meeting of a town, with respect to a law relating to that city or town; (2) a
804 recommendation by the Governor; or (3) matters relating to erecting and constituting
805 metropolitan or regional entities, embracing any two or more cities and towns, or established
806 with other than existing city or town boundaries, for any general or special public purpose or
807 purposes. [30.] (16.) [See Joint Rule 7.]

808 [Amended Feb. 11, 2009.]

809 27. With the exception of matters referred to the committee on Rules under the provisions of
810 paragraph (3) of Rule 24, committees shall report on all matters referred to them. The committee
811 on Ways and Means shall report the General Appropriation Bill not later than the second

812 Wednesday of May; and provided further that said committee shall make available to the
813 members all data compiled for justification of budgetary recommendations in all appropriation
814 bills. [33.]

815 [Amended April 18, 1979; Jan. 14, 1997; Jan. 29, 2015.]

816 27A. [Omitted Jan. 23, 2007.]

817 28. (1) Motions directing the committee on Ways and Means to report certain matters to the
818 House, or motions discharging said committees from further consideration of certain matters,
819 shall not be considered until the expiration of seven calendar days and shall require a majority
820 vote of the members present and voting for adoption. Committees so directed to report shall file
821 a report with the Clerk within 4 legislative days. The committee on Ways and Means may not be
822 directed to report or be discharged from further consideration of any appropriation or capital
823 outlay measure.

824 (2) The committee on Rules, except as provided in Rule 24, and the committee on Bills in the
825 Third Reading shall not be discharged from consideration of any measure or be directed to report
826 on any measure within 10 calendar days of its reference without the unanimous consent of the
827 House, or after such 10 day period except by a vote of a majority of the members present and
828 voting thereon.

829 (3) Matters discharged under the provisions of this rule shall be placed in the Orders of the
830 Day for the next sitting. Petitions discharged under the provisions of this rule shall be considered
831 as favorably reported and the bill, resolve, resolution or order accompanying such petitions shall
832 be placed in the Orders of the Day for the next sitting.

833 (4) During the last week of the session, the provisions of paragraphs (1) and (3) of this rule
834 shall be inoperative.

835 (5) A second motion to discharge a matter from a committee or a second motion to direct a
836 committee to report a matter shall not be entertained until the first such motion has been disposed
837 of.

838 (6) As an alternative procedure to that provided under the provisions of this rule, the members
839 of the House may, by filing a petition signed by a majority of the members elected to the House,
840 discharge the House committee on Ways and Means, the House committee on Bills in the Third
841 Reading, and the House committee on Rules from further consideration of a legislative matter.
842 Seven days following the filing of the petition with the House Clerk, the committee shall be
843 discharged from further consideration of the legislative matter specified in the petition and the
844 House Clerk shall place the matter in the Orders of the Day for the next calendar day that the
845 House is meeting.

846 (7) For the purpose of this rule, matters not appearing on the Calendar which are not before
847 any committee shall be deemed to be before the Rules committee. Notwithstanding the previous
848 sentence, a bill which has been engrossed by the House and Senate shall be placed before the
849 House for enactment. Any member may request to the House that a matter engrossed in the
850 House and Senate, returned for final passage by the engrossing division, and reviewed and
851 released by the Committee on Bills in Third Reading be placed before the House for enactment.
852 The Speaker shall, in response to such a request of a member, put the matter before the House at
853 the conclusion of the matter then pending.

854 (8) This rule shall not be suspended unless by unanimous consent of the members present.
855 (27C, 32A.)

856 [Amended Jan. 12, 1981; April 27, 1981; Jan. 12, 1983; Nov. 17, 1983; Jan. 11, 1985; Jan. 9,
857 1989; Jan. 9, 1991; Jan. 24, 2001; Jan. 9, 2003; Jan. 26, 2005, Jan. 23, 2007; Jan. 29, 2015.]

858 28A. The committee on Bills in the Third Reading shall report on a legislative matter not later
859 than 45 days following the day the matter was referred to it. The Clerk shall indicate on the
860 Calendar entry of every matter before the Committee on Bills in the Third Reading the date that
861 said matter was referred to said committee.

862 [Adopted Jan. 11, 1985; Amended Jan. 9, 2003; Jan. 29, 2015.]

863 REGULAR COURSE OF PROCEEDINGS.

864 *Petitions.*

865 29. The member presenting a petition shall endorse his/her name thereon; and the reading
866 thereof shall be dispensed with, unless specially ordered. [37.] (18.)

867 [Amended Jan. 11, 1985.]

868 *Motions Contemplating Legislation, etc.*

869 30. All motions contemplating legislation shall be founded upon petition, except as follows:

870 The committee on Ways and Means may originate and report appropriation bills as provided
871 in Rule 20. Messages from the Governor shall, unless otherwise ordered, be referred to the
872 appropriate committee, which may report by bill or otherwise thereon. A similar disposition

873 shall, unless otherwise ordered, be made of reports by state officers and committees authorized to
874 report to the Legislature, and similar action may be had thereon.

875 Messages from the Governor returning appropriation bills, or parts of appropriation bills, with
876 objections or reductions of sections or items thereof, shall be reconsidered subsequent to a report
877 of the committee on Ways and Means. Messages or recommendations from the Governor shall
878 be filed with the Clerk in a format to be determined by the Clerk. [40.] (19.)

879 [Amended Jan. 24, 2001.]

880 *Bills and Resolves.*

881 31. Bills shall be drafted in a format approved by the Counsel to the House and submitted in a
882 format to be determined by the Clerk. Bills amending existing laws shall not provide for striking
883 words from, or inserting words in, such laws, unless such course is best calculated to show
884 clearly the subject and nature of the amendment. No repealed law, and no part of any repealed
885 law, shall be re-enacted merely by reference. [42.] (17.)

886 [Amended Jan. 9, 2003; Jan. 26, 2005; Jan. 29, 2015.]

887 32. If a committee to which a bill is referred reports that the same ought not to pass, the
888 question shall be “Shall this bill be rejected?”. If the question on rejection is negatived, the bill, if
889 it has been read but once, shall go to a second reading without question; otherwise it shall be
890 placed in the Orders of the Day for the next day, pending the question on ordering to a third
891 reading, or to engrossment, as the case may be. [43.] (30.)

892 32A. [Omitted Jan. 26, 2005.]

893 33. Bills involving an expenditure of public money or grant of public property, or otherwise
894 affecting the state finances, unless the subject matter has been acted upon by the joint committee
895 on Ways and Means, shall, after their first reading, be referred to the committee on Ways and
896 Means, for report on their relation to the finances of the Commonwealth.

897 New provisions shall not be added to such bills by the committee on Ways and Means, unless
898 directly connected with the financial features thereof.

899 Orders reported in the House or received from the Senate involving the expenditure of public
900 money for special committees, shall, before the question is taken on the adoption thereof, be
901 referred to the committee on Ways and Means, whose duty it shall be to report on their relation
902 to the finances of the Commonwealth.

903 Every such bill involving a capital expenditure for new projects, or an appropriation for
904 repairs, or any legislation, the cost of which, in the opinion of the committee, exceeds the sum of
905 one hundred thousand dollars when reported into the House by the committee on Ways and
906 Means, shall be accompanied by a fiscal note indicating the amount of public money which will
907 be required to be expended to carry out the provisions of the proposed legislation, together with
908 an estimate of the cost of operation and maintenance for the first year if a new project is
909 involved. [44.] (27.)

910 [Amended April 18, 1979; Jan. 12, 1981; Jul. 17, 2003; Jan. 26, 2005.]

911 33A. Copies of all bills shall be available, in a format to be determined by the Speaker in
912 consultation with the Clerk, to all members of the House and the public at least 24 hours in
913 advance of consideration by the House.

914 All amendments offered by members to any legislative matter in the House shall be submitted
915 in a format to be determined by the Speaker in consultation with the Clerk; and shall be
916 considered chronologically as submitted to the Clerk, except for an amendment in the second
917 degree; provided that all of said amendments shall be drafted in proper form acceptable to the
918 clerk; and provided further that there shall be available to the members a duplicate copy of each
919 amendment. (33A.)

920 [Adopted Nov. 17, 1983; Amended Nov. 28, 1984; Jan. 12, 1987; Jan. 9, 1991; Jan. 17,
921 1995]; Jan. 9, 2003; Jan. 26, 2005, Jan. 23, 2007; Jan. 29, 2015.]

922 33B. [Omitted Jan. 26, 2005.]

923 33C. [Omitted Jan. 26, 2005.]

924 33D. [Omitted Jan. 26, 2005.]

925 33E. No consolidated amendment offered by the committee on Ways and Means shall be
926 considered by the House until the expiration of at least 30 minutes after the consolidated
927 amendment shall have been first filed with the Clerk and made available to the members. This
928 rule shall not be suspended unless by unanimous consent of the members present.

929 [Added Feb. 4, 2010; Amended Jan. 29, 2015.]

930 34. Bills from the Senate, after their first reading, shall be referred to a committee of the House.
931 [45.] (26.)

932 [Amended Jan. 26, 1999.]

933 35. Amendments proposed by the Senate, and sent back to the House for concurrence, shall
934 be referred to the committee on Bills in Third Reading, provided that the journal shall reflect the
935 referral; and provided further that subsequent to a report from said committee, the amendments
936 shall be considered forthwith. [46.] (36.)

937 [Amended April 18, 1979; Jan. 12, 1981; Jan. 26, 2005, Jan. 23, 2007; Jan. 23, 2013.]

938 36. No bill shall be proposed or introduced unless received from the Senate, reported by a
939 committee, or moved as an amendment to the report of a committee. [47.] (36.)

940 37. Bills, resolves and other papers that have been, or, under the rules or usage of the House,
941 are to be made available in a format to be determined by the Speaker in consultation with the
942 Clerk, shall be read by their titles only, unless the full reading is requested by vote of a majority
943 of those members present and voting.

944 [Amended Jan. 9, 2003, Amended, Jan. 23, 2007.] [48.] (29.)

945 38. When a bill, resolve, order, petition or memorial has been finally rejected or disposed of
946 by the House, no measure substantially the same shall be introduced by any committee or
947 member during the same session. This rule shall not be suspended unless by unanimous consent
948 of the members present. [49.] (54.)

949 39. No bill shall be passed to be engrossed without having been read on three separate
950 legislative days. [51.] (28.)

951 [Amended Jan. 11, 1985.]

952 40. No engrossed bill shall be amended, except by striking out the enacting clause. A motion
953 to strike out the enacting clause of a bill shall be received when the bill is before the House for

954 enactment. If the bill contains an emergency preamble, a motion to suspend this rule may be
955 received before the adoption of the emergency preamble and, if suspended, the amendment may
956 contain a new emergency preamble. This rule shall not apply to a bill or resolve returned by the
957 Governor with a recommendation of amendment in accordance with the provisions of Article
958 LVI of the Amendments to the Constitution; nor shall it apply to amendments of engrossed bills
959 proposed by the Senate and sent to the House for concurrence, which amendments shall be
960 subject to the provisions of Rule 35, provided, however, that an affirmative vote on a motion to
961 suspend this rule shall be required in order to offer an amendment to such an engrossed bill when
962 the question before the House is on adoption of an emergency preamble, re-enactment or
963 enactment, as the case may be. [53.] (49.)

964 [Amended, Jan. 23, 2007; Jan. 20, 2011; Jan. 23, 2013; Jan. 29, 2015.]

965 41. Bills received from the Senate and bills reported favorably by committees, when not
966 referred to another standing committee of the House, shall, prior to being placed in the Orders of
967 the Day, be referred to the committee on Steering, Policy and Scheduling. Resolutions received
968 from and adopted by the Senate, or reported in the House by committees, shall, if proposed for
969 joint adoption, be referred to said committee on Steering, Policy and Scheduling. [56.] (26.)

970 [Amended Jan. 14, 1997; Jan. 26, 1999.]

971 42. Reports of committees, not by bill or resolve, including orders if proposed for joint
972 adoption, after they are received from the Senate, or made in the House, as the case may be,
973 shall, unless subject to the provisions of any other House or joint rules, be referred to the
974 committee on Steering, Policy and Scheduling; provided that the report of a committee asking to
975 be discharged from further consideration of a subject, and recommending that it be referred or

976 recommitted to another committee, or a report of a committee recommending that a matter be
977 placed on file, shall be immediately considered. Reports of committees on proposals for
978 amendments to the Constitution shall be dealt with in accordance with the provisions of Joint
979 Rule 23. [57.] (36.)

980 [Amended Jan. 14, 1997; Jan. 29, 2015.]

981 42A. The Clerk shall, prior to 3 o'clock P.M., on the day preceding a session, make available
982 by electronic communication or other means, a list of all reports of the committee on Steering,
983 Policy and Scheduling, asking to be discharged from further consideration of subjects, and
984 recommending that the subjects be referred to other committees.

985 [Adopted Jan. 26, 2005; Amended Jan. 29, 2015.]

986 43. Bills ordered to a third reading shall be placed in the Orders of the Day for the next day
987 for such reading. [58.] (32.)

988 *Special Rules Affecting the Course of Proceedings.*

989 44. The Speaker may designate when an informal session of the House shall be held provided
990 said Speaker gives notice of such informal session at a prior session of the House. The Speaker
991 may, in cases of emergency, cancel a session or declare any session of the House to be an
992 informal session. At an informal session the House shall only consider reports of committees,
993 papers from the Senate, bills for enactment or resolves for final passage, bills containing
994 emergency preambles and the matters in the Orders of the Day. Motions to reconsider moved at
995 such informal session shall be placed in the Orders of the Day for the succeeding day, and no
996 new business shall be entertained, except by unanimous consent.

997 Formal debate, or the taking of the sense of the House by yeas and nays shall not be
998 conducted during such informal session.

999 Upon the receipt of a petition signed by at least a majority of the members elected to the
1000 House, so requesting, the Speaker shall, when the House is meeting in informal session under the
1001 provisions of Joint Rule 12A, designate a formal session, to be held within seven days of said
1002 receipt, for the purpose of considering the question of passage of a bill, notwithstanding the
1003 objections of the Governor, returned pursuant to Article 2, Section 1, Clause 1, Part 2 of the
1004 Massachusetts Constitution. This rule shall not be suspended unless by unanimous consent of the
1005 members present. [59.] (5A.)

1006 [Amended Jan. 11, 1985; Jan. 12, 1987; Jan. 17, 1995; Jan. 14, 1997; Jan. 24, 2001; Jan. 9,
1007 2003; Feb. 11, 2009.]

1008 45. After entering upon the consideration of the Orders of the Day, the House shall proceed
1009 with them in regular course as follows: Matters not giving rise to a motion or debate shall first be
1010 disposed of in the order in which they stand in the Calendar; after which the matters that were
1011 passed over shall be considered in like order and disposed. The provisions of this paragraph shall
1012 not be suspended unless by unanimous consent of the members present.

1013 Notwithstanding the provisions of this rule, during consideration of the Orders of the Day, the
1014 committee on Ways and Means and the committee on Bills in the Third Reading may present
1015 matters for consideration of the House after approval of two-thirds of the members present and
1016 voting, without debate. [59.] (37.) [See Rule 47.]

1017 [Amended Jan. 12, 1981; Jan. 12, 1983; Feb. 11, 2009.]

1018 46. When the House does not finish the consideration of the Orders of the Day, those which
1019 had not been acted upon shall be the Orders of the Day for the next and each succeeding day
1020 until disposed of, and shall be entered in the Calendar, without change in their order, to precede
1021 matters added under Rule 7A; provided, however, that all other matters shall be listed in
1022 numerical order by Calendar item.

1023 The unfinished business in which the House was engaged at the time of adjournment shall
1024 have the preference in the Orders of the Day for the next day. [60.] (35.)

1025 [Amended Jan. 12, 1987; Jan. 26, 1999.]

1026 47. No matter which has been duly placed in the Orders of the Day shall be discharged
1027 therefrom, or considered out of the regular course. [61.] (38.) [See Rule 45.]

1028 *Voting.*

1029 48. Members desiring to be excused from voting shall make application to that effect before
1030 the division of the House or the taking of the yeas and nays is begun. Such application may be
1031 accompanied by a brief statement of reasons by the member. A member absent from the House
1032 for a formal session period of a day or longer shall notify the Clerk in writing of the intended
1033 absence. A member absent during a formal session for an extended period or for the remainder of
1034 the session shall notify the Clerk in person. The Clerk shall provide a written notice to any such
1035 absent member.

1036 The Clerk shall disable the voting station of any such member notifying the Clerk of an absence
1037 pursuant to this Rule. The Clerk shall also disable the voting station of any member failing to
1038 answer the first non-quorum roll call of a legislative sitting; provided, however, that the Clerk

1039 shall reactivate the voting station upon receiving notification of the member's return to the
1040 House Chamber. ([64.] (57.)

1041 [Amended Feb. 11, 2009.]

1042 49. If the presence of a quorum is doubted, a count of the House shall be made. When a yea
1043 and nay vote is taken, the members, with the exception of the Speaker, shall vote only from their
1044 seats. A member who has been appointed by the Speaker to perform the duties of the Chair, or a
1045 person who has been elected Speaker pro tempore, may designate some member or a court
1046 officer to cast a vote for him/her on any vote taken on the electronic voting system while such
1047 member is presiding. Said designated member performing the duties of the Chair, or Speaker pro
1048 tempore, may, if the Speaker is in the State House, cast a vote for the Speaker. The Speaker
1049 shall state the pending question before opening the system for voting.

1050 The Speaker may direct the Clerk to cast a vote for a member who is in the House Chamber,
1051 but who is unable to vote due to a malfunction of his/her voting station or inability to open
1052 his/her voting station.

1053 Except in the case of a vote to ascertain the presence of a quorum, if a member is prevented
1054 from voting personally using the electronic voting system because of physical disability, said
1055 member shall, if present in the State House, be excused from so voting and the Speaker shall
1056 assign a court officer to cast said member's vote so long as said physical disability continues;
1057 provided that the Speaker shall announce the action of the Chair to the membership prior to
1058 assigning a court officer to cast the member's vote and provided further that the Speaker shall
1059 announce the action to the membership the first time a vote is cast for that member on each
1060 successive day. [65.]

1061 [Amended April 18, 1979; Jan. 12, 1987; Jan. 9, 1991; Jan. 9, 2003; Jan. 20, 2011; Feb. 11,
1062 2009.]

1063 50. When a question is put, the sense of the House shall be taken by the voices of the
1064 members, and the Speaker shall first announce the vote as it appears to the Speaker by the sound.
1065 If the Speaker is unable to decide by the sound of the voices, or if the announcement made
1066 thereupon is doubted by a member rising in his/her place for that purpose, the Speaker shall
1067 order a division of the number voting in the affirmative and in the negative, without further
1068 debate upon the question. [66.] (55.)

1069 [Amended Jan. 11, 1985; Feb. 11, 2009.]

1070 51. When a return by division of the members voting in the affirmative and in the negative is
1071 ordered, the members for or against the question, when called on by the Speaker, shall rise in
1072 their places, and stand until they are counted. If, upon the taking of such a vote, the presence of a
1073 quorum is doubted, a count of the House shall be had, and if a quorum is present the vote shall
1074 stand. [67.]

1075 52. The sense of the House shall be taken by yeas and nays whenever required by ten percent
1076 of the members elected. The Speaker shall, after waiting up to an interval of twelve minutes,
1077 state the pending question and, after opening the electronic voting system, instruct the members
1078 to vote for not less than two minutes and no more than twenty-two minutes, the Speaker shall
1079 close said system and cause totals to be displayed and a record made of how each member
1080 present voted; provided, that if at any time during said voting period any standing, joint or
1081 conference committee is meeting in public or executive sessions, the Speaker shall leave the
1082 electronic voting machine open for not less than 5 minutes.

1083 Any member desiring to be recorded as being “present” when a yea and nay vote is taken on
1084 the electronic roll call system shall so notify the Clerk in person after said vote is ordered and
1085 before the vote is announced.

1086 In the event the electronic voting system is not in operating order, the roll of the House shall
1087 be called in alphabetical order; provided, however, that no member shall be allowed to vote or to
1088 answer “present” who was not on the floor before the vote is declared; provided, however, that a
1089 member, who was in the State House on a previous roll call, may be recorded by reporting to the
1090 Clerk within five minutes after such vote is closed, unless objection is made thereto and it is
1091 seconded; and provided further that the presiding officer shall not, for said purpose, interrupt the
1092 member who is speaking on the floor; provided, however, that such request may be announced to
1093 the House subsequent to the five minutes. The Speaker shall not entertain any requests beyond
1094 said five minute period. Once the voting has begun it shall not be interrupted except for the
1095 purpose of questioning the validity of a member’s vote before the result is announced. Except as
1096 heretofore provided, any member who shall vote or attempt to vote for another member or any
1097 person not a member who votes or attempts to vote for a member, or any member or other person
1098 who willfully tampers with or attempts to impair or destroy in any manner whatsoever the voting
1099 equipment used by the House, or change the records thereon shall be punished in such manner as
1100 the House determines; and provided further, that such a violation shall be reported to the Ethics
1101 Committee. [68.] (56, 57.)

1102 [Amended Jan. 12, 1983; Jan. 11, 1985; Jan. 12, 1987; Jan. 9, 1991; Jan. 24, 2001; Jan. 9,
1103 2003; Jan. 26, 2005; Feb. 11, 2009; Jan 20, 2011.]

1104 53. The call for yeas and nays shall be decided without debate. If the yeas and nays have been
1105 ordered before the question is put, the proceedings under Rules 50 and 51 relative to verification
1106 of the vote by the voices of the members or by a return of divisions shall be omitted; if not, they
1107 may be called for in lieu of a return by divisions when the Speaker's announcement is doubted
1108 by a member rising in his/her place, and, if then ordered, the proceedings under Rules 50 and 51
1109 shall be omitted. [69.] (52.)

1110 [Amended Jan. 26, 1999.]

1111 *Reconsideration.*

1112 54. No motion to reconsider a vote shall be entertained unless it is made on the same day on
1113 which the vote was taken, or before the Orders of the Day have been taken up on the next day
1114 thereafter on which a quorum is present. If reconsideration is moved on the same day, the motion
1115 shall be placed first in the Orders of the Day for the succeeding day; but, if it is moved on the
1116 succeeding day, the motion shall be considered forthwith except that if said motion is moved on
1117 a day on which an informal session has been designated, it shall be placed in the Orders of the
1118 Day for the succeeding day. If reconsideration is moved after July first of the second annual
1119 session and thereafter, on any main question, it shall be considered forthwith. This rule shall not
1120 prevent the reconsideration of a vote on a subsidiary, incidental or dependent question at any
1121 time when the main question to which it relates is under consideration; and provided, further,
1122 that a motion to reconsider a vote on any subsidiary, incidental or dependent question shall not
1123 remove the main subject under consideration from before the House, but shall be considered at
1124 the time when it is made. This rule shall not be suspended unless by unanimous consent of the
1125 members present. [70.] (53.)

1126 [Amended Jan. 12, 1981, Jan. 23, 2007.]

1127 55. When a motion for reconsideration is decided, that decision shall not be reconsidered, and
1128 no question shall be twice reconsidered; nor shall any vote be reconsidered upon any of the
1129 following motions:

1130 to recess,

1131 to adjourn,

1132 on sustaining a ruling of the Chair,

1133 to close debate at a specified time,

1134 to postpone if voted in the negative,

1135 to discharge or direct a committee to report,

1136 to commit or recommit,

1137 for second or subsequent legislative days,

1138 for the previous question, or

1139 for suspension of rules.

1140 This rule shall not be suspended unless by unanimous consent of the members present. [71.]

1141 (53.)

1142 [Amended Jan. 12, 1981; Jan. 12, 1983; Jan. 9, 1991.]

1143 56. Debate on motions to reconsider shall be limited to fifteen minutes, and no member shall
1144 occupy more than three minutes, but on a motion to reconsider a vote upon any subsidiary or
1145 incidental question, debate shall be limited to ten minutes, and no member shall occupy more
1146 than three minutes.

1147 If the House has voted to close debate on any question, a motion to reconsider said question
1148 shall be decided without debate. [72.] (52.)

1149 [Amended Jan. 12, 1981; Jan. 12, 1987.]

1150 RULES OF DEBATE.

1151 57. Every member, when about to speak, shall rise and respectfully address the Speaker and
1152 shall confine himself/herself to the question under debate. [73.] (39.)

1153 [Amended Jan. 11, 1985.]

1154 58. Every member while speaking shall avoid personalities; and shall sit down when finished.
1155 No member shall speak out of his/her place without leave of the Speaker. [73.] (39.)

1156 When two or more members rise at the same time, the Speaker shall name the member
1157 entitled to the floor, preferring one who rises in his/her place to one who does not. [74.] (40.)

1158 [Amended Jan. 11, 1985.]

1159 59. If a member repeatedly violates any of the rules of the House, or disrupts the orderly
1160 procedure of the House, the Speaker, after warning the member of such violations, shall call the
1161 member to order, and order that member to take his/her seat. A member so called to order shall
1162 lose the right to speak on the pending subject-matter but shall not be debarred from voting. A

1163 member so called to order shall remain seated until the House begins consideration of another
1164 subject-matter or unless the Speaker earlier returns to the member his/her rights to the floor.

1165 If a member so called to order refuses to immediately take his/her seat, the Speaker shall
1166 immediately name that member, who shall be escorted from the Chamber under escort of the
1167 Sergeant-at-Arms. The matter shall thereupon, on motion, be referred to a special committee of
1168 three to be appointed by the Speaker. Said special committee shall make a report to the House of
1169 its recommendations, which report shall be read and accepted.

1170 Having been named, a member shall not be allowed to resume his/her seat until said member
1171 has complied with the recommendations of the committee as accepted by the House.

1172 If, after a member is seated or named, the action of the Speaker is appealed, the House shall
1173 decide the case by a majority vote of the members present and voting, but if there is no
1174 immediate appeal, the decision of the Speaker shall be conclusive.

1175 [Amended Jan. 12, 1981; Jan. 11, 1985; Feb. 11, 2009.]

1176 60. No member shall interrupt another while speaking except by rising to a point of order, to a
1177 question of personal privilege, to doubt the presence of a quorum, or to ask the person speaking
1178 to yield.

1179 Members may rise to explain matters personal to them by leave of the presiding officer, but
1180 shall not discuss pending questions in such explanations.

1181 Questions of personal privilege shall be limited to questions affecting the rights, reputation, and
1182 conduct of the member in his/her representative capacities.

1183 Members may rise to ask questions of parliamentary inquiry concerning the pending matter by
1184 leave of the presiding officer, but shall not debate the pending questions. [75.] (42.)

1185 [Amended Jan. 12, 1981; Feb. 11, 2009.]

1186 61. No member shall speak more than once to the prevention of those who have not spoken
1187 and desire to speak on the same question.

1188 This prohibition shall not apply to those members designated by the committee or committees
1189 reporting the bill.

1190 No member shall occupy more than thirty minutes at a time while speaking on any question
1191 where debate is unlimited.

1192 Unless the operation of another rule provides to the contrary (such as previous question,
1193 limitation of debate, etc.), no member shall be prohibited from speaking more than once on any
1194 question when no other member who has not spoken is seeking recognition by the Chair. [76.]
1195 (41.)

1196 *Motions.*

1197 62. Every motion shall be reduced to writing, if the Speaker so directs. [77.] (44.)

1198 63. A motion need not be seconded, except an appeal from the decision of the Chair, and may
1199 be withdrawn by the mover if no objection is made. [78.] (44.)

1200 [Amended Jan. 12, 1981.]

1201 *Limit of Debate.*

1202 64. A motion to recess or adjourn shall always be first in order, and shall be decided without
1203 debate; and on the motions to close debate at a specified time, to postpone to a time certain, to
1204 commit or recommit, not exceeding ten minutes shall be allowed for debate, and no member
1205 shall speak more than three minutes. On the motion to discharge any committee, or on a motion
1206 directing any committee to report matters before it, not exceeding fifteen minutes shall be
1207 allowed for debate, and no member shall speak more than three minutes.

1208 If the main motion is undebatable, any subsidiary or incidental motion made relating to it
1209 shall also be decided without debate. [79.] (52.) [See Rules 56 and 83.]

1210 [Amended Jan. 12, 1981.]

1211 64A. Debate on the question on adoption of orders for second and subsequent legislative days
1212 shall be limited to ten minutes, and no member shall speak more than three minutes. After
1213 entering into a second or subsequent legislative day, the House shall immediately proceed to
1214 consideration of engrossed bills, reports of committees, papers from the Senate or the Orders of
1215 the Day. This rule shall not be suspended unless by unanimous consent of the members present.

1216 [Adopted Jan. 12, 1983.]

1217 65. When a question is before the House, until it is disposed of, the Speaker shall receive no
1218 motion that does not relate to the same, except the motion to recess or adjourn or some other
1219 motion that has precedence either by express rule of the House, or because it is privileged in its
1220 nature; and the Speaker shall receive no motion relating to the same, except,—

1221 for the previous question,

1222 to close debate at a specified time,

1223 to postpone to a time certain,

1224 to commit (or recommit),

1225 to amend, See Rules 66, 67 and 68

1226 See Rules 64, 69 and 70

1227 See Rules 64 and 70

1228 See Rules 64 and 71

1229 See Rules 72, 73, 74 and 75

1230 — which several motions shall have precedence in the order in which they are arranged in
1231 this rule. [80.] (46.)

1232 [Amended Jan. 11, 1985.]

1233 *Previous Question.*

1234 66. Any member may call for the previous question on the main question.

1235 The previous question shall be put in the following form: “Shall the main question be now
1236 put?” and all debate on the main question shall be suspended until the previous question is
1237 decided.

1238 The adoption of the previous question shall require the affirmative vote of two-thirds of the
1239 members present and voting and shall put an end to all debate, and bring the House to direct vote
1240 upon pending amendments, if any, in their regular order, and then upon the main question.

1241 A motion to reconsider the vote on any of the pending amendments shall be decided without
1242 debate. [81.]

1243 [Amended Jan. 12, 1981.]

1244 67. Any member may call for the previous question on any pending amendment.

1245 The previous question shall be put in the following form: “Shall the question on adoption of
1246 the amendment be now put?” and all debate shall be suspended until the previous question is
1247 decided.

1248 The adoption of the previous question on a pending amendment shall require the affirmative
1249 vote of two-thirds of the members present and voting and shall put an end to all debate and bring
1250 the House to a direct vote upon the pending amendment.

1251 A motion to reconsider the vote on the pending amendment shall be decided without debate.

1252 [Amended Jan. 12, 1981.]

1253 68. The previous question shall be decided without debate.

1254 *Motion to Close Debate at a Specified Time.*

1255 69. Debate may be closed at any time not less than thirty minutes from the adoption of a
1256 motion to that effect. This rule shall not be suspended unless by unanimous consent of the
1257 members present. [85.] (47.)

1258 *Motion to Postpone to a Time Certain.*

1259 70. When a motion is made to postpone to a time certain, and different times are proposed,
1260 the question shall first be taken on the most remote time; and the time shall be determined before
1261 the question is put on postponement, which may then be rejected if the House sees fit. [87.] (51.)

1262 *Motion to Commit.*

1263 71. When a motion is made to commit, and different committees are proposed, the question
1264 shall be taken in the following order:

1265 a standing committee of the House,

1266 a select committee of the House,

1267 a joint standing committee,

1268 a joint selected committee;

1269 and a subject may be recommitted to the same committee or to another committee at the
1270 pleasure of the House. [88.] (48.)

1271 *Motion to Amend.*

1272 72. A motion to amend an amendment may be received; but no amendment in the third degree
1273 shall be allowed. This rule shall not be suspended unless by unanimous consent of the members
1274 present. [89.]

1275 [Amended Jan. 12, 1983.]

1276 73. No motion or proposition on a subject different from that under consideration shall be
1277 admitted under color of amendment. This rule shall not be suspended unless by unanimous
1278 consent of the members present. [90.] (50.)

1279 [Amended Jan. 12, 1987.]

1280 73A. No motion to amend a report from the committee on Ways and Means or a report from
1281 the committee on Bills in the Third Reading, when such an amendment contains an expenditure
1282 of public money or an increase or decrease in taxes, shall be considered unless a brief
1283 explanation of the amendment is stated.

1284 [Adopted Jan. 17, 1995; Amended Jan. 26, 1999.]

1285 74. A question containing two or more propositions capable of division shall be divided
1286 whenever desired by any member, if the question includes points so distinct and separate that,
1287 one of them being taken away, the other will stand as a complete proposition. The motion to
1288 strike out and insert shall be considered as one proposition and therefore indivisible. The
1289 question on ordering a bill or resolve to a third reading, or to be engrossed, or to be enacted, or
1290 similar main motions shall be considered as indivisible under this rule. This rule shall not be
1291 suspended unless by unanimous consent of the members present. [91.] (45.)

1292 [Amended Jan. 12, 1983.]

1293 75. In filling blanks, the largest sum and longest time shall be put first. [92.] (51.) [See Rule
1294 70.]

1295 *Declaration of Recess.*

1296 76. The Speaker may declare a recess of 15 minutes duration, or less.

1297 [Amended Jan. 9, 1991; Jan. 29, 2015.]

1298 *Appeal.*

1299 77. No appeal from the decision of the Speaker shall be entertained unless it is seconded; and
1300 no other business shall be in order until the question on the appeal has been disposed of. Debate
1301 shall be limited to 15 minutes on the question of sustaining a ruling by the Chair, and no member
1302 shall occupy more than three minutes. [94.] (43A.) [See Rule 2.]

1303 [Amended Jan. 9, 1989; Jan. 29, 2015.]

1304 *Resolves.*

1305 78. Such of these rules as are applicable to bills, whether of the House or of the Senate, shall
1306 apply likewise to such resolves as require the concurrence of the Senate and approval by the
1307 Governor in order to become law and have force as such. [95.]

1308 *Seats.*

1309 79. (1) The desk on the right of the Speaker shall be assigned to the use of the Clerk and such
1310 persons as he/she may employ to assist said Clerk, and that on the left to the use of the chairman
1311 and vice-chairman of the committee on Bills in the Third Reading.

1312 (2) The Speaker shall assign members to vacant seats. The seat assigned to any member, other
1313 than seats assigned under paragraph (1) of this rule, shall be his/her seat for the year and for such
1314 additional years as said member may elect so long as service in the House remains continuous.
1315 An exchange of seats may be made with the approval of the Speaker. [98.]

1316 [Amended Jan. 11, 1985; May 5, 1993.]

Privilege of the Floor.

1317

1318 80. The following persons shall be entitled to admission to the House of Representatives,
1319 during the session thereof, to stand in an area designated by the Speaker in the rear of the
1320 Chamber, unless otherwise invited by said Speaker to occupy seats not numbered:

1321 (1) The Governor and the Lieutenant-Governor, members of the Executive Council, Secretary
1322 of the Commonwealth, Treasurer and Receiver-General, Auditor of the Commonwealth,
1323 Attorney-General, Librarian and Assistant Librarian.

1324 (2) The members of the Senate.

1325 (3) Persons in the exercise of an official duty directly connected with the business of the
1326 House.

1327 (4) Contestants for seats in the House, whose papers are in the hands of a special committee
1328 of the House, may be admitted, while their cases are pending, to seats to be assigned by the
1329 Speaker.

1330 No other person shall be admitted to the floor during the session, except upon the permission
1331 of the Speaker.

1332 No legislative agent or counsel may be admitted to the floor of the House Chamber during a
1333 session unless that part of the session is ceremonial in nature in which no other legislative
1334 business is conducted.

1335 The legislative reporters shall be entitled to the privileges of the reporters' galleries.

1336 This rule shall not be suspended unless by unanimous consent of the members present. [99.] (60,
1337 61.)

1338 [Amended Jan. 9, 1991, Jan. 23, 2007.]

1339 *Representatives' Chamber and Adjoining Rooms.*

1340 81. (a) Use of the Representatives' Chamber members' corridor or adjoining rooms shall be
1341 for official business or educational purposes only and shall be subject to the approval of the
1342 Speaker or the committee on Rules. The provisions of this paragraph shall not apply if the
1343 purpose of admittance is to attend a meeting in an adjoining room to which members of the
1344 general public are allowed to attend.

1345 (b) No legislative agent or counsel shall be admitted to the members' corridor or adjoining
1346 rooms. No other person shall be admitted to the members' corridor or adjoining rooms, except
1347 persons entitled to the privileges of the floor of the House unless upon written invitation of a
1348 member bearing the name of the member and the person the member invites. Upon entering, the
1349 invitation shall be given to the court officer assigned to the area. The provisions of this paragraph
1350 shall not apply if the purpose of admittance is to attend a meeting in an adjoining room to which
1351 members of the general public are allowed to attend.

1352 (c) No person shall be admitted to the north gallery of the House except upon a card of the
1353 Speaker.

1354 (d) Subject to the approval and direction of the committee on Rules during the session and of
1355 the Speaker after prorogation, the use of the reporters' galleries of the House Chamber shall be

1356 under the control of the organization of legislative reporters known as the Massachusetts State
1357 House Press Association and the State House Broadcasters Association.

1358 (e) Every legislative reporter desiring admission to the reporters' galleries shall state in
1359 writing that he/she is not the agent or representative of any person or corporation interested in
1360 legislation before the General Court, and will not act as representative of any such person or
1361 corporation while retaining a place in the galleries; but nothing herein contained shall prevent
1362 such legislative reporter from engaging in other employment, provided such other employment is
1363 specifically approved by the committee on Rules and reported to the House.

1364 (f) All formal sessions of the House of Representatives shall be open to both commercial and
1365 public radio and television, except designated times during such sessions, as determined by the
1366 House, reserved for the consideration of non-controversial business which does not give rise to
1367 debate. The manner and conditions of such broadcasts shall be established by the Speaker.
1368 Television, radio or web-broadcasts may be prohibited on any given day by the Speaker.

1369 The Speaker may arrange for a limited number of remote connections at a location
1370 outside of the Representatives' Chamber for commercial and public radio and television to
1371 obtain audio and visual feeds of formal sessions being recorded or streamed by the House. Video
1372 or audio obtained from such feed shall be used only for reporting purposes. Access to the
1373 connections provided shall be on a first-come-first serve basis; provided, however, that
1374 commercial and public radio and television acquiring access shall be required to share the audio
1375 or video feeds with other any other commercial and public radio and television station seeking
1376 access. The manner and conditions of access shall be established by the Speaker. Access may be
1377 prohibited by the Speaker.

1396 84. Unless otherwise indicated, nothing in the House rules or joint rules shall be suspended,
1397 altered or repealed unless two-thirds of the members present and voting consent thereto. This
1398 rule shall not be suspended unless by unanimous consent of the members present. [103.] (63.)

1399 [Amended Jan. 12, 1981.]

1400 84A. The clerk may, due to technical limitations or upon exigent circumstances, elect to waive
1401 any requirement relative to the electronic availability and posting on the internet of any bills,
1402 resolves, summaries or other documents contained herein; provided, however, that if the clerk so
1403 waives any such requirement he shall make paper copies of the documents available to all
1404 members and the public within the limitation established for the electronic availability and
1405 posting on the internet of any bills, resolves, summaries or other documents contained herein.

1406 [Adopted Feb. 11, 2009.]

1407 *Reference to Committee on Rules.*

1408 85. All motions or orders authorizing committees of the House to travel or to employ
1409 stenographers, all propositions involving special investigations by committees of the House, all
1410 resolutions presented for adoption by the House only, and all motions and orders except those
1411 which relate to the procedure of the House or are privileged in their nature or are authorized by
1412 Rule 65, shall be referred without debate to the committee on Rules, which shall report thereon,
1413 recommending what action should be taken. The committee shall not recommend suspension of
1414 Joint Rule 9, unless evidence satisfactory to the committee is produced that the petitioners have
1415 previously given notice, by public advertisement or otherwise, equivalent to that required by
1416 Chapter 3 of the General Laws. [104.] (13A.)

1417 [Amended Jan. 29, 2015.]

1418 85A. The House Business Manager, with the approval of House Counsel, shall provide that
1419 outside, independent audits of House financial accounts be conducted for each fiscal year upon
1420 receipt of the fiscal year end appropriation activity with balance report from the comptroller of
1421 the Commonwealth. The audit shall be conducted in accordance with auditing standards
1422 generally accepted in the United States of America and the standards applicable to financial
1423 audits contained in Government Auditing Standards, issued by the Comptroller General of the
1424 United States. The House Business Manager shall provide the independent auditor with
1425 requested documents for such audit. A copy of such audit shall be filed with the Clerk of the
1426 House and said copies shall be made available to the members and the general public upon
1427 request.

1428 [Adopted Jan. 11, 1985, Amended Jan. 20, 2011.]

1429 *Parliamentary Practice.*

1430 86. The rules of parliamentary practice shall govern the House in all cases to which they are
1431 applicable, and in which they are not inconsistent with these rules or the joint rules of the two
1432 branches. (62.)

1433 *Procurement.*

1434 87. (a) All procurements for goods or services shall be completed by the House Business
1435 Manager.

1436 (b) All procurements for goods or services shall, to the extent practicable, be made from the
1437 statewide procurement list established by the operational services division.

1438 (c) Upon certification by the House Business Manager that a necessary procurement cannot be
1439 made using the statewide procurement list established by the operational services division, the
1440 House Business Manager may procure the required goods or services pursuant to the following:

1441 (i) for a procurement of a supply or service in an amount of less than \$10,000, the House
1442 Business Manager shall use sound business practices;

1443 (ii) for a procurement of a supply or service in an amount of \$10,000, but less than \$100,000,
1444 the House Business Manager shall seek written or oral quotations from no fewer than 3 persons
1445 customarily providing such supply or service. The House Business Manager shall record the
1446 names and addresses of all persons from whom quotations were sought, the names of the persons
1447 submitting quotations and the date and amount of each quotation. The House Business Manager
1448 shall award the contract to the responsible person whose quotation offers the needed quality of
1449 supply or service and which represents the best value for the Commonwealth;

1450 (iii) for a procurement of a supply or service in an amount exceeding \$100,000, the House
1451 Business Manager shall seek proposals through a competitive bid process established by the
1452 Office of House Counsel; provided, however, that the Office of House Counsel shall file the
1453 competitive bid process with the Clerk of the House no later than March 31 of the first year of
1454 the session.

1455 (d) All procurements for legal consulting services shall be handled exclusively by the Office of
1456 House Counsel in compliance with the provisions of this rule. Prior to executing a contract for
1457 legal consulting services, said office shall certify, in writing, to the Clerk of the House that no
1458 employee of the House of Representatives possesses the required skills to complete the service
1459 which is the subject of the contract.

1460 (e) The House Business Manager shall maintain a file on each contract not executed using the
1461 statewide procurement list established by the operational services division and in excess of
1462 \$10,000 and shall include in such file a copy of all documents related to the contract. The House
1463 Business Manager shall make the file available for inspection within said office by members of
1464 the House for at least 3 years from the date of final payment under the contract; provided,
1465 however, that the Business Manager, in consultation with the Counsel to House of
1466 Representatives appointed pursuant to section 51 of chapter 3 of the General Laws, shall redact
1467 from said file any information which (i) is legally privileged; (ii) is proprietary; (iii) is related to
1468 individual members or House personnel; or (iv) is otherwise protected by state or federal law.

1469 (f) Whenever the time required to comply with a requirement of this rule would endanger the
1470 health, safety or convenience of the members, staff or visitors to the House of Representatives,
1471 the House Business Manager may make an emergency procurement without satisfying the
1472 requirements of this rule; provided, however, that both the House Business Manager and the
1473 Counsel to the House of Representatives appointed pursuant to section 51 of chapter 3 of the
1474 General Laws certify in writing: (i) that an emergency exists and explain the nature thereof; (ii)
1475 that said emergency procurement is limited to only supplies or services necessary to meet the
1476 emergency; (iii) that said emergency procurement conforms to the requirements of this rule to
1477 the extent practicable under the circumstances; and (iv) shall include each contractor's name, the
1478 amount and the type of each contract, the supplies or services provided under each contract, and
1479 (vii) the basis for determining the need for an emergency procurement. Such certification shall
1480 be filed with the Clerk of the House prior to an emergency procurement.

1481 [Adopted Jan. 20, 2011, Amended Jan. 23, 2013; Jan. 29, 2015; Feb. 19, 2015.]