

**HOUSE . . . . . No. 2023**

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**The Commonwealth of Massachusetts**



*House of Representatives, January 31, 2023.*

**In the One Hundred and Ninety-Third General Court  
(2023-2024)**

1           *Ordered*, That the rules of the House of Representatives for the years 2023-2024 be  
2 adopted, as follows:

3 SPEAKER.

4           1. The Speaker shall take the Chair at the hour to which the House stands adjourned, call the  
5 members to order, and, on the appearance of a quorum, proceed to business. [1.]

6           1A. The House shall not be called to order before the hour of ten o'clock A.M. nor meet  
7 beyond the hour of midnight unless by unanimous consent of the Members present. If there is  
8 unanimous consent to continue meeting past midnight then, the House shall return to the  
9 business then pending; and if no business was pending, to the next order of business. However, if  
10 there is not unanimous consent of the members present to meet beyond the hour of midnight, the

11 Speaker shall forthwith, and without further debate, adjourn or recess the House to a time not  
12 earlier than ten o'clock A.M. on the next succeeding calendar day.

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

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

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

24 The Speaker may permit photographs or videos during special occasions, which shall include,  
25 but shall not be limited to, swearing-in ceremonies and addresses by constitutional officers or  
26 other dignitaries. The use of audio-visual aids including, without limitation, videos, computers,  
27 posters, displays or charts shall be permitted only upon approval of the Speaker.

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

31 [Amended Jan. 11, 1985; Jan. 9, 2003; Jan. 20, 2011; Jan. 29, 2015; Jan. 30, 2019.]

32 3. The Speaker shall declare all votes, subject to verification as hereinafter provided. [3.] (55.)

33 [See Rules 49 to 53, inclusive.]

34 [Amended Jan. 11, 1985.]

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

36 [Amended Jan. 11, 1985.]

37 4A. The Speaker shall appoint a Speaker pro Tempore. The Speaker pro Tempore shall  
38 assist the Speaker in the coordination of policy development and the ceremonial functions of the  
39 House and shall perform such duties assigned to them by the Speaker. Upon a vacancy in the  
40 office of Speaker, the office of Speaker pro Tempore shall be considered vacant.

41 [Adopted Jan. 26, 2005, Amended, Jan. 23, 2007; Jan. 30, 2019.]

42 4B. (a) As used in this Rule, the following words shall have the following meanings:-

43 "Earned income", income derived from salaries, wages, tips and commissions for performing  
44 services as an employee of an employer.

45 "Unearned income", all other income that is not earned income.

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

47 (1) affiliating with or being employed by a firm, partnership, association, corporation or other  
48 entity that provides professional services involving a fiduciary relationship;

49 (2) permitting their name to be used by such a firm, partnership, association, corporation or  
50 other entity;

51 (3) receiving compensation for practicing a profession that involves a fiduciary relationship; or

52 (4) serving as an officer or member of the board of an association, corporation or other entity.

53 (c) The provisions of this rule shall take effect on August 1, 2017.

54 [Added Feb. 2, 2017; Amended Jan 30, 2019.]

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

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

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

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

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

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

71 SCHEDULING.

72 7A. There shall be appointed a standing committee on Steering, Policy and Scheduling  
73 consisting of eleven members. The committee shall not be subject to the provisions of Rule  
74 17A, but shall be authorized to meet from time to time at the call of the Chair for the purpose of  
75 assisting the members of the House of Representatives in identifying the major matters pending  
76 before the General Court, the relative urgency and priority for consideration of such matters, and  
77 alternative methods of responding to such matters by the General Court. Said committee shall  
78 schedule legislative matters in a manner that will provide for an even distribution and orderly  
79 consideration of reports of legislative committees on the daily Calendar.

80 The committee on Steering, Policy and Scheduling shall not be authorized to recommend  
81 changes or amendments to legislation or recommend that a matter ought to pass or ought not to  
82 pass, but shall only report asking to be discharged from further consideration of a bill, and  
83 recommending that it be referred or recommitted to another committee; provided, however, that  
84 it shall not recommend that a matter be referred or recommitted to the committee on Rules or the  
85 committees on Rules of the two branches, acting concurrently, or what date a matter shall be  
86 scheduled for consideration by the House and placed in the Orders of the Day. All reports by the  
87 committee on petitions filed or approved by the voters of a city or town, or by the mayor and city  
88 council, or other legislative body of a city or the town meeting of a town with respect to a law  
89 relating to that city or town shall be read and considered by the House at a formal or informal  
90 session before being accepted, rejected or otherwise acted upon. Any such petition and any  
91 attachment to the petition shall be filed in both paper and electronic format approved by the  
92 Clerk.

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

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

104 7B. The committee on Rules shall be authorized to originate and report special orders for the  
105 scheduling and consideration of legislation on the floor of the House. Said committee shall not  
106 be subject to the notification provisions contained in Rule 17A but may hold public hearings and  
107 shall accept testimony only from the members of the House. A majority of the members  
108 appointed to the committee shall constitute a quorum. When reported, such orders may be  
109 amended by a two-thirds vote of the members present and voting, and shall be subject to  
110 approval by a majority of the members of the House present and voting. Debate on the question  
111 on adoption of such orders shall be limited to one hour. No orders adopted pursuant to this  
112 paragraph shall limit the powers of the Speaker as provided in Rules 1 to 6, inclusive. Such  
113 orders shall not be subject to reconsideration.

114 The committee on Rules shall not be subject to the provisions of Rule 17A, but may meet in  
115 private to discuss or consider the appointment, discipline or dismissal of any individual the  
116 committee is authorized by law or rule to appoint, discipline or dismiss.

117 [Adopted Jan. 14, 1997; Amended Jan. 24, 2001; Feb. 11, 2009; Jan. 30, 2019.]

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 in writing or by  
129 electronic mail by 5pm on Friday of the preceding week; provided, however, that the Speaker  
130 may make, notwithstanding the provisions of Rule 7A, changes in the schedules to facilitate the  
131 business of the House in an efficient and timely fashion. The Speaker shall communicate notice  
132 of any such scheduling change to the members in writing or by electronic mail as soon as  
133 practicable, and whenever possible, the Speaker shall provide such notice not less than twenty-  
134 four hours before the event so rescheduled is set to commence.

135 [Adopted Jan. 14, 1997; January 9, 2003; Jan. 30, 2019.]

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 their knowledge of the occurrence of a member  
143 voting for another member, in their division of the House, to the Speaker of the House and to the  
144 Minority Leader. [10.] [See Rules 16 and 16A.]

145 [Amended Jan. 9, 1991; May 5, 1993; Feb. 11, 2009; Jan. 30, 2019.]

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 Their 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, they shall also cause a true copy thereof to be posted on the website of the General

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

202 [Amended Jan. 12, 1983; Jan. 11, 1985; Jan. 12, 1987; May 5, 1993; Jan. 17, 1995; Jan. 24,  
203 2001; Jan. 9, 2003; Jan. 26, 2005, Jan. 23, 2007; Jan. 30, 2019.]

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

206 13A. The Clerk shall make available to all members electronically and, to the public via the  
207 website of the General Court, the text of all dockets and bills introduced and admitted for  
208 consideration in the House.

209 [Adopted, Feb. 11, 2009; Jan. 30, 2019.]

210 COUNSEL

211 13B. (a) The House shall employ a full-time Counsel pursuant to section 51 of chapter 3 of the  
212 General Laws. The committee on Rules shall appoint a qualified person to act as Counsel at such  
213 compensation as the committee on Rules shall approve.

214 Counsel shall serve a term of two years from the date of appointment, unless the Counsel sooner  
215 resigns, retires or is removed; provided, however, that the Counsel may only be removed: (i) for  
216 misfeasance, malfeasance or nonfeasance, as determined by agreement of the Equal Employment  
217 Opportunity Officer appointed pursuant to Rule 89 and the Director of Human Resources  
218 appointed pursuant to Rule 90 and approved by a majority vote of the committee on Rules; or (ii)  
219 by a majority roll call vote of the House.

220 Counsel may employ such legal and other assistants as may be necessary in the discharge of  
221 Counsel's duties, subject to the approval of the committee on Rules, and may expend with like  
222 approval such sums as may be necessary for the discharge of their duties.

223 (b) Counsel shall be the chief legal officer of the House and shall perform all duties generally  
224 required of a counsel to an organization and specifically those required pursuant to any general  
225 or special law, rule, regulation, or order of the House. Counsel shall provide legal and legislative  
226 drafting services to all members regardless of party or seniority.

227 [Added Jan. 30, 2019.]

228 MEMBERS.

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

234 14A. [Adopted Feb. 11, 2009; Omitted Jan. 29, 2015.]

235 15. When it appears to the Chair that the presence of a quorum is endangered, the Chair shall  
236 order the doors closed. If a quorum is doubted the Chair shall order the doors closed and  
237 thereafter no member shall enter or leave the House until an initial determination has been made  
238 as to the presence of a quorum or lack thereof; and thereafter, provided that no quorum is  
239 present, no member shall leave the House unless by permission of the Chair, but members shall  
240 be admitted, at any time.

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

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

245 Members answering a quorum call shall vote "YES" on the roll call system. [17.] (11.)

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

247 ETHICS.

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

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

253 The committee shall investigate and evaluate, at the direction of the Speaker, by a sworn written  
254 complaint filed and delivered by a member, officer or employee to the chair, or by a majority  
255 vote of the members appointed to the Ethics committee, any matters relative to alleged violations  
256 of Rule 16A by a member, officer or employee.

257 Upon the receipt of said sworn written complaint, at the direction of the Speaker or by a  
258 majority vote of the members appointed to the Ethics committee, the committee shall notify any  
259 person named of the nature of the alleged violation and a list of prospective witnesses, and also  
260 shall notify said person of the final disposition and the recommendations, if any, of the  
261 committee.

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

264 All proceedings including the filing of the initial complaint shall be considered confidential  
265 information.

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

270 If a majority appointed finds that any member, officer, or employee of the House has violated  
271 any provision of Rule 16A, a majority appointed may, in the case of a member, recommend a  
272 reprimand, censure, removal from position of authority, including leadership, chair or vice chair,  
273 or expulsion; and in the case of an officer or employee, a majority appointed may recommend a  
274 reprimand, suspension, or removal from employment.

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

278 Any member, officer, or employee of the House may request in writing from the House  
279 committee on Ethics or from the Counsel to the House appointed pursuant to Rule 13B a  
280 confidential written advisory opinion on the requirements of chapters 268A and 268B of the  
281 General Laws as well as an opinion on any other general or special law, rule or regulation  
282 applicable to their official position or concerning any contemplated personal action which may

283 conflict with their official position. The committee on Ethics or the Counsel to the House shall  
284 issue confidential written advisory opinions and clarification in response to said written request.

285 No member, officer or employee of the House shall be penalized in any manner for having  
286 acted within the guidelines of a written advisory opinion from the House committee on Ethics or  
287 from the Counsel to the House appointed pursuant to Rule 13B, provided that all pertinent facts  
288 are stated in the request for an advisory opinion.

289 A written advisory opinion from the House committee on Ethics or from the Counsel to the  
290 House appointed pursuant to Rule 13B shall be a defense in any proceeding arising from said  
291 opinion or advice unless material facts were omitted or misstated by the person in the request of  
292 the opinion.

293 The chair of the Ethics committee may convene the committee at any time.

294 The chair shall also convene the committee at the written request of at least 5 members of the  
295 committee.

296 The Committee may, upon the written and signed report of two-thirds of the members of the  
297 committee, file a special report containing legislation without said legislation being founded  
298 upon petition which shall be referred under the provisions of Rule 24 and consistent with the  
299 provisions of Joint Rule 13, to the appropriate joint standing committee. Any special report  
300 containing legislation filed pursuant to this paragraph shall be germane to subject matters  
301 regularly considered by the committee. The committee shall not include in any such special  
302 report a bill that would have a fiscal impact as described in Rule 33.

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

306       [Amended Jan. 12, 1987; May 5, 1993; Jan. 17, 1995; Mar. 6, 1995; Jan. 14, 1997; Jan. 20,  
307 2011; Feb. 11, 2009; Jan. 29, 2015; Jan. 30, 2019.]

308       CODE OF ETHICS.

309       16A. (1.) While members, officers and employees should not be denied those opportunities  
310 available to all other citizens to acquire and retain private, economic and other interests;  
311 members, officers, and employees should exercise prudence in any and all such endeavors and  
312 make every reasonable effort to avoid transactions, activities, or obligations, which are in  
313 substantial conflict with or will substantially impair their independence of judgment.

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

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

318       (4.) No member, officer or employee shall receive any compensation or permit any  
319 compensation to accrue to their beneficial interest by virtue of influence improperly exerted from  
320 their official position in the House.

321       (5.) No member, officer or employee shall accept employment or engage in any business or  
322 professional activity, which will require the disclosure of confidential information gained in the  
323 course of, and by reason of, their official position.



324 (6.) No member, officer or employee shall willfully and knowingly disclose or use  
325 confidential information gained in the course of their official position to further their own  
326 economic interest or that of any other person.

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

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

334 (9.) No member, officer or employee shall employ anyone from public funds who does not  
335 perform tasks which contribute substantially to the work of the House and which are  
336 commensurate with the compensation received. Unless their personnel record indicates  
337 otherwise, no officer or full-time employee of the House shall engage in any outside business  
338 activity during regular business hours, whether the House is in session or not, and all employees  
339 of the House are assumed to be full-time.

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

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

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

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

354 ((14.) No member shall serve on any committee or vote on any question in which their private  
355 right is immediately concerned, distinct from the public interest. [19.]

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

358 (16.) Members, officers and employees may utilize public resources to support charitable  
359 and community service activities consistent with the Conflict of Interest Law, G.L. c. 268A,  
360 pursuant to policies established by Committee on Human Resources and Employee Engagement  
361 pursuant to Rule 90(h)(2).

362 [Amended Jan. 12, 1981; May 5, 1993; Jan. 24, 2001; Feb. 11, 2009; Jan. 29, 2015; Jan. 30,  
363 2019.]

364 16B. The Committee on Human Resources and Employee Engagement shall develop and  
365 conduct an ethics law training program for every member, officer and employee of the House;  
366 provided further, that said training program shall include, without limitation, a review of the

367 requirements and prohibitions of chapter 268A and chapter 268B of the General Laws, and the  
368 regulations of the State Ethics Commission, as they apply to legislators and legislative staff; and  
369 provided further, that said training program shall be offered virtually or in-person and shall be  
370 mandatory for all members, officers and employees.

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

372 16C. Bills involving lobbyists' reporting laws, and laws pertaining to the ethical conduct of  
373 public officials shall, after their first reading, be referred to the committee on Ethics, for report  
374 on their relation to the ethics laws of the Commonwealth. No new provisions shall be added to  
375 such measures by the committee, unless directly pertaining to ethics. [Adopted Feb. 11, 2009.]

376 COMMITTEES.

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

379 A committee on Rules;

380 (to consist of 15 members).

381 A committee on Ways and Means;

382 (to consist of 35 members).

383 A committee on Bills in the Third Reading;

384 (to consist of 3 members).

385 A committee of each Floor Division;

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

387 A committee on Ethics;

388 (to consist of 11 members).

389 A committee on Human Resources and Employee Engagement;

390 (to consist of 13 members).

391 A committee on Post Audit and Oversight;

392 (to consist of 11 members).

393 A committee on Steering, Policy and Scheduling;

394 (to consist of 11 members).

395 A committee on Global Warming and Climate Change;

396 (to consist of 11 members).

397 A committee on Federal Stimulus and Census Oversight;

398 (to consist of 11 members).

399 A committee on Operations, Facilities and Security;

400 (to consist of 11 members).

401 A committee on Intergovernmental Affairs;

402 (to consist of 11 members).

403 Committee meetings, insofar as practicable, shall not be scheduled in conflict with formal  
404 sessions of the House of Representatives. [20.] (12, 12A, 12B.)

405 [Amended March 6, 1979; Sept. 16, 1981; Jan. 11, 1985; Jan. 12, 1987; May 5, 1993; Oct. 6,  
406 1993; May 23, 1996; Jan. 14, 1997; Jul. 17, 2003; Jan. 26, 2005, Feb. 11, 2009; Jan. 29, 2015.]

407 17A. (a) For the purposes of this rule, the following terms shall, unless the context clearly  
408 requires otherwise, have the following meanings:

409 "Deliberation", a verbal exchange between a quorum of members of a committee attempting  
410 to arrive at a decision on any public business within its jurisdiction.

411 "Emergency", a sudden generally unexpected occurrence or set of circumstances demanding  
412 immediate action.

413 "Executive conference", any meeting or part of a meeting of a committee which is closed to  
414 certain persons for deliberation on certain matters.

415 "Executive session", any meeting or part of a meeting of a committee wherein the committee  
416 is voting on legislation and where public participation is limited to observance.

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

422 "Quorum", a simple majority of a committee unless otherwise defined by constitution, rule or  
423 law applicable to such committee; provided further, that a quorum shall be presumed to be  
424 present unless otherwise doubted.

425 (b) All meetings, except executive conferences, of House standing and special committees,  
426 shall be open to the public and any person shall be permitted to attend any meeting except as  
427 otherwise provided pursuant to this rule or Rule 7A. All meetings, except executive conferences,  
428 of House standing and special committees shall be conducted in-person with the option of remote  
429 participation available to both members of such committees and the public; provided, however,  
430 that the chair of such committees shall be physically present at the hearing location where in-  
431 person public testimony is offered. All House standing and special committees, in the conduct of  
432 their hearings, shall utilize, to the extent practicable, online platforms or systems that allow for  
433 synchronous, audio-visual communication between the chair of the committee and individuals  
434 offering testimony remotely. All hearings of House standing and special committees shall be  
435 publicly livestreamed on the website of the General Court and shall display and transmit, in real-  
436 time, the audio-visual attributes of public testimony offered remotely; provided further, that said  
437 livestream shall be archived on the website of the General Court for the duration of the  
438 legislative session. Members of House standing and special committees may participate  
439 remotely and shall have the same privileges, rights and responsibilities as if the member were  
440 physically present at the hearing location, and other members of the House may offer remote  
441 testimony before said committees of which they are not a member. The chair of any House  
442 standing or special committee conducting a hearing shall use best efforts to prioritize the  
443 testimony of those physically present at the hearing location and may, in their discretion, allow  
444 individuals participating in-person a greater amount of time to testify than those participating

445 remotely. All notices of hearings shall include instructions on how to offer testimony both in-  
446 person and remotely.

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

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

455 (c) Executive conferences shall be held only for the following purposes: (i) to discuss the  
456 reputation, character, physical condition or mental health rather than the professional  
457 competence of a member, officer or employee; (ii) to consider the discipline or dismissal of, or to  
458 hear complaints or charges brought against a member, officer or employee; (iii) to discuss  
459 strategy with respect to litigation if an executive session or other open meeting may have a  
460 detrimental effect on the legal position of the committee; or (iv) to consider the purchase,  
461 exchange, lease or value of real property, if such discussions may have a detrimental effect on  
462 the negotiating position of the Commonwealth or a person, firm or corporation.

463 A member, officer or employee subject to an executive conference pursuant to clause (i) or  
464 clause (ii) shall be notified in writing no less than 48 hours prior to the proposed executive  
465 conference; provided, however, that upon agreement of the parties involved, the notification  
466 requirements of clause (i) and clause (ii) may be waived. Upon request of the member, officer or

467 employee subject to an executive conference pursuant to clause (i) or clause (ii) the executive  
468 conference shall be open to the public.

469 A member, officer or employee subject to an executive conference pursuant to clause (i) or  
470 clause (ii) shall have the right to: (a) be present at such executive conference during discussions  
471 or considerations which involve that member, officer or employee; (b) have counsel or a  
472 representative of their own choosing present and attending for the purpose of advising said  
473 member, officer or employee; provided, however, that said counsel or representative shall not  
474 actively participate in the executive conference; and (c) to speak on their own behalf to the  
475 committee assembled in executive conference.

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

481 (e) Except pursuant to an emergency, a notice and agenda of every meeting of a committee  
482 subject to this rule shall be filed with the Clerk of the House, publicly posted by the Clerk on the  
483 bulletin board outside the Clerk's Office and in such other places as are designated in advance for  
484 such purpose by said Clerk, made available to all members electronically and made available to  
485 the public via the website of the General Court at least forty-eight hours, including Saturdays,  
486 but not Sundays and legal holidays, prior to the time of such meeting and a list of the bills,  
487 petitions, and resolutions to be considered for a vote or other action by the committee. The notice  
488 shall include the date, time and place of such meeting. Such filing and posting shall be the



489 responsibility of the committee scheduling such meeting. If public testimony is being solicited,  
490 agendas may include an electronic mail address and physical mail address for the submission of  
491 testimony and the committee shall make reasonable efforts to ensure diversity among those from  
492 whom testimony is solicited. The notice and posting requirements shall not apply to executive  
493 conferences held pursuant to clause (i) or clause (ii) of part (c) of this rule unless the member,  
494 officer or employee subject to the executive conference requests that the executive conference be  
495 open to the public.

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

503 (g) Upon prior notification and approval of the chair, a meeting of a committee may be  
504 recorded by a person in attendance by means of a recorder or any other means of audio/visual  
505 reproduction; provided, however, that said recording shall not interfere with the conduct of the  
506 meeting. Executive conferences conducted pursuant to clause (i) or clause (11) of part (c) of this  
507 rule shall not be recorded unless upon the request of the member, officer or employee who is  
508 subject to said executive conference, and then only at such member's, officer's or employee's  
509 expense. Executive conferences conducted pursuant to clause (iii) or (iv) of part (c) of this rule  
510 may be recorded at the discretion of the chair.

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

516 [Adopted Nov. 17, 1983; Amended Jan. 12, 1987; Jan. 9, 1991; May 5, 1993; Jan. 17, 1995;  
517 Jan. 14, 1997; Jan. 9, 2003, Jan. 23, 2007, Feb. 11, 2009; Jan. 30, 2019.]

518 17B. Whenever any member of a House committee present at the committee meeting so  
519 requests, the vote to give any legislation a favorable or adverse report shall be a recorded vote of  
520 the full committee. Such votes shall be recorded on appropriate forms that show all votes for and  
521 against the particular committee action; provided, that votes may also be recorded in LAWS. The  
522 record of all such roll calls shall be kept in the offices of the committee and shall include the  
523 aggregate tally of members voting in the affirmative, members not voting or members reserving  
524 their rights, and the names of members voting in the negative on an individual bill, and shall be  
525 posted on the website of the General Court within 48 hours of the vote for public inspection.

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

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

532 17C. There shall be a committee on Human Resources and Employee Engagement on the part  
533 of the House consisting of thirteen members.

534 Said committee shall discharge its duties pursuant to the Rules, including Rule 16B and Rules  
535 88 through 100, and shall also be responsible for the allocation of office space as equitably as  
536 possible among the various members and joint and standing committees. The committee shall  
537 allocate space among the various committees on the part of the House taking into account the  
538 work load, duties and responsibilities and size of staff of each.

539 The Speaker may make temporary office assignments in accordance with the foregoing  
540 principles.

541 The committee on Human Resources and Employee Engagement may from time to time make  
542 changes in the assignment of office space for committees and the various staffs in accordance  
543 with the established standards.

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

547 For each person who is employed or is to be employed by a joint or standing committee on  
548 the part of the House, each committee chair shall nominate each such person and the House  
549 members of the committee by a majority vote shall vote on whether to approve each said  
550 nominee. The House members of the committee shall approve such persons whose character and  
551 qualifications are acceptable to the majority of the House members of the committee and are in  
552 accordance with the qualifications established by the Human Resources and Employee  
553 Engagement committee.

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

557 (1) engage in any work other than legislative business during business hours unless pursuant  
558 to the pro-bono service policy or charitable and community service activity policy established by  
559 the committee on Human Resources and Employee Engagement pursuant to Rule 90(h)(2); and

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

561 The committee shall meet on request of the chair or any 3 members of the committee. Any  
562 such meeting requested shall be convened on or within the fifth business day following such  
563 request. All such requests shall be in writing and forwarded to the chair and each member of the  
564 committee.

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

566 [Adopted Jan. 11, 1985; Amended Jan. 16, 1985; Jan. 12, 1987; Jan. 9, 1991; Feb. 11, 2009;  
567 Jan. 29, 2015; Jan. 30, 2019.]

568 17D. [Omitted Jan. 26, 2005.]

569 17E. [Omitted Jan. 26, 2005.]

570 17F. [Omitted Jan. 26, 2005.]

571 18. The Speaker shall appoint, and may recommend the removal of, the Speaker pro  
572 Tempore, the Majority Floor Leader, Assistant Majority Floor Leader and two Second Assistant  
573 Majority Floor Leaders. The Minority Leader shall appoint, and may recommend the removal of,

574 the Assistant Minority Floor Leader, Second Assistant Minority Floor Leader, and two Third  
575 Assistant Minority Floor Leaders, Ranking minority member of Ways and Means, Assistant  
576 Ranking minority member of the Ways and Means committee, Ranking minority member of the  
577 committee on Rules, Ranking minority member of the committee on Financial Services, Ranking  
578 minority member of the committee on Health Care Financing, Ranking minority member of the  
579 committee on the Judiciary, Ranking minority member of the committee on Bonding, Capital  
580 Expenditures, and State Assets, Ranking minority member of the committee on Public Safety  
581 and Homeland Security, Ranking minority member of the committee on Transportation and  
582 Ranking minority member of the committee on Economic Development and Emerging  
583 Technologies. The Minority Leader shall be that member of the minority party who is selected  
584 for that position by the members of their party.

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

589 The Speaker shall appoint, and may recommend the removal of, the chair of each standing  
590 committee. The Speaker shall appoint, and may recommend the removal of, the vice chair and  
591 assistant vice chair of the Ways and Means committee, the vice chair of the Post Audit and  
592 Oversight committee, the vice chair of the committee on Rules, the vice chair of the committee  
593 on Revenue, the vice chair of the committee on Financial Services, the vice chair of the  
594 committee on Health Care Financing, the vice chair of the committee on Bonding, Capital  
595 Expenditures, and State Assets, the vice chair of the committee on State Administration and

596 Regulatory Oversight, and the vice chair of the committee on Economic Development and  
597 Emerging Technologies.

598 The majority party shall then vote to accept or reject each such appointment or  
599 recommendation for removal by a majority vote.

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

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

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

609 [Amended Jan. 16, 1979; Nov. 17, 1983; Jan. 11, 1985; Jan. 9, 1991; Jan. 14, 1997; Jan. 23,  
610 2007; Feb. 11, 2009; Jan 23, 2013; Jan. 29, 2015; Feb. 19, 2015; Jan. 30, 2019.]

611 18A. There shall be 1 member of the minority party on all committees of conference and 1 on  
612 the committee on Bills in the Third Reading. On all other standing and joint committees, the  
613 percent of minority party membership shall be at least equal to the percent of minority party  
614 membership in the House of Representatives as of the first day of the session; provided, further,  
615 that where such percentage results in a fraction of a number, the fraction shall be rounded off to  
616 the nearest whole; provided, however, that the minority party shall under no circumstances have

617 less than 4 members on the committee on Ethics, 4 on the committee on Human Resources and  
618 Employee Engagement , 3 on the committee on Rules and 7 on the committee on Ways and  
619 Means. In no case shall minority party representation be less than 2 members on all other  
620 standing and joint committees.

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

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

633 The Speaker shall announce committee appointments of majority party members, and the  
634 member first named shall be chair, and the second named member shall be vice-chair. The  
635 Minority Leader shall announce committee appointments of minority party members. (13.)

636 [Adopted Jan. 11, 1985; Amended Jan. 12, 1987; Jan. 9, 1991; Jan. 14, 1997; Feb. 11, 2009;  
637 Jan. 30, 2019.]

638 18B. All votes on ratification by the caucus required by these rules shall be by written ballot  
639 and shall require a majority of those present and voting; provided, however, that if a motion to  
640 ratify the appointments by acclamation is made and seconded, no written ballot shall be required.  
641 [Adopted Jan. 11, 1985.]

642 18C. [Adopted, Jan. 11, 1985, Omitted Jan. 24, 2001.]

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

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

648 19A. The majority party and minority party shall establish caucus rules that shall dictate the  
649 procedures of each caucus.

650 19B. Any member caucus or group of members organized around a common legislative agenda  
651 that utilizes House resources, including staff time, shall register with the House Committee on  
652 Rules as a Legislative Member Organization, unless it is a party caucus. The chair of the House  
653 Committee on Rules shall notify the Clerk of the House of any Legislative Member Organization  
654 registering with the Committee and shall maintain a list of all Legislative Member Organizations.  
655 Registration shall include the name of the Legislative Member Organization, its statement of  
656 purpose, identification of its members and officers, and a certification signed by its chair that any  
657 state resources used for the purposes of the Legislative Member Organization shall be not be  
658 used for any partisan political end.



659 A Legislative Member Organization may not include a non-legislator. Senators may belong to  
660 the Legislative Member Organization, but in order to use House resources at least one House  
661 member shall be an officer of the Legislative Member Organization. A Legislative Member  
662 Organization may, without limitation, sponsor informational or educational events, may invite  
663 outside speakers and groups to make presentations to the members of the Legislative Member  
664 Organization and others, and may distribute any report, analysis, or other research material  
665 prepared by others provided that the identity of the person or organization authoring the work is  
666 fully disclosed.

667 A member's official stationery may list his or her membership in a Legislative Member  
668 Organization.

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

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

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

674 20A. (a) Notwithstanding the provisions of Rule 33A, amendments to the General  
675 Appropriation Bill shall be properly filed with the Clerk in an electronic format to be determined  
676 by the Clerk as directed by the Speaker; provided that the Clerk shall notify by electronic  
677 communication the primary sponsor of each amendment of the receipt of such amendment and  
678 the number assigned by said Clerk to the amendment; provided further, that the Clerk shall print  
679 each amendment so filed electronically and such printed copy shall be considered to be the  
680 official amendment for that bill. Amendments to said General Appropriation Bill shall be filed

681 with the Clerk by 5 o'clock P.M. on the third business day subsequent to the bill being made  
682 available in a format to be determined by the Clerk as directed by the Speaker pursuant to Rule  
683 20B and release of said bill by said Clerk; provided, that if the release of said bill by said Clerk  
684 occurs before the hour of 2 o'clock P.M., then the same day in which said bill was released shall  
685 be considered the first business day. Otherwise, the day following the release shall be considered  
686 the first business day.

687 (b)(1) The Clerk, with the assistance of the committee on Ways and Means, shall categorize  
688 the subject-matter of the amendments and arrange such amendments for consideration  
689 sequentially by subject as appearing in the published version of the General Appropriation Bill,  
690 or the Clerk, with the assistance of the committee on Ways and Means, shall categorize the  
691 subject-matter of the amendments and arrange such subject matters for consideration as  
692 determined by the committee on Ways and Means. Debate on the General Appropriation Bill  
693 shall not commence until a date and time to be determined by the House which is subsequent to  
694 the designated time established for filing of amendments pursuant to subsection (a) of this rule.

695 (2) Before the main question on the General Appropriation Bill is placed before the House, an  
696 amendment may be withdrawn at the request of the primary sponsor of the amendment or  
697 postponed by the committee on Ways and Means; provided, that further consideration of any  
698 amendment so postponed shall take place immediately subsequent to consideration of the  
699 amendments within the particular subject-matter to which the postponed amendment was  
700 assigned according to the provisions of this subparagraph; provided, that if more than one  
701 amendment is so postponed, subsequent consideration of said amendments shall be in the order  
702 determined by the committee on Ways and Means; provided further, an amendment so postponed  
703 shall not be subsequently considered outside of its assigned subject-matter; and provided further,

704 that notwithstanding the provisions of Rule 33A; and provided further, that perfecting or  
705 substitute amendments, including, but not limited to an amendment consolidating more than one  
706 amendment, may be submitted by the committee on Ways and Means during consideration of the  
707 subject category to which the amendment or amendments were assigned. Any amendment may  
708 be removed from a consolidated amendment by the primary sponsor of the amendment. Any  
709 such amendment so removed from a consolidated amendment shall be offered as an amendment  
710 to the General Appropriation Bill, to be acted upon in the first degree before action is taken on  
711 the consolidated amendment, except that any amendment so removed from the consolidated  
712 amendment may be moved by the committee on Ways and Means from one subject category to  
713 another subject category not yet disposed of in the General Appropriation Bill.

714 (3) A consolidated amendment to the General Appropriation Bill, offered by the committee on  
715 Ways and Means, shall contain a fiscal note indicating its total expenditures.

716 (4) Notwithstanding Rule 74, a consolidated amendment offered by the committee on Ways  
717 and Means, may not be divided.

718 (c) Except for consolidated amendments or perfecting amendments offered by the committee on  
719 Ways and Means, no proposition on a subject different from the amendment under consideration  
720 shall be admitted under color of a further amendment to the General Appropriation Bill. A  
721 consolidated amendment to the General Appropriation Bill, offered by the committee on Ways  
722 and Means, shall be a motion offering an amendment in the second degree.

723 (d) Any amendment to the General Appropriation Bill not complying with this rule shall be  
724 considered withdrawn; provided that, any such amendments shall be published as part of the  
725 amendment list published by the committee on Ways and Means.

726 20B. When the General Appropriation Bill is reported by the committee on Ways and Means, it  
727 shall be made available to all members electronically and to the public via the website of the  
728 General Court in a format to be determined by the Speaker in consultation with the Clerk. The  
729 committee on Ways and Means shall provide the membership with an electronic copy of its  
730 proposed text of said General Appropriation Bill, and an executive summary which shall include  
731 a list of outside sections, and a short summary of each outside section prior to full House  
732 consideration of such bill. When the House considers said General Appropriation Bill, it shall be  
733 read a second time; provided further that amendments relative to enhancing or reducing revenue  
734 shall only be considered prior to the third reading of said bill to be in order, and that all other  
735 amendments to the General Appropriations Bill shall only be considered subsequent to the third  
736 reading of said bill.

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

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

749 The committee on Bills in the Third Reading may consolidate into 1 bill any 2 or more related  
750 bills referred to it, whenever legislation may be simplified thereby.

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

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

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

761 If a bill or resolve referred to the committee on Bills in the Third Reading requires a two-  
762 thirds vote because it contains an emergency preamble, or if it provides for the borrowing of  
763 money by the Commonwealth and comes within the provisions of Section 3 of Article LXII of  
764 the Amendments to the Constitution, or provides for the giving, loaning or pledging of the credit  
765 of the Commonwealth and comes within the provisions of Section 1 of Article LXII (as amended  
766 by Article LXXXIV) of the Amendments to the Constitution, or provides, upon recommendation  
767 of the Governor, for a special law relating to an individual city or town and comes within the  
768 provisions of clause (2) of Section 8 of Article LXXXIX of the Amendments to the Constitution  
769 or provides for environmental protection within the provisions of Article XLIX as amended by

770 Article XCVII, the committee shall plainly indicate the fact on the outside of the bill or resolve,  
771 or on a wrapper or label attached thereto. [26.] (33.)

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

773 23. Bills and resolves prepared for final passage shall be certified by the Clerk of the House,  
774 after comparison, to be the same as the bills or resolves passed to be engrossed; and if found to  
775 be properly prepared, the Clerk shall so endorse on the envelope thereof; and the question on  
776 enactment or final passage or adopting an emergency preamble shall be taken thereon, without  
777 further reading, unless specifically ordered.

778 When a bill prepared for final passage contains an emergency preamble or when it provides  
779 for the borrowing of money by the Commonwealth and comes within the provisions of Section 3  
780 of Article LXII of the Amendments to the Constitution, or provides for the giving, loaning or  
781 pledging of the credit of the Commonwealth and comes within the provisions of Section 1 of  
782 Article LXII (as amended by Article LXXXIV) of the Amendments to the Constitution, or  
783 provides, upon recommendation of the Governor, for a special law relating to an individual city  
784 or town and comes within the provisions of clause (2) of Section 8 of Article LXXXIX of the  
785 Amendments to the Constitution, or provides for environmental protection within the provisions  
786 of Article XLIX as amended by Article XCVII, the Clerk shall plainly indicate the fact on the  
787 envelope thereof. [27.] (34.) [See Rule 40.]

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

789 23A. No member of the House, except the Speaker, Speaker pro Tempore, Majority Leader,  
790 Assistant Majority Leader, Second Assistant Majority Leader, Minority Leader, Assistant  
791 Minority Leader, Second Assistant Minority Leader, Third Assistant Minority Leader, Vice-

792 Chairperson of the Committee on Ways and Means, Assistant Vice-Chairperson of the  
793 Committee on Ways and Means and committee chairs with respect to committee business, shall  
794 receive privileges or compensation for postage which is greater than seventy-five percent of the  
795 amount allowed as standard practice during the 186th biennial session of the General Court, as  
796 determined by the House Business Manager.

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

798 24. (a) (1) Petitions, recommendations and reports of state officials, departments,  
799 commissions including legislative commissions, and boards, special reports including legislation  
800 initiated by the Committee on Ethics pursuant to rule 16, and reports of special committees and  
801 commissions including legislative commissions, shall be filed with the Clerk in a format to be  
802 determined by said Clerk, who shall, unless they are subject to other provisions of these rules or  
803 the rules of the two branches, refer them, with the approval of the Speaker, to the appropriate  
804 committees, subject to such change of reference as the House may make. The reading of all such  
805 documents may be dispensed with, but they shall be entered in the Journal of the same or the  
806 next legislative day after such reference except as provided in Joint Rule 13.

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

812 (b) Resolutions for adoption by the House only or resolutions for joint adoption shall  
813 only be considered for adoption in the House if the resolution meets the criteria set forth in this  
814 rule.

815 (c) Resolutions shall consist of: (i) no more than 5 clauses beginning with the word  
816 “WHEREAS”, which shall contain statements of facts or opinions; and (ii) no more than 2  
817 clauses beginning with the word “RESOLVED”.

818 (d) Resolutions shall recognize, honor, commend, celebrate or commemorate a momentous  
819 achievement, special occasion or significant event or date; provided, however, that the following  
820 resolutions shall not be considered for adoption:

821 (i) resolutions recognizing, honoring, commending, celebrating or commemorating the birthday  
822 of a person under the age of 80;

823 (ii) resolutions recognizing, honoring, commending, celebrating or commemorating a wedding  
824 anniversary of a married couple of less than 50 years,

825 (iii) resolutions recognizing, honoring, commending, celebrating or commemorating an  
826 anniversary of an organization of less than 20 years;

827 (iv) resolutions recognizing, honoring, commending, celebrating or commemorating a class  
828 reunion;

829 (v) resolutions recognizing, honoring, commending, celebrating or commemorating a for-profit  
830 organization;

831 (iv) resolutions proclaiming certain days, weeks or months;



832 (vii) resolutions that includes a statement of policy or ideology.

833 (e) Suspension of clauses (b) through (d) of subsection (2) of this rule shall require unanimous  
834 consent of the members present.

835 (3) Petitions and other papers so filed which are subject to the provisions of Joint Rule 7A,  
836 7B, or 9 shall be referred by the Clerk to the committee on Rules. Petitions and other papers so  
837 filed, which are subject to the provisions of the second paragraph of Joint Rule 12, shall, prior to  
838 the procedure required by said rule, be referred by the Clerk to the committee on Rules. The  
839 reading of all such papers may be dispensed with, but they shall be entered in the Journal of the  
840 same or the next legislative day after such reference.

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

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

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

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

858 (8) Debate upon the suspension of this rule shall be limited to 10 minutes, 3 minutes for each  
859 member, and the Speaker shall recognize the member presenting the order, resolution or petition  
860 first; provided, however, that suspension of this rule shall require unanimous consent of the  
861 members present. Any order, except such order that would amend the Rules of the House,  
862 resolution or petition referred to the committee on Rules after the question of suspension of this  
863 rule has been negatived, or any order, resolution or petition filed after the beginning of the  
864 session and referred to the committee on Rules, shall not be discharged from said committee  
865 except by unanimous consent of the House. Motions to discharge the committee on Rules shall  
866 be subject to the provisions of paragraph 2 of Rule 28. [28.] (20.) [See Rules 36 and 85.]

867 [Amended April 27, 1981; Jan. 9, 1989; Jan. 9, 1991; Jan. 26, 2005; Feb. 11, 2009; Jan. 29,  
868 2015; Jan. 30, 2019.]

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

871 26. When the object of an application can be secured without a special act under existing  
872 laws, or, without detriment to the public interests, by a general law, the committee to which the  
873 matter is referred shall report such general law or ought not to pass, as the case may be. The  
874 committee may report a special law on matters referred to it upon (1) a petition filed or approved  
875 by the voters of a city or town, or the mayor and city council, or other legislative body, of a city,

876 or the town meeting of a town, with respect to a law relating to that city or town; (2) a  
877 recommendation by the Governor; or (3) matters relating to erecting and constituting  
878 metropolitan or regional entities, embracing any two or more cities and towns, or established  
879 with other than existing city or town boundaries, for any general or special public purpose or  
880 purposes. [30.] (16.) [See Joint Rule 7.]

881 [Amended Feb. 11, 2009.]

882 27. With the exception of matters referred to the committee on Rules under the provisions of  
883 paragraph (3) of Rule 24, committees shall report on all matters referred to them. The committee  
884 on Ways and Means shall report the General Appropriation Bill not later than the second  
885 Wednesday of May; and provided further that said committee shall make available to the  
886 members all data compiled for justification of budgetary recommendations in all appropriation  
887 bills. [33.]

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

889 27A. [Omitted Jan. 23, 2007.]

890 28. (1) Motions directing the committee on Ways and Means to report certain matters to the  
891 House, or motions discharging said committees from further consideration of certain matters,  
892 shall not be considered until the expiration of seven calendar days and shall require a majority  
893 vote of the members present and voting for adoption. Committees so directed to report shall file  
894 a report with the Clerk within 4 legislative days. The committee on Ways and Means may not be  
895 directed to report or be discharged from further consideration of any appropriation or capital  
896 outlay measure.

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

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

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

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

911 (6) As an alternative procedure to that provided under the provisions of this rule, the members  
912 of the House may, by filing a petition signed by a majority of the members elected to the House,  
913 discharge the House committee on Ways and Means, the House committee on Bills in the Third  
914 Reading, and the House committee on Rules from further consideration of a legislative matter.  
915 Seven days following the filing of the petition with the House Clerk, the committee shall be  
916 discharged from further consideration of the legislative matter specified in the petition and the  
917 House Clerk shall place the matter in the Orders of the Day for the next calendar day that the  
918 House is meeting.

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

927 (8) This rule shall not be suspended unless by unanimous consent of the members present.  
928 (27C, 32A.)

929 [Amended Jan. 12, 1981; April 27, 1981; Jan. 12, 1983; Nov. 17, 1983; Jan. 11, 1985; Jan. 9,  
930 1989; Jan. 9, 1991; Jan. 24, 2001; Jan. 9, 2003; Jan. 26, 2005, Jan. 23, 2007; Jan. 29, 2015.]

931 28A. The committee on Bills in the Third Reading shall report on a legislative matter not later  
932 than 45 days following the day the matter was referred to it. The Clerk shall indicate on the  
933 Calendar entry of every matter before the committee on Bills in the Third Reading the date that  
934 said matter was referred to said committee.

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

936 REGULAR COURSE OF PROCEEDINGS.

937 Petitions.

938 29. The member presenting a petition shall endorse their name thereon; and the reading  
939 thereof shall be dispensed with, unless specially ordered. [37.] (18.)

940 [Amended Jan. 11, 1985; Jan. 30, 2019.]

941 Motions Contemplating Legislation, etc.

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

943 The committee on Ways and Means may originate and report appropriation bills as provided  
944 in Rule 20. Messages from the Governor shall, unless otherwise ordered, be referred to the  
945 appropriate committee, which may report by bill or otherwise thereon. A similar disposition  
946 shall, unless otherwise ordered, be made of reports by state officers and committees authorized to  
947 report to the Legislature, and similar action may be had thereon.

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

952 [Amended Jan. 24, 2001.]

953 Bills and Resolves.

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

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

960 32. If a committee to which a bill is referred reports that the same ought not to pass, the  
961 question shall be "Shall this bill be rejected?". If the question on rejection is negatived, the bill, if  
962 it has been read but once, shall be placed in the Orders of the Day for the next sitting for a  
963 second reading without question; otherwise it shall be placed in the Orders of the Day for the  
964 next sitting, pending the question on ordering to a third reading, or to engrossment, as the case  
965 may be. [43.] (30.)

966 [Amended Jan. 30, 2019.]

967 32A. [Omitted Jan. 26, 2005.]

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

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

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

978 Every such bill involving a capital expenditure for new projects, or an appropriation for  
979 repairs, or any legislation, the cost of which, in the opinion of the committee, exceeds the sum of  
980 one hundred thousand dollars when reported into the House by the committee on Ways and

981 Means, shall be accompanied by a fiscal note indicating the amount of public money which will  
982 be required to be expended to carry out the provisions of the proposed legislation, together with  
983 an estimate of the cost of operation and maintenance for the first year if a new project is  
984 involved. [44.] (27.)

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

986 33A. Copies of all bills shall be available, in a format to be determined by the Speaker in  
987 consultation with the Clerk, to all members of the House and the public electronically via the  
988 website of the General Court; provided, however, that any bill or resolve to be considered by the  
989 House at a formal session shall be available to all members electronically and to the public via  
990 the website of the General Court no later than P.M. the day prior to consideration thereof by the  
991 House in a formal session; provided further that, to the extent practicable, a summary of any bill  
992 containing meaningful policy changes to be considered by the House in a formal session shall be  
993 made available by the chair of the committee reporting the bill, to all members of the House prior  
994 to the commencement of roll calls for the formal session in which the bill will be considered.

995 All amendments offered by members to any legislative matter in the House shall be submitted  
996 in a format to be determined by the Clerk in consultation with the Speaker; provided, however,  
997 that an amendment to any bill or resolve to be considered by the House at a formal session shall  
998 be filed by 5:00 P.M. on the day the bill or resolve is made available to the members pursuant to  
999 the first paragraph of this rule. Amendments shall be considered by the House chronologically as  
1000 submitted to the Clerk, except for an amendment in the second degree; provided that all  
1001 amendments shall be drafted in proper form acceptable to the clerk; and provided further that the  
1002 Clerk shall print each amendment so filed and such printed copy shall be considered to be the



1003 official amendment for that bill and there shall be available to the members a duplicate copy of  
1004 each amendment. (33A.)

1005 When the House considers any bill or resolve, other than the General Appropriations Bill, it  
1006 shall be read a second time and, subsequent to the consideration of any amendments  
1007 recommended by a committee or committees, it shall forthwith be considered by the House, the  
1008 question being on ordering it to a third reading, without any other amendments. A bill or resolve  
1009 so ordered to a third reading shall be immediately referred to the committee on Bills in the Third  
1010 Reading and, upon being released by said committee, it shall be read a third time and shall then  
1011 be open to amendments, the main question being on passing the bill or resolve to be engrossed.

1012 Except for consolidated amendments or perfecting amendments offered by the committee on  
1013 Ways and Means, no proposition on a subject different from the amendment under consideration  
1014 shall be admitted under color of a further amendment to any bill or resolve. A consolidated  
1015 amendment to any bill or resolve, offered by the committee on Ways and Means, shall be a  
1016 motion offering an amendment in the second degree.

1017 [Adopted Nov. 17, 1983; Amended Nov. 28, 1984; Jan. 12, 1987; Jan. 9, 1991; Jan. 17,  
1018 1995l; Jan. 9, 2003; Jan. 26, 2005, Jan. 23, 2007; Jan. 29, 2015.]

1019 33B. [Omitted Jan. 26, 2005.]

1020 33C. [Omitted Jan. 26, 2005.]

1021 33D. [Omitted Jan. 26, 2005.]

1022 33E. No consolidated amendment offered by the committee on Ways and Means shall be  
1023 considered by the House until the expiration of at least 30 minutes after the consolidated

1024 amendment shall have been first filed with the Clerk and made available to the members. This  
1025 rule shall not be suspended unless by unanimous consent of the members present.

1026 [Added Feb. 4, 2010; Amended Jan. 29, 2015.]

1027 33F. No consolidated amendment shall be adopted except by a roll call vote.

1028 [Added Feb. 2, 2017.]

1029 34. Bills from the Senate, after their first reading, shall be referred to a committee of the House.  
1030 [45.] (26.)

1031 [Amended Jan. 26, 1999.]

1032 35. Amendments proposed by the Senate, and sent back to the House for concurrence, shall  
1033 be referred to the committee on Bills in Third Reading, provided that the journal shall reflect the  
1034 referral; and provided further that subsequent to a report from said committee, the amendments  
1035 shall be considered forthwith. [46.] (36.)

1036 [Amended April 18, 1979; Jan. 12, 1981; Jan. 26, 2005, Jan. 23, 2007; Jan. 23, 2013.]

1037 36. No bill shall be proposed or introduced unless received from the Senate, reported by a  
1038 committee, or moved as an amendment to the report of a committee. [47.] (36.)

1039 37. Bills, resolves and other papers that have been, or, under the rules or usage of the House,  
1040 are to be made available in a format to be determined by the Speaker in consultation with the  
1041 Clerk, shall be read by their titles only, unless the full reading is requested by vote of a majority  
1042 of those members present and voting.

1043 [Amended Jan. 9, 2003, Amended, Jan. 23, 2007.] [48.] (29.)

1044 38. When a bill, resolve, order, petition or memorial has been finally rejected or disposed of  
1045 by the House, no measure substantially the same shall be introduced by any committee or  
1046 member during the same session. This rule shall not be suspended unless by unanimous consent  
1047 of the members present. [49.] (54.)

1048 39. No bill shall be passed to be engrossed without having been read on three separate  
1049 legislative days. [51.] (28.)

1050 [Amended Jan. 11, 1985.]

1051 40. No engrossed bill shall be amended, except by striking out the enacting clause. A motion  
1052 to strike out the enacting clause of a bill shall be received when the bill is before the House for  
1053 enactment. If the bill contains an emergency preamble, a motion to suspend this rule may be  
1054 received before the adoption of the emergency preamble and, if suspended, the amendment may  
1055 contain a new emergency preamble. This rule shall not apply to a bill or resolve returned by the  
1056 Governor with a recommendation of amendment in accordance with the provisions of Article  
1057 LVI of the Amendments to the Constitution; nor shall it apply to amendments of engrossed bills  
1058 proposed by the Senate and sent to the House for concurrence, which amendments shall be  
1059 subject to the provisions of Rule 35, provided, however, that an affirmative vote on a motion to  
1060 suspend this rule shall be required in order to offer an amendment to such an engrossed bill when  
1061 the question before the House is on adoption of an emergency preamble, re-enactment or  
1062 enactment, as the case may be. [53.] (49.)

1063 [Amended, Jan. 23, 2007; Jan. 20, 2011; Jan. 23, 2013; Jan. 29, 2015.]

1064 41. Bills received from the Senate and bills reported favorably by committees, when not  
1065 referred to another standing committee of the House, shall, prior to being placed in the Orders of

1066 the Day, be referred to the committee on Steering, Policy and Scheduling. Resolutions received  
1067 from and adopted by the Senate, or reported in the House by committees, shall, if proposed for  
1068 joint adoption, be referred to said committee on Steering, Policy and Scheduling. [56.] (26.)

1069 [Amended Jan. 14, 1997; Jan. 26, 1999.]

1070 42. Reports of committees, not by bill or resolve, including orders if proposed for joint  
1071 adoption, after they are received from the Senate, or made in the House, as the case may be,  
1072 shall, unless subject to the provisions of any other House or joint rules, be referred to the  
1073 committee on Steering, Policy and Scheduling; provided that the report of a committee asking to  
1074 be discharged from further consideration of a subject, and recommending that it be referred or  
1075 recommitted to another committee, or a report of a committee recommending that a matter be  
1076 placed on file, shall be immediately considered. Reports of committees on proposals for  
1077 amendments to the Constitution shall be dealt with in accordance with the provisions of Joint  
1078 Rule 23. [57.] (36.)

1079 [Amended Jan. 14, 1997; Jan. 29, 2015.]

1080 42A. The Clerk shall, prior to 3 o'clock P.M., on the day preceding a session, make available  
1081 by electronic communication or other means, a list of all reports of the committee on Steering,  
1082 Policy and Scheduling, asking to be discharged from further consideration of subjects, and  
1083 recommending that the subjects be referred to other committees.

1084 [Adopted Jan. 26, 2005; Amended Jan. 29, 2015.]

1085 43. Bills ordered to a third reading shall be placed in the Orders of the Day for the next day  
1086 for such reading. [58.] (32.)

1087 Special Rules Affecting the Course of Proceedings.

1088 44. The Speaker may designate when an informal session of the House shall be held provided  
1089 said Speaker gives notice of such informal session at a prior session of the House. The Speaker  
1090 may, in cases of emergency, cancel a session or declare any session of the House to be an  
1091 informal session. At an informal session the House shall only consider reports of committees,  
1092 papers from the Senate, bills for enactment or resolves for final passage, bills containing  
1093 emergency preambles and the matters in the Orders of the Day. Motions to reconsider moved at  
1094 such informal session shall be placed in the Orders of the Day for the succeeding day, and no  
1095 new business shall be entertained, except by unanimous consent.

1096 Formal debate, or the taking of the sense of the House by yeas and nays shall not be  
1097 conducted during such informal session.

1098 Upon the receipt of a petition signed by at least a majority of the members elected to the  
1099 House, so requesting, the Speaker shall, when the House is meeting in informal session under the  
1100 provisions of Joint Rule 12A, designate a formal session, to be held within seven days of said  
1101 receipt, for the purpose of considering the question of passage of a bill, notwithstanding the  
1102 objections of the Governor, returned pursuant to Article 2, Section 1, Chapter 1, Part 2 of the  
1103 Massachusetts Constitution. This rule shall not be suspended unless by unanimous consent of the  
1104 members present. [59.] (5A.)

1105 [Amended Jan. 11, 1985; Jan. 12, 1987; Jan. 17, 1995; Jan. 14, 1997; Jan. 24, 2001; Jan. 9,  
1106 2003; Feb. 11, 2009.]

1107 45. After entering upon the consideration of the Orders of the Day, the House shall proceed  
1108 with them in regular course as follows: Matters not giving rise to a motion or debate shall first be

1109 disposed of in the order in which they stand in the Calendar; after which the matters that were  
1110 passed over shall be considered in like order and disposed. The provisions of this paragraph shall  
1111 not be suspended unless by unanimous consent of the members present.

1112 Notwithstanding the provisions of this rule, during consideration of the Orders of the Day, the  
1113 committee on Ways and Means and the committee on Bills in the Third Reading may present  
1114 matters for consideration of the House after approval of two-thirds of the members present and  
1115 voting, without debate. [59.] (37.) [See Rule 47.]

1116 [Amended Jan. 12, 1981; Jan. 12, 1983; Feb. 11, 2009.]

1117 46. When the House does not finish the consideration of the Orders of the Day, those which  
1118 had not been acted upon shall be the Orders of the Day for the next and each succeeding day  
1119 until disposed of, and shall be entered in the Calendar, without change in their order, to precede  
1120 matters added under Rule 7A; provided, however, that all other matters shall be listed in  
1121 numerical order by Calendar item.

1122 The unfinished business in which the House was engaged at the time of adjournment shall  
1123 have the preference in the Orders of the Day for the next day. [60.] (35.)

1124 [Amended Jan. 12, 1987; Jan. 26, 1999.]

1125 47. No matter which has been duly placed in the Orders of the Day shall be discharged  
1126 therefrom, or considered out of the regular course. [61.] (38.) [See Rule 45.]

1127 Voting.

1128 48. Members desiring to be excused from voting shall make application to that effect before  
1129 the division of the House or the taking of the yeas and nays is begun. Such application may be

1130 accompanied by a brief statement of reasons by the member. The Clerk shall, prior to the first  
1131 roll call of the sitting, announce the name of any member who has informed the Clerk to not call  
1132 their name or lock their voting station. The Clerk shall also announce prior to any subsequent  
1133 roll call of the sitting the name of any member who had informed said Clerk not to call their  
1134 name or lock their voting station since the taking of the immediately preceding roll call.

1135 A member absent from the House for a formal session period of a day or longer shall notify the  
1136 Clerk in writing of the intended absence. A member absent during a formal session for an  
1137 extended period or for the remainder of the session shall notify the Clerk in person. The Clerk  
1138 shall provide a written notice to any such absent member.

1139 The Clerk shall disable the voting station of any such member notifying the Clerk of an absence  
1140 pursuant to this Rule. The Clerk shall also disable the voting station of any member failing to  
1141 answer the first non-quorum roll call of a legislative sitting; provided, however, that the Clerk  
1142 shall reactivate the voting station upon receiving notification of the member's return to the House  
1143 Chamber. ([64.] (57.)

1144 [Amended Feb. 11, 2009; Jan. 30, 2019.]

1145 49. If the presence of a quorum is doubted, a count of the House shall be made. When a yea  
1146 and nay vote is taken, the members, with the exception of the Speaker, shall vote only from their  
1147 seats. A member who has been appointed by the Speaker to perform the duties of the Chair, or a  
1148 person who has been elected Speaker pro Tempore, may designate some member or a court  
1149 officer to cast a vote for said member on any vote taken on the electronic voting system while  
1150 such member is presiding. Said designated member performing the duties of the Chair, or

1151 Speaker pro Tempore, may, if the Speaker is in the State House, cast a vote for the Speaker. The  
1152 Speaker shall state the pending question before opening the system for voting.

1153 The Speaker may direct the Clerk to cast a vote for a member who is in the House Chamber,  
1154 but who is unable to vote due to a malfunction of their voting station or inability to open their  
1155 voting station.

1156 Except in the case of a vote to ascertain the presence of a quorum, if a member is prevented  
1157 from voting personally using the electronic voting system because of physical disability, said  
1158 member shall, if present in the State House, be excused from so voting and the Speaker shall  
1159 assign a court officer to cast said member's vote so long as said physical disability continues;  
1160 provided that the Speaker shall announce the action of the Chair to the membership prior to  
1161 assigning a court officer to cast the member's vote and provided further that the Speaker shall  
1162 announce the action to the membership the first time a vote is cast for that member on each  
1163 successive day.

1164 A member serving on active reserve military duty may participate remotely in a formal session,  
1165 subject to the requirements and limitations of federal law and regulation, including, but not  
1166 limited to, United States Department of Defense Directive 1344.10. A member serving on active  
1167 reserve military shall notify the Clerk of such service as soon as practicable.

1168 A member diagnosed with a serious medical condition may, upon submission of a request for an  
1169 accommodation to participate remotely to Counsel appointed pursuant to Rule 13B, accompanied  
1170 by documentation from said member's medical provider that an accommodation is necessary,  
1171 may participate remotely in a formal session. Upon receipt and approval of a request for  
1172 accommodation to participate remotely Counsel shall notify the Clerk that the member filing the



1173 request has been authorized to participate remotely. Other than the notification provided to the  
1174 Clerk, Counsel shall maintain any request for accommodation pursuant to this rule as  
1175 confidential.

1176 A member authorized to participate remotely in a formal session pursuant to this Rule shall have  
1177 the same privileges, rights and responsibilities as if the member were physically present in the  
1178 House Chamber, including without limitation, the right, privilege and responsibility to cast votes  
1179 on all questions or other matters brought to a vote and the ability to take the oath required  
1180 pursuant to Part the Second, Chapter VI, Article I of the Constitution of the Commonwealth.

1181 The Journal of the House for any formal session of the House where a member is participating  
1182 remotely in a formal session pursuant to this Rule shall not specify which members participated  
1183 remotely. [65.]

1184 [Amended April 18, 1979; Jan. 12, 1987; Jan. 9, 1991; Jan. 9, 2003; Jan. 20, 2011; Feb. 11,  
1185 2009; Jan. 30, 2019.]

1186 50. When a question is put, the sense of the House shall be taken by the voices of the  
1187 members, and the Speaker shall first announce the vote as it appears to the Speaker by the sound.  
1188 If the Speaker is unable to decide by the sound of the voices, or if the announcement made  
1189 thereupon is doubted by a member rising in their place for that purpose, the Speaker shall order a  
1190 division of the number voting in the affirmative and in the negative, without further debate upon  
1191 the question. [66.] (55.)

1192 [Amended Jan. 11, 1985; Feb. 11, 2009; Jan. 30, 2019.]

1193        51. When a return by division of the members voting in the affirmative and in the negative is  
1194 ordered, the members for or against the question, when called on by the Speaker, shall rise in  
1195 their places, and stand until they are counted. If, upon the taking of such a vote, the presence of a  
1196 quorum is doubted, a count of the House shall be had, and if a quorum is present the vote shall  
1197 stand. [67.]

1198        52. The sense of the House shall be taken by yeas and nays whenever required by ten percent  
1199 of the members elected. The Speaker shall, after waiting up to an interval of twelve minutes,  
1200 state the pending question and, after opening the electronic voting system, instruct the members  
1201 to vote for not less than two minutes and no more than twenty-two minutes, the Speaker shall  
1202 close said system and cause totals to be displayed and a record made of how each member  
1203 present voted; provided, that if at any time during said voting period any standing, joint or  
1204 conference committee is meeting in public or executive sessions, the Speaker shall leave the  
1205 electronic voting machine open for not less than 5 minutes.

1206        Any member desiring to be recorded as being "present" when a yea and nay vote is taken on  
1207 the electronic roll call system shall so notify the Clerk in person after said vote is ordered and  
1208 before the vote is announced.

1209        In the event the electronic voting system is not in operating order, the roll of the House shall  
1210 be called in alphabetical order; provided, however, that no member shall be allowed to vote or to  
1211 answer "present" who was not on the floor before the vote is declared; provided, however, that a  
1212 member, who was in the State House on a previous roll call, may be recorded by reporting to the  
1213 Clerk within five minutes after such vote is closed, unless objection is made thereto and it is  
1214 seconded; and provided further that the presiding officer shall not, for said purpose, interrupt the

1215 member who is speaking on the floor; provided, however, that such request may be announced to  
1216 the House subsequent to the five minutes. The Speaker shall not entertain any requests beyond  
1217 said five-minute period. Once the voting has begun it shall not be interrupted except for the  
1218 purpose of questioning the validity of a member's vote before the result is announced. Except as  
1219 heretofore provided, any member who shall vote or attempt to vote for another member or any  
1220 person not a member who votes or attempts to vote for a member, or any member or other person  
1221 who willfully tampers with or attempts to impair or destroy in any manner whatsoever the voting  
1222 equipment used by the House, or change the records thereon shall be punished in such manner as  
1223 the House determines; and provided further, that such a violation shall be reported to the Ethics  
1224 Committee. [68.] (56, 57.)

1225 Upon completion of the tally by the Clerk and the announcement of the vote by the Speaker, the  
1226 results of all roll calls conducted shall be conspicuously posted on the website of the General  
1227 Court.

1228 [Amended Jan. 12, 1983; Jan. 11, 1985; Jan. 12, 1987; Jan. 9, 1991; Jan. 24, 2001; Jan. 9,  
1229 2003; Jan. 26, 2005; Feb. 11, 2009; Jan 20, 2011.]

1230 53. The call for yeas and nays shall be decided without debate. If the yeas and nays have been  
1231 ordered before the question is put, the proceedings under Rules 50 and 51 relative to verification  
1232 of the vote by the voices of the members or by a return of divisions shall be omitted; if not, they  
1233 may be called for in lieu of a return by divisions when the Speaker's announcement is doubted by  
1234 a member rising in their place, and, if then ordered, the proceedings under Rules 50 and 51 shall  
1235 be omitted. [69.] (52.)

1236 [Amended Jan. 26, 1999; Jan. 30, 2019.]

1237 Reconsideration.

1238 54. No motion to reconsider a vote shall be entertained unless it is made on the same day on  
1239 which the vote was taken, or before the Orders of the Day have been taken up on the next day  
1240 thereafter on which a quorum is present. If reconsideration is moved on the same day, the motion  
1241 shall be placed first in the Orders of the Day for the succeeding day; but, if it is moved on the  
1242 succeeding day, the motion shall be considered forthwith except that if said motion is moved on  
1243 a day on which an informal session has been designated, it shall be placed in the Orders of the  
1244 Day for the succeeding day. If reconsideration is moved after July first of the second annual  
1245 session and thereafter, on any main question, it shall be considered forthwith. This rule shall not  
1246 prevent the reconsideration of a vote on a subsidiary, incidental or dependent question at any  
1247 time when the main question to which it relates is under consideration; and provided, further,  
1248 that a motion to reconsider a vote on any subsidiary, incidental or dependent question shall not  
1249 remove the main subject under consideration from before the House, but shall be considered at  
1250 the time when it is made. This rule shall not be suspended unless by unanimous consent of the  
1251 members present. [70.] (53.)

1252 [Amended Jan. 12, 1981, Jan. 23, 2007.]

1253 55. When a motion for reconsideration is decided, that decision shall not be reconsidered, and  
1254 no question shall be twice reconsidered; nor shall any vote be reconsidered upon any of the  
1255 following motions:

1256 to recess,

1257 to adjourn,

1258 on sustaining a ruling of the Chair,  
1259 to close debate at a specified time,  
1260 to postpone if voted in the negative,  
1261 to discharge or direct a committee to report,  
1262 to commit or recommit,  
1263 for second or subsequent legislative days,  
1264 for the previous question, or  
1265 for suspension of rules.

1266 This rule shall not be suspended unless by unanimous consent of the members present. [71.]  
1267 (53.)

1268 [Amended Jan. 12, 1981; Jan. 12, 1983; Jan. 9, 1991.]

1269 56. Debate on motions to reconsider shall be limited to fifteen minutes, and no member shall  
1270 occupy more than three minutes, but on a motion to reconsider a vote upon any subsidiary or  
1271 incidental question, debate shall be limited to ten minutes, and no member shall occupy more  
1272 than three minutes.

1273 If the House has voted to close debate on any question, a motion to reconsider said question  
1274 shall be decided without debate. [72.] (52.)

1275 [Amended Jan. 12, 1981; Jan. 12, 1987.]

1276 RULES OF DEBATE.

1277 57. Every member, when about to speak, shall rise and respectfully address the Speaker and  
1278 shall confine themselves to the question under debate. [73.] (39.)

1279 [Amended Jan. 11, 1985.]

1280 58. Every member while speaking shall avoid personalities; and shall sit down when finished.  
1281 No member shall speak out of their place without leave of the Speaker. [73.] (39.)

1282 When two or more members rise at the same time, the Speaker shall name the member  
1283 entitled to the floor, preferring one who rises in their place to one who does not. [74.] (40.)

1284 [Amended Jan. 11, 1985; Jan. 30, 2019.]

1285 59. If a member repeatedly violates any of the rules of the House, or disrupts the orderly  
1286 procedure of the House, the Speaker, after warning the member of such violations, shall call the  
1287 member to order, and order that member to take their seat. A member so called to order shall lose  
1288 the right to speak on the pending subject-matter but shall not be debarred from voting. A member  
1289 so called to order shall remain seated until the House begins consideration of another subject-  
1290 matter or unless the Speaker earlier returns to the member their rights to the floor.

1291 If a member so called to order refuses to immediately take their seat, the Speaker shall  
1292 immediately name that member, who shall be escorted from the Chamber under escort of the  
1293 Sergeant-at-Arms. The matter shall thereupon, on motion, be referred to a special committee of  
1294 three to be appointed by the Speaker. Said special committee shall make a report to the House of  
1295 its recommendations, which report shall be read and accepted.

1296 Having been named, a member shall not be allowed to resume their seat until said member  
1297 has complied with the recommendations of the committee as accepted by the House.

1298 If, after a member is seated or named, the action of the Speaker is appealed, the House shall  
1299 decide the case by a majority vote of the members present and voting, but if there is no  
1300 immediate appeal, the decision of the Speaker shall be conclusive.

1301 [Amended Jan. 12, 1981; Jan. 11, 1985; Feb. 11, 2009; Jan. 30, 2019.]

1302 60. No member shall interrupt another while speaking except by rising to a point of order, to a  
1303 question of personal privilege, to doubt the presence of a quorum, or to ask the person speaking  
1304 to yield.

1305 Members may rise to explain matters personal to them by leave of the presiding officer, but  
1306 shall not discuss pending questions in such explanations.

1307 Questions of personal privilege shall be limited to questions affecting the rights, reputation, and  
1308 conduct of the member in their representative capacities.

1309 Members may rise to ask questions of parliamentary inquiry concerning the pending matter by  
1310 leave of the presiding officer, but shall not debate the pending questions. [75.] (42.)

1311 [Amended Jan. 12, 1981; Feb. 11, 2009; Jan. 30, 2019.]

1312 61. No member shall speak more than once to the prevention of those who have not spoken  
1313 and desire to speak on the same question.

1314 This prohibition shall not apply to those members designated by the committee or committees  
1315 reporting the bill.

1316 No member shall occupy more than thirty minutes at a time while speaking on any question  
1317 where debate is unlimited.

1318 Unless the operation of another rule provides to the contrary (such as previous question,  
1319 limitation of debate, etc.), no member shall be prohibited from speaking more than once on any  
1320 question when no other member who has not spoken is seeking recognition by the Chair. [76.]  
1321 (41.)

1322 Motions.

1323 62. Every motion shall be reduced to writing, if the Speaker so directs. [77.] (44.)

1324 63. A motion need not be seconded, except an appeal from the decision of the Chair, and may  
1325 be withdrawn by the mover if no objection is made. [78.] (44.)

1326 [Amended Jan. 12, 1981.]

1327 Limit of Debate.

1328 64. A motion to recess or adjourn shall always be first in order, and shall be decided without  
1329 debate; and on the motions to close debate at a specified time, to postpone to a time certain, to  
1330 commit or recommit, not exceeding ten minutes shall be allowed for debate, and no member  
1331 shall speak more than three minutes. On the motion to discharge any committee, or on a motion  
1332 directing any committee to report matters before it, not exceeding fifteen minutes shall be  
1333 allowed for debate, and no member shall speak more than three minutes.

1334 If the main motion is undebatable, any subsidiary or incidental motion made relating to it  
1335 shall also be decided without debate. [79.] (52.) [See Rules 56 and 83.]

1336 [Amended Jan. 12, 1981.]



1337 64A. Debate on the question on adoption of orders for second and subsequent legislative days  
1338 shall be limited to ten minutes, and no member shall speak more than three minutes. After  
1339 entering into a second or subsequent legislative day, the House shall immediately proceed to  
1340 consideration of engrossed bills, reports of committees, papers from the Senate or the Orders of  
1341 the Day. This rule shall not be suspended unless by unanimous consent of the members present.

1342 [Adopted Jan. 12, 1983.]

1343 65. When a question is before the House, until it is disposed of, the Speaker shall receive no  
1344 motion that does not relate to the same, except the motion to recess or adjourn or some other  
1345 motion that has precedence either by express rule of the House, or because it is privileged in its  
1346 nature; and the Speaker shall receive no motion relating to the same, except,—

1347 for the previous question, . . . . .

1348 to close debate at a specified time, . . . . .

1349 to postpone to a time certain, . . . . .

1350 to commit (or recommit), . . . . .

1351 to amend, . . . . . See Rules 66, 67 and 68

1352 See Rules 64, 69 and 70

1353 See Rules 64 and 70

1354 See Rules 64 and 71

1355 See Rules 72, 73, 74 and 75

1356 — which several motions shall have precedence in the order in which they are arranged in  
1357 this rule. [80.] (46.)

1358 [Amended Jan. 11, 1985.]

1359 Previous Question.

1360 66. Any member may call for the previous question on the main question.

1361 The previous question shall be put in the following form: "Shall the main question be now  
1362 put?" and all debate on the main question shall be suspended until the previous question is  
1363 decided.

1364 The adoption of the previous question shall require the affirmative vote of two-thirds of the  
1365 members present and voting and shall put an end to all debate, and bring the House to direct vote  
1366 upon pending amendments, if any, in their regular order, and then upon the main question.

1367 A motion to reconsider the vote on any of the pending amendments shall be decided without  
1368 debate. [81.]

1369 [Amended Jan. 12, 1981.]

1370 67. Any member may call for the previous question on any pending amendment.

1371 The previous question shall be put in the following form: "Shall the question on adoption of  
1372 the amendment be now put?" and all debate shall be suspended until the previous question is  
1373 decided.

1374 The adoption of the previous question on a pending amendment shall require the affirmative  
1375 vote of two-thirds of the members present and voting and shall put an end to all debate and bring  
1376 the House to a direct vote upon the pending amendment.

1377 A motion to reconsider the vote on the pending amendment shall be decided without debate.

1378 [Amended Jan. 12, 1981.]

1379 68. The previous question shall be decided without debate.

1380 Motion to Close Debate at a Specified Time.

1381 69. Debate may be closed at any time not less than thirty minutes from the adoption of a  
1382 motion to that effect. This rule shall not be suspended unless by unanimous consent of the  
1383 members present. [85.] (47.)

1384 Motion to Postpone to a Time Certain.

1385 70. When a motion is made to postpone to a time certain, and different times are proposed,  
1386 the question shall first be taken on the most remote time; and the time shall be determined before  
1387 the question is put on postponement, which may then be rejected if the House sees fit. [87.] (51.)

1388 Motion to Commit.

1389 71. When a motion is made to commit, and different committees are proposed, the question  
1390 shall be taken in the following order:

1391 a standing committee of the House,

1392 a select committee of the House,

1393 a joint standing committee,

1394 a joint selected committee;

1395 and a subject may be recommitted to the same committee or to another committee at the

1396 pleasure of the House. [88.] (48.)

1397 Motion to Amend.

1398 72. A motion to amend an amendment is a motion offering an amendment in the second

1399 degree and may be received; a motion to amend an amendment in the second degree is a motion

1400 offering an amendment in the third degree and shall not be allowed. This rule shall not be

1401 suspended unless by unanimous consent of the members present. [89.]

1402 [Amended Jan. 12, 1983.]

1403 73. No motion or proposition on a subject different from that under consideration shall be

1404 admitted under color of amendment. This rule shall not be suspended unless by unanimous

1405 consent of the members present. [90.] (50.)

1406 [Amended Jan. 12, 1987.]

1407 73A. No motion to amend a report from the committee on Ways and Means or a report from

1408 the committee on Bills in the Third Reading, when such an amendment contains an expenditure

1409 of public money or an increase or decrease in taxes, shall be considered unless a brief

1410 explanation of the amendment is stated.

1411 [Adopted Jan. 17, 1995; Amended Jan. 26, 1999.]

1412 74. A question containing two or more propositions capable of division shall be divided  
1413 whenever desired by any member, if the question includes points so distinct and separate that,  
1414 one of them being taken away, the other will stand as a complete proposition. The motion to  
1415 strike out and insert shall be considered as one proposition and therefore indivisible. The  
1416 question on ordering a bill or resolve to a third reading, or to be engrossed, or to be enacted, or  
1417 similar main motions shall be considered as indivisible under this rule. This rule shall not be  
1418 suspended unless by unanimous consent of the members present. [91.] (45.)

1419 [Amended Jan. 12, 1983.]

1420 75. In filling blanks, the largest sum and longest time shall be put first. [92.] (51.) [See Rule  
1421 70.]

1422 Declaration of Recess.

1423 76. The Speaker may declare a recess of 15 minutes duration, or less.

1424 [Amended Jan. 9, 1991; Jan. 29, 2015.]

1425 Appeal.

1426 77. No appeal from the decision of the Speaker shall be entertained unless it is seconded; and  
1427 no other business shall be in order until the question on the appeal has been disposed of. Debate  
1428 shall be limited to 15 minutes on the question of sustaining a ruling by the Chair, and no member  
1429 shall occupy more than three minutes. [94.] (43A.) [See Rule 2.]

1430 [Amended Jan. 9, 1989; Jan. 29, 2015.]

1431 Resolves.

1432 78. Such of these rules as are applicable to bills, whether of the House or of the Senate, shall  
1433 apply likewise to such resolves as require the concurrence of the Senate and approval by the  
1434 Governor in order to become law and have force as such. [95.]

1435 Seats.

1436 79. (1) The desk on the right of the Speaker shall be assigned to the use of the Clerk and such  
1437 persons as they may employ to assist said Clerk, and that on the left to the use of the chair and  
1438 vice-chair of the committee on Bills in the Third Reading.

1439 (2) The Speaker shall assign members to vacant seats. The seat assigned to any member, other  
1440 than seats assigned under paragraph (1) of this rule, shall be their seat for the year and for such  
1441 additional years as said member may elect so long as service in the House remains continuous.  
1442 An exchange of seats may be made with the approval of the Speaker. [98.]

1443 [Amended Jan. 11, 1985; May 5, 1993; Jan. 30, 2019.]

1444 Privilege of the Floor.

1445 80. The following persons shall be entitled to admission to the House of Representatives,  
1446 during the session thereof, to stand in an area designated by the Speaker in the rear of the  
1447 Chamber, unless otherwise invited by said Speaker to occupy seats not numbered:

1448 (1) The Governor and the Lieutenant-Governor, members of the Executive Council, Secretary  
1449 of the Commonwealth, Treasurer and Receiver-General, Auditor of the Commonwealth,  
1450 Attorney-General, Librarian and Assistant Librarian;

1451 (2) The members of the Senate;

1452 (3) Authorized employees of the House and persons in the exercise of an official duty directly  
1453 connected with the business of the House; or

1454 (4) Contestants for seats in the House, whose papers are in the hands of a special committee  
1455 of the House, may be admitted, while their cases are pending, to seats to be assigned by the  
1456 Speaker.

1457 No other person shall be admitted to the floor during the session, except upon the permission  
1458 of the Speaker.

1459 No legislative agent or counsel may be admitted to the floor of the House Chamber during a  
1460 session unless that part of the session is ceremonial in nature in which no other legislative  
1461 business is conducted.

1462 The legislative reporters shall be entitled to the privileges of the reporters' galleries.

1463 This rule shall not be suspended unless by unanimous consent of the members present. [99.] (60,  
1464 61.)

1465 [Amended Jan. 9, 1991, Jan. 23, 2007; Jan. 30, 2019.]

1466 Representatives' Chamber and Adjoining Rooms.

1467 81. (a) Use of the Representatives' Chamber members' corridor or adjoining rooms shall be  
1468 for official business or educational purposes only and shall be subject to the approval of the  
1469 Speaker or the committee on Rules. The provisions of this paragraph shall not apply if the  
1470 purpose of admittance is to attend a meeting in an adjoining room to which members of the  
1471 general public are allowed to attend.

1472 (b) No legislative agent or counsel shall be admitted to the members' corridor or adjoining  
1473 rooms. No other person shall be admitted to the members' corridor or adjoining rooms, except  
1474 persons entitled to the privileges of the floor of the House unless upon written invitation of a  
1475 member bearing the name of the member and the person the member invites. Upon entering, the  
1476 invitation shall be given to the court officer assigned to the area. The provisions of this paragraph  
1477 shall not apply if the purpose of admittance is to attend a meeting in an adjoining room to which  
1478 members of the general public are allowed to attend.

1479 (c) No person shall be admitted to the north gallery of the House except upon a card of the  
1480 Speaker.

1481 (d) Subject to the approval and direction of the committee on Rules during the session and of  
1482 the Speaker after prorogation, the use of the reporters' galleries of the House Chamber shall be  
1483 under the control of the organization of legislative reporters known as the Massachusetts State  
1484 House Press Association and the State House Broadcasters Association.

1485 (e) Every legislative reporter desiring admission to the reporters' galleries shall state in  
1486 writing that they are not the agent or representative of any person or corporation interested in  
1487 legislation before the General Court, and will not act as representative of any such person or  
1488 corporation while retaining a place in the galleries; but nothing herein contained shall prevent  
1489 such legislative reporter from engaging in other employment, provided such other employment is  
1490 specifically approved by the committee on Rules and reported to the House.

1491 (f) All formal and informal sessions of the House of Representatives shall be open to both  
1492 commercial and public radio and television, except designated times during such sessions, as  
1493 determined by the House, reserved for the consideration of non-controversial business which



1494 does not give rise to debate. The manner and conditions of such broadcasts shall be established  
1495 by the Speaker. Television, radio or web-broadcasts may be prohibited on any given day by the  
1496 Speaker.

1497 All formal and informal sessions shall be broadcast live on House television and  
1498 livestreamed on the General Court website. Audio or video recordings of prior formal and  
1499 informal sessions for the current biennial session shall be made available to the public on the  
1500 General Court website.

1501 The Speaker may arrange for a limited number of remote connections at a location  
1502 outside of the Representatives' Chamber for commercial and public radio and television to obtain  
1503 audio and visual feeds of formal sessions being recorded or streamed by the House. Video or  
1504 audio obtained from such feed shall be used only for reporting purposes. Access to the  
1505 connections provided shall be on a first-come-first serve basis; provided, however, that  
1506 commercial and public radio and television acquiring access shall be required to share the audio  
1507 or video feeds with other any other commercial and public radio and television station seeking  
1508 access. The manner and conditions of access shall be established by the Speaker with the  
1509 approval of the House. Access may be prohibited by the Speaker with the approval of the House.

1510 Clauses (a) through (e) of this rule shall not be suspended unless by unanimous consent of the  
1511 members present. [100.] (59.)

1512 [Amended April 18, 1979; Jan. 12, 1983; Jan. 12, 1987; Jan. 9, 1991; Jan. 26, 1999, Jan. 23,  
1513 2007; Jan. 30, 2019.]

1514 Quorum.

1515 82. Eighty-one members present shall constitute a quorum for the organization of the House  
1516 and the transaction of business. [See amendments to the Constitution, Art. XXXIII.]

1517 In the event that a quorum is not present, the presiding officer shall compel the attendance of  
1518 a quorum. During the absence of a quorum, no other business may be transacted or motions  
1519 entertained except a declaration of adjournment or a recess by the Speaker. [105.]

1520 [Amended Jan. 12, 1981; Jan. 14, 1997.]

1521 Debate on Motions for Suspension of Rules.

1522 83. The question of suspension of House Rules 45, 47, 56, 61, 64, 66, 67, 68, 69, 77 and 83  
1523 shall be decided without debate. Debate upon the motion for the suspension of any other House  
1524 rule, unless otherwise indicated, or any joint rule shall be limited to fifteen minutes and no  
1525 member shall occupy more than three minutes. This rule shall not be suspended unless by  
1526 unanimous consent of the members present. [102.] (52.)

1527 [Amended Jan. 12, 1981; Jan. 9, 1989.]

1528 84. Unless otherwise indicated, nothing in the House rules or joint rules shall be suspended,  
1529 altered or repealed unless two-thirds of the members present and voting consent thereto. This  
1530 rule shall not be suspended unless by unanimous consent of the members present. [103.] (63.)

1531 [Amended Jan. 12, 1981.]

1532 84A. The Clerk may, due to technical limitations or upon exigent circumstances, elect to  
1533 waive any requirement relative to the electronic availability and posting on the website of the  
1534 General Court of any bills, resolves, summaries or other documents contained herein; provided,  
1535 however, that if the Clerk so waives any such requirement he shall make paper copies of the

1536 documents available to all members and the public within the limitation established for the  
1537 electronic availability and posting on the website of the General Court of any bills, resolves,  
1538 summaries or other documents contained herein.

1539 [Adopted Feb. 11, 2009.]

1540 Reference to Committee on Rules.

1541 85. All motions or orders authorizing committees of the House to travel or to employ  
1542 stenographers, all propositions involving special investigations by committees of the House, all  
1543 resolutions presented for adoption by the House only, and all motions and orders except those  
1544 which relate to the procedure of the House or are privileged in their nature or are authorized by  
1545 Rule 65, shall be referred without debate to the committee on Rules, which shall report thereon,  
1546 recommending what action should be taken. The committee shall not recommend suspension of  
1547 Joint Rule 9, unless evidence satisfactory to the committee is produced that the petitioners have  
1548 previously given notice, by public advertisement or otherwise, equivalent to that required by  
1549 Chapter 3 of the General Laws. [104.] (13A.)

1550 [Amended Jan. 29, 2015.]

1551 85A. The House Business Manager, with the approval of the Counsel appointed pursuant to  
1552 Rule 13B, shall provide that outside, independent audits of House financial accounts be  
1553 conducted for each fiscal year upon receipt of the fiscal year end appropriation activity with  
1554 balance report from the comptroller of the Commonwealth. The audit shall be conducted in  
1555 accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America and the  
1556 standards applicable to financial audits contained in Government Auditing Standards, issued by  
1557 the Comptroller General of the United States. The House Business Manager shall provide the

1558 independent auditor with requested documents for such audit. A copy of such audit shall be filed  
1559 with the Clerk of the House and said copies shall be made available to the members and the  
1560 general public upon request. The procurement of an independent auditor pursuant to this rule  
1561 shall not be subject to rule 87.

1562 [Adopted Jan. 11, 1985, Amended Jan. 20, 2011; Jan. 30, 2019.]

1563 Parliamentary Practice.

1564 86. The rules of parliamentary practice shall govern the House in all cases to which they are  
1565 applicable, and in which they are not inconsistent with these rules or the joint rules of the two  
1566 branches. (62.)

1567 Procurement.

1568 87. (a) All procurements for goods or services shall be completed by the House Business  
1569 Manager.

1570 (b) All procurements for goods or services shall, to the extent practicable, be made pursuant to a  
1571 statewide procurement contract established by the operational services division.

1572 (c) Upon certification by the House Business Manager that a necessary procurement cannot be  
1573 made using a statewide procurement contract established by the operational services division, the  
1574 House Business Manager may procure the required goods or services pursuant to the following:

1575 (i) for a procurement of a supply or service in an amount of less than \$10,000, the House  
1576 Business Manager shall use sound business practices;

1577 (ii) for a procurement of a supply or service in an amount of \$10,000, but less than \$100,000,  
1578 the House Business Manager shall seek written or oral quotations from no fewer than 3 persons  
1579 customarily providing such supply or service. The House Business Manager shall record the  
1580 names and addresses of all persons from whom quotations were sought, the names and addresses  
1581 of all persons submitting quotations and the date and amount of each quotation. The House  
1582 Business Manager shall transmit all quotes to House Counsel with the House Business  
1583 Manager's recommendation as to what quotation offers the needed quality of supply or service at  
1584 the best value for the House. House Counsel shall review the quotations to ensure compliance  
1585 with this rule. Upon completion of the review by the House Counsel, the House Business  
1586 Manager shall award the contract to the responsible person whose quotation offers the needed  
1587 quality of supply or service and which represents the best value for the House;

1588 (iii) for a procurement of a supply or service in an amount exceeding \$100,000, the House  
1589 Business Manager shall seek proposals through a competitive bid process established by House  
1590 Counsel; provided, however, that House Counsel shall file the competitive bid process with the  
1591 Clerk of the House no later than March 31st of the first year of the session.

1592 (d) Notwithstanding subsections (a) through (c), all procurements for legal consulting services  
1593 and legal resources shall be handled exclusively by Counsel in compliance with the provisions of  
1594 this rule.

1595 (e) The House Business Manager shall maintain a file on each contract not executed using a  
1596 statewide procurement contract established by the operational services division and in excess of  
1597 \$10,000 and shall include in such file a copy of all documents constituting the agreement for  
1598 goods and services and all documents evidencing compliance with this rule. The House Business

1599 Manager shall make the file available for inspection within said office by members of the House  
1600 for at least 3 years from the date of final payment under the contract; provided, however, that the  
1601 Business Manager, in consultation with Counsel, shall redact from said file any information  
1602 which (i) is legally privileged; (ii) is proprietary; (iii) is related to individual members or House  
1603 personnel; or (iv) is otherwise protected by state or federal law.

1604 (f) Whenever the time required to comply with a requirement of this rule would endanger the  
1605 health, safety or convenience of the members, staff or visitors to the House of Representatives,  
1606 the House Business Manager may make an emergency procurement without satisfying the  
1607 requirements of this rule; provided, however, that both the House Business Manager and Counsel  
1608 certify in writing: (i) that an emergency exists and explain the nature thereof; (ii) that said  
1609 emergency procurement is limited to only supplies or services necessary to meet the emergency;  
1610 (iii) that said emergency procurement conforms to the requirements of this rule to the extent  
1611 practicable under the circumstances; and (iv) shall include each contractor's name, the amount  
1612 and the type of each contract, the supplies or services provided under each contract, and (vii) the  
1613 basis for determining the need for an emergency procurement. Such certification shall be filed  
1614 with the Clerk of the House prior to an emergency procurement. [Adopted Jan. 20, 2011,  
1615 Amended Jan. 23, 2013; Jan. 29, 2015; Feb. 19, 2015; Jan. 30, 2019.]

1616 Professional Standards and Conduct

1617 88. (a) As used in Rules 88 to 100, inclusive, the following terms shall, unless the context  
1618 clearly requires otherwise, have the following meanings:-

1619 "Authorized party", a party authorized to receive a complaint of harassment or retaliation  
1620 pursuant to Rule 93.

1621 "Counsel", Legal Counsel to the House appointed pursuant to Rule 13B.

1622 "Director", the Director of Human Resources appointed pursuant to Rule 90.

1623 "Discriminatory harassment", verbal or physical conduct that:

1624 (1) demeans, stereotypes, or shows hostility or aversion toward an individual or group because

1625 of the individual's race, color, religion, national origin, sex, ancestry, sexual orientation, age,

1626 disability status, genetic information, gender identity, active military personnel status,

1627 transgender status or membership in any other protected class and;

1628 (2) (i) has the purpose or effect of creating an intimidating, hostile, humiliating or offensive

1629 working environment;

1630 (ii) has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with a member, officer, intern or

1631 employee's work performance or official duties; or

1632 (iii) otherwise adversely affects a member, officer, intern or employee's employment

1633 opportunities or ability to fulfill their official duties or conduct business before the House.

1634 "EEO Officer", the Equal Employment Opportunity Officer appointed pursuant to Rule 89.

1635 "Harassment", discriminatory harassment or sexual harassment engaged in by a member, officer,

1636 intern or employee of the House or by a third party.

1637 "Sexual harassment", sexual advances, requests for sexual favors and verbal or physical conduct

1638 of a sexual nature when:

1639 (1) submission to or rejection of such advances, requests or conduct is made either explicitly or

1640 implicitly a term or condition of employment or as a basis for employment decisions, or as a

1641 term, condition or basis for the support of certain policy objectives, political aspirations or  
1642 business before the House; or

1643 (2) such advances, requests or conduct have the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering  
1644 with a member, officer, intern or employee's work performance or official duties by creating an  
1645 intimidating, hostile, humiliating or sexually offensive work environment.

1646 Under this definition, direct or implied requests for sexual favors in exchange for actual or  
1647 promised (i) employment benefits such as favorable reviews, salary increases, promotions,  
1648 increased benefits or continued employment or (ii) support for certain policy objectives, political  
1649 aspirations or business before the House, shall constitute sexual harassment.

1650 The definition of sexual harassment is broad and may include other sexually oriented conduct,  
1651 whether or not it is intended to violate this Rule, that is unwelcome and has the effect of creating  
1652 a workplace environment that is hostile, offensive, intimidating or humiliating to a member,  
1653 officer, intern or employee of the same or different gender, or those who do not identify as  
1654 gender binary.

1655 "Supervisor", a member, officer or employee having direct authority or oversight over one or  
1656 more employees.

1657 "Third party", any person visiting the House of Representatives, or conducting official business  
1658 or work with any member, officer or employee of the House.

1659 (b) The House is committed to providing fair and equal opportunity for employment and  
1660 advancement to all employees and applicants.



1661 It is our policy and practice to assign, promote and compensate employees on the basis of  
1662 qualifications, merit, and competence. Employment practices shall not be influenced nor  
1663 affected by virtue of an applicant's or employee's race, color, religion, national origin, sex,  
1664 ancestry, sexual orientation, age, disability status, genetic information, gender identity, active  
1665 military personnel status, transgender status or membership in any other protected class.

1666 This policy governs all aspects of recruiting, hiring, training, on-the-job treatment, promotion,  
1667 transfer, discharge and all other terms and conditions of employment.

1668 Without limiting the applicability of the foregoing, the House is committed to creating and  
1669 maintaining a work environment in which all members, officers, interns and employees of the  
1670 House, and all third parties, are treated with respect and free from any form of harassment,  
1671 including harassment based on an individual's membership in any protected class. To that end,  
1672 the House will not tolerate harassment of any kind by any member, officer, intern, employee or  
1673 third party in the workplace or otherwise in connection with the official duties or employment  
1674 responsibilities of a member, officer, third party, intern or employee. Any individual who  
1675 believes that they may have been the object of harassment, or any individual who witnesses  
1676 something they think may be harassment, is strongly encouraged to report that information to an  
1677 authorized party.

1678 The House shall promote the safety and respectful treatment of all members, officers, interns and  
1679 employees of the House, and all third parties, by establishing uniform procedures for making and  
1680 receiving complaints of harassment and initiating, conducting and concluding investigations into  
1681 complaints of harassment.

1682 A violation of this policy will subject the member, officer, employee or intern to discipline  
1683 pursuant to Rule 95 and Rule 96.

1684 (c) (1) Discriminatory harassment may include, but is not limited to, the following conduct:

1685 (i) epithets, slurs, insults or negative stereotyping related to the protected classes;

1686 (ii) acts or jokes that are hostile or demeaning with regard to the protected classes;

1687 (iii) threatening, intimidating or hostile acts that relate to the protected classes;

1688 (iv) displays of written or graphic material that demean, ridicule or show hostility toward an

1689 individual or group because of membership in a protected class, including material circulated or

1690 displayed in the workplace, including District Offices, such as on an employee's desk or

1691 workspace, or on House equipment or bulletin boards, including but not limited to House-issued

1692 computers, laptops and personal device assistants;

1693 (v) verbal or non-verbal innuendo, and micro-aggressions; and

1694 (vi) other conduct that falls within the definition of discriminatory harassment set forth above.

1695 (2) Sexual harassment includes, but is not limited to, the following conduct:

1696 (i) gender-based bullying, including bullying based on transgender or non-gender binary status;

1697 (ii) attempts to coerce an unwilling person into a sexual relationship;

1698 (iii) repeatedly subjecting a person to unwelcome sexual or romantic attention;

1699 (iv) punishing a person's refusal to comply with a request for sexual conduct; and

1700 (v) conditioning a benefit on submitting to sexual advances.

1701 (3) Conduct that, if unwelcome, and depending upon the totality of the circumstances, including  
1702 the severity of the conduct and its pervasiveness, may constitute sexual harassment includes, but  
1703 is not limited to, the following:

1704 (i) unwelcome sexual advances, flirtations or propositions, whether they involve physical  
1705 touching or not;

1706 (ii) sexual "kidding," epithets, jokes, written or oral references to sexual conduct;

1707 (iii) gossip regarding one's sex life;

1708 (iv) comment on a person's body or an individual's sexual activity, deficiencies, or prowess;

1709 (v) displaying sexually suggestive objects, pictures, posters or cartoons;

1710 (vi) unwelcome leering or staring at a person;

1711 (vii) sexual gestures and suggestive or insulting sounds, such as whistling or comments with  
1712 sexual content or meaning;

1713 (viii) uninvited physical contact, such as touching, hugging, purposely brushing against the body,  
1714 patting or pinching;

1715 (ix) indecent exposure;

1716 (x) inquiries into one's sexual experiences;

1717 (xi) discussion of one's sexual activities;

1718 (xii) sexual emails; and

1719 (xiii) sexting, or sexual messages or images posted on social media, for example, texts, instant  
1720 messages, Facebook posts, tweets, Snapchat, Instagram or blog entries.

1721 (d) No member, officer or employee of the House shall retaliate, including against a member,  
1722 officer, intern, or employee of the House who has complained about harassment or participated  
1723 in an investigation into an allegation of harassment or retaliation. Any person who believes that  
1724 they may have been the subject of retaliation for having complained of harassment or retaliation,  
1725 or for having participated in an investigation related to an allegation of harassment or retaliation,  
1726 is strongly encouraged to report that information to an authorized party.

1727 [Added Mar. 15, 2018; Jan. 30, 2019.]

1728 89. (a) The House shall employ a full-time Equal Employment Opportunity Officer. The  
1729 committee on Rules shall appoint a qualified person with expertise in harassment prevention,  
1730 conduct of investigations, and identifying barriers to equal employment opportunity to act as the  
1731 EEO Officer at such compensation as the committee on Rules shall approve.

1732 The EEO Officer shall serve a term of two years from the date of appointment, unless the EEO  
1733 Officer sooner resigns, retires or is removed; provided, however, that the EEO Officer may only  
1734 be removed: (i) for misfeasance, malfeasance or nonfeasance, as determined by agreement of  
1735 Counsel and the Director, and approved by a majority vote of the committee on Rules; or (ii) by  
1736 a majority roll call vote of the House.

1737 The EEO Officer may employ such assistants as may be necessary in the discharge of the EEO  
1738 Officer's duties, subject to the approval of the committee on Rules, and may expend with like  
1739 approval such sums as may be necessary for the discharge of their duties.

1740 (b) The EEO Officer shall receive, review and investigate all complaints alleging a violation of  
1741 Rule 88, the House Anti-Harassment Policy, or the House Equal Employment Policy, including,  
1742 but not limited to complaints alleging harassment or retaliation. Complaints shall be received,  
1743 reviewed and investigated pursuant to Rules 93 to 96, inclusive.

1744 The EEO Officer shall develop and implement written policies and procedures for receiving,  
1745 investigating, resolving and maintaining records of complaints against members, officers, interns  
1746 or employees of the House, or against third parties, made in accordance with Rules 93 to 98,  
1747 inclusive.

1748 (c) (1) The EEO Officer, in conjunction with the committee on Human Resources and Employee  
1749 Engagement and the Director, shall provide for training of members. Training shall include,  
1750 without limitation, instruction on: (i) House equal employment policies, including the complaint  
1751 and investigation process; (ii) workplace harassment specifically, including techniques for  
1752 bystander intervention and other best practices; (iii) prohibition on retaliation; (iv) best  
1753 management practices; (v) professionalism and respect; and (vi) practices for monitoring the  
1754 workplace for issues and identifying risk factors. Each member shall make a signed, written  
1755 acknowledgement of the member's completion of the training, which shall be retained by the  
1756 EEO Officer.

1757 (2) The EEO Officer, in conjunction with the committee on Human Resources and Employee  
1758 Engagement and the Director, shall provide for annual training for all appointed officers and  
1759 employees. Training shall include, without limitation, instruction on (i) House equal employment  
1760 policies, including the complaint and investigation process; (ii) workplace harassment

1761 specifically, including techniques for bystander intervention and other best practices; (iii)  
1762 prohibition on retaliation; and (iv) professionalism and respect.

1763 Separate trainings shall be held for those appointed officers and employees who are supervisors  
1764 and those appointed officers and employees who are not supervisors. The content of the training  
1765 shall be tailored appropriately to the recipients. Supervisors shall be specifically trained on best  
1766 management practices.

1767 Each appointed officer and employee shall make a signed, written acknowledgement of their  
1768 completion of the training, which shall be retained by the EEO Officer, who shall provide a copy  
1769 to the Director to be maintained in their personnel file.

1770 (3) The EEO Officer shall provide for appropriate additional training to members, officers or  
1771 employees at any time that the EEO Officer deems necessary or appropriate, including upon the  
1772 request of a member, officer or employee.

1773 (4) The EEO Officer, in conjunction with the Director, shall provide for training for interns  
1774 during the intern orientation process. The training shall include without limitation, instruction  
1775 on: (i) House equal employment policies, including the complaint and investigation process; (ii)  
1776 workplace harassment specifically, including techniques for bystander intervention and other  
1777 best practices; (iii) prohibition on retaliation; and (iv) professionalism and respect. Each intern  
1778 shall make a signed, written acknowledgement of the intern's completion of the training, which  
1779 shall be retained by the EEO Officer, who shall provide a copy to the Director to be maintained  
1780 in the Director's records.

1781 (d) The EEO Officer shall develop practices and procedures for auditing House offices, including  
1782 random audits, to ensure the maintenance of best practices. Audits may include interviews and

1783 in-office observation. All members, officers, interns and employees shall comply with a request  
1784 from the EEO Officer to conduct an audit. [Adopted Mar. 15, 2018.]

1785 90. (a) The House shall employ a full-time Director of Human Resources. The committee on  
1786 Rules shall appoint a qualified person to act as the Director at such compensation as the  
1787 committee on Rules shall approve.

1788 The Director shall serve a term of two years from the date of appointment, unless the Director  
1789 sooner resigns, retires or is removed; provided, however, that the Director may only be removed:  
1790 (i) for misfeasance, malfeasance or nonfeasance, as determined by agreement of the EEO Officer  
1791 and Counsel and approved by a majority vote of the committee on Rules; or (ii) by a majority  
1792 roll call vote of the House.

1793 (b) The Director may employ such assistants as may be necessary in the discharge of the  
1794 Director's duties, subject to the approval of the committee on Rules, and may expend with like  
1795 approval such sums as may be necessary for the discharge of their duties.

1796 (c) The Director shall develop and oversee standardized practices and procedures, which shall  
1797 apply to all applications for employment. The practices and procedures shall include, but shall  
1798 not be limited to: (i) a standard application for employment; (ii) mandatory background and  
1799 reference checks, the results of which shall be reported by the Director to the applicant's  
1800 prospective appointing authority; and (iii) a standard offer letter for each position within the  
1801 House.

1802 (d) The Director shall develop and oversee standardized practices and procedures, which shall  
1803 apply to all employees and appointed officers of the House. These practices and procedures shall  
1804 include or address, without limitation: (i) regular meetings between the Director, the EEO

1805 Officer and employees who are supervisors, including an initial meeting within 14 days of the  
1806 employee assuming such a role; (ii) guidelines for conducting employee performance reviews;  
1807 (iii) a program of progressive discipline; and (iv) separations from employment including exit  
1808 interviews for terminated employees.

1809 (e) The Director shall develop employee classifications, which shall include written job  
1810 descriptions, salary ranges and schedules. The classifications shall be published in the employee  
1811 and supervisor handbooks. The Director may develop a seniority system on which employee  
1812 salaries may be based. A seniority system shall be published in the employee handbook.

1813 (f) The Director shall develop practices and procedures for receiving, investigating and  
1814 resolving personnel complaints unrelated to Rule 88, the House Anti-Harassment Policy, or the  
1815 House Equal Employment Policy.

1816 (g) The Director shall annually publish: (i) an Employee Handbook; and (ii) an Intern  
1817 Handbook. Each handbook shall be developed with the advice and approval of the EEO Officer  
1818 and Counsel, and shall be submitted to the committee on Human Resources and Employee  
1819 Engagement for review and approval at least 14 days prior to publication.

1820 The handbooks shall be available as follows:

1821 (i) the Director shall post both handbooks on the human resources web portal;

1822 (ii) the Director shall email an electronic copy of the Employee Handbook to each employee  
1823 within 10 days of its publication and require that each employee sign a written acknowledgement  
1824 of receipt and return such acknowledgement to the Director within 5 days;



1825 (iii) the Director shall email an electronic copy of the Employee Handbook to each new  
1826 employee within 5 days of the employee's start date and require that the employee sign a written  
1827 acknowledgement of receipt and return such acknowledgement to the Director within 5 days;

1828 (iv) the committee on Human Resources and Employee Engagement shall provide an Intern  
1829 Handbook to each intern on the first day of their internship. Upon receipt of the Intern  
1830 Handbook the intern shall sign a written acknowledgement of receipt that day, which shall be  
1831 maintained by the committee, with a copy sent to the Director;

1832 (vi) hard copies of each handbook shall be available in the offices of the Director, the EEO  
1833 Officer, Counsel and the Clerk;

1834 (vi) the Director shall cause electronic copies of each handbook to be downloaded onto the  
1835 desktop of each House computer; and

1836 (vii) in formats accessible to all members, officers and employees.

1837 (h) (1) The Committee on Human Resources and Employee Engagement, in consultation with  
1838 the Director, shall develop policies to address individuals who provide services to the House in a  
1839 volunteer capacity or otherwise without receiving compensation

1840 (2) The Committee on Human Resources and Employee Engagement, in consultation with the  
1841 Director and subject to the approval of Counsel, shall develop policies pro-bono service and  
1842 charitable and community service activities by members, officers and employees of the House.

1843 [Added Mar. 15. 2018; Amended Jan. 30, 2019.]

1844 91. The Director shall, in consultation with the EEO Officer, create and maintain an internal web  
1845 portal for members, officers and employees. The web portal shall provide relevant information

1846 on human resource policies and procedures, including, without limitation, the Rules of the  
1847 House, each handbook published by the Director, explanations of complaint and investigation  
1848 procedures, contact information for the Director, the EEO Officer and Counsel, training  
1849 opportunities and schedules and the directory of committee staff required pursuant to Rule 92.

1850 [Added Mar. 15, 2018.]

1851 92. (a) The House shall employ a full-time Director of Employee Engagement. The committee  
1852 on Human Resources and Employee Engagement shall appoint a qualified person to act as the  
1853 Director of Employee Engagement at such compensation as the committee on Human Resources  
1854 and Employee Engagement shall approve.

1855 (b) The Director of Employee Engagement shall, in consultation with the Director of Human  
1856 Resources: (i) develop methods for enhancing the skills and professional development of  
1857 employees including skills for providing constituent services and engaging with, and ensuring  
1858 the privacy of, members of the public who visit the State House; (ii) explore and develop  
1859 partnerships with national trade organizations to maximize the opportunities for professional  
1860 development available to employees; and (iv) engage employees in roundtable discussions on  
1861 issues of importance or concern.

1862 (c) The Director of Employee Engagement shall assist the committee on Human Resources  
1863 and Employee Engagement with duties as may be assigned by the committee or the Director of  
1864 Human Resources.

1865 (d) The Director of Employee Engagement shall prepare and publish on the house intranet a  
1866 directory of committee staff.

1867 [Added Mar. 15, 2018.]

1868 93. (a) (1) A member who believes that they have been the object of harassment or retaliation,  
1869 who witnesses harassment or retaliation, or who becomes aware of harassment or retaliation  
1870 may make a complaint, either orally or in writing with the EEO Officer, Counsel, or the Director.  
1871 Upon receipt of a complaint pursuant to this subsection, a recipient other than the EEO Officer  
1872 shall forthwith provide a detailed account of the complaint to the EEO Officer for assessment  
1873 pursuant to Rule 94.

1874 (2) An appointed officer, employee or intern of the House who believes that they have been  
1875 the object of harassment or retaliation, who witnesses harassment or retaliation, or who becomes  
1876 aware of harassment or retaliation may make a complaint, either orally or in writing, to any of  
1877 the officer's, employee's or intern's supervisors, the Director, the EEO Officer or Counsel. Upon  
1878 receipt of a complaint pursuant to this subsection, a recipient other than the EEO Officer shall  
1879 forthwith provide a detailed account of the complaint to the EEO Officer for assessment pursuant  
1880 to Rule 94.

1881 (3) A third party who believes that they have been the object of harassment, or who witnesses  
1882 harassment or retaliation may make a complaint, either orally or in writing, with the EEO  
1883 Officer. Upon receipt of a complaint pursuant to this subsection, the EEO Officer shall assess  
1884 the complaint pursuant to Rule 94.

1885 (b) The EEO Officer shall provide guidance for authorized parties who may receive  
1886 complaints under subsection (a), both in the form of the training referenced in Rule 89 and  
1887 otherwise. The guidance shall instruct authorized parties on the proper way to receive  
1888 complaints and to advise complainants on issues including, but not limited to, confidentiality,

1889 prohibition on retaliation and the availability of additional resources and avenues for action for  
1890 the complainant, including possible criminal action where appropriate.

1891 (c) If a complaint, made pursuant to subsection (a), is against the EEO Officer or an employee  
1892 appointed by the EEO Officer, the recipient of the complaint shall notify Counsel, who shall, in  
1893 consultation with the Director, investigate the complaint pursuant to Rules 94 to 96, inclusive.

1894 (d) If, based on the nature and circumstances of the complaint, the EEO Officer believes that  
1895 they cannot objectively assess or investigate a complaint made pursuant to subsection (a) the  
1896 EEO Officer shall refer the matter to Counsel who shall assume responsibility for the assessment  
1897 or investigation or refer the complaint to outside counsel for investigation. The EEO Officer  
1898 shall consult with Counsel to establish guidelines used to identify matters that should be referred  
1899 to Counsel or outside counsel pursuant to this subsection.

1900 [Added Mar. 15, 2018; Amended Jan. 30, 2019.]

1901 94. (a)(1) All complaints alleging harassment or retaliation by or against a member, officer,  
1902 intern or employee of the House, or by or against a third party, received by any member, officer  
1903 or employee of the House, shall be immediately referred to the EEO Officer for assessment.

1904 (2) Upon receiving a complaint alleging harassment or retaliation by or against a member, officer  
1905 or employee of the House, or by or against a third party, the EEO Officer shall promptly  
1906 undertake an assessment to determine whether the complaint is plausible and requires  
1907 investigation. Such assessment shall be completed within two weeks from the date of receiving a  
1908 complaint.

1909 Upon a determination by the EEO Officer that a complaint is plausible and requires  
1910 investigation, the EEO Officer shall commence an investigation of the complaint.

1911 Upon a determination by the EEO Officer that a complaint is not plausible and does not require  
1912 investigation, the EEO Officer shall submit a report to Counsel and the Director describing the  
1913 complaint and the EEO Officer's basis for determining that the complaint lacked plausibility and  
1914 did not require investigation. If either Counsel or the Director objects to the EEO Officer's  
1915 determination, the EEO Officer shall commence an investigation of the complaint.

1916 (b) The EEO Officer shall assess complaints and conduct investigations pursuant to written  
1917 policies and procedures, which shall be established by the EEO Officer pursuant to Rule 98 and  
1918 published on the human resources web portal. The policies and procedures shall ensure that all  
1919 assessments, investigations and reports are confidential to the fullest extent practicable under the  
1920 circumstances and shall include, without limitation, the following: trauma-informed techniques;  
1921 mechanisms for investigating complaints made by witnesses or third parties; standards for  
1922 collecting and maintaining evidence; consideration of interim measures; and methods to tailor  
1923 each investigation to the specific needs of the complainant and particular circumstances of the  
1924 complaint.

1925 (c) The EEO Officer shall complete investigations within 90 days; provided, that the EEO  
1926 Officer may extend the investigation in extraordinary circumstances. The EEO Officer shall  
1927 regularly, but no less frequently than every 2 weeks, update the complainant on the status of the  
1928 investigation. If the EEO Officer believes that interim measures are warranted to protect  
1929 complainants during the investigation, then the EEO shall recommend such measures to the  
1930 appropriate supervisory individual or body.

1931 (d) Upon the conclusion of an investigation, the EEO Officer shall prepare a report summarizing  
1932 the complaint, the EEO Officer's investigation, findings and recommendations, if any, for  
1933 disciplinary, remedial or preventative action, or any combination thereof.

1934 [Added Mar. 15, 2018.]

1935 95. (a) (1) If after completion of an investigation pursuant to Rule 94, the EEO Officer  
1936 determines that a member has violated Rule 88, the EEO Officer shall recommend disciplinary,  
1937 remedial or preventative action, or any combination thereof, as is appropriate and proportional  
1938 under the circumstances, subject to the limitations set forth in paragraphs (2) and (3).

1939 (2) Where the EEO Officer's action recommended pursuant to paragraph (1) does not include  
1940 reprimand, censure, removal from position as a chair or other position of authority, or expulsion,  
1941 prior to imposing such action the EEO Officer shall notify the member of the action and provide  
1942 the member with a copy of the EEO Officer's report. The member may, within 10 days of  
1943 receiving notice, request in writing that the Speaker and Minority Leader appoint a special  
1944 committee pursuant to Rule 96 to review the findings and recommendations of the EEO Officer.  
1945 Upon receipt of said request, the Speaker and Minority Leader shall convene a special committee  
1946 pursuant to Rule 96.

1947 If the member fails to request the appointment of a special committee pursuant to Rule 96 within  
1948 10 days, the EEO Officer shall implement the recommended action.

1949 (3) If the action recommended pursuant to subsection (a) includes reprimand, censure, removal  
1950 from position as a chair or other position of authority, or expulsion, the EEO Officer shall  
1951 request that the Speaker and Minority Leader convene a special committee pursuant to Rule 96  
1952 to review the findings and recommendations of the EEO Officer. Upon receipt of said request

1953 from the EEO Officer, the Speaker and Minority Leader shall appoint a special committee  
1954 pursuant to Rule 96.

1955 (4) Upon the request for a special committee made by the EEO Officer or a member pursuant to  
1956 this subsection, the EEO Officer shall provide the Speaker and Minority Leader with a copy of  
1957 the EEO Officer's report.

1958 (b) (1) If after completion of an investigation pursuant to Rule 94 the EEO Officer concludes that  
1959 an appointed officer, intern or employee has violated Rule 88, the EEO Officer shall notify the  
1960 appointing authority for the appointed officer, intern or employee and recommend and  
1961 implement remedial, preventative or disciplinary action, or any combination thereof, as is  
1962 appropriate and proportional under the circumstances, subject to the limitations set forth in  
1963 paragraph (2). Notwithstanding Rule 97, the appointing authority may inform any other  
1964 supervisors of the appointed officer, intern or employee of the remedial, preventative or  
1965 disciplinary action if the appointing authority believes that sharing such information is necessary  
1966 for maintaining proper supervision of the appointed officer, intern or employee.

1967 (2) If after completion of an investigation pursuant to Rule 94 the EEO Officer concludes that an  
1968 appointed officer, intern or employee has violated Rule 88 and the EEO Officer's action  
1969 recommended pursuant to paragraph (1) includes termination of employment or internship, the  
1970 EEO Officer shall forward the recommendation, with all supporting documentation, to Counsel  
1971 for review and approval. Counsel shall have two business days to review the EEO Officer's  
1972 recommendation. If Counsel approves the recommendation, Counsel shall notify the EEO  
1973 Officer and the Director and the Director shall immediately terminate the individual's

1974 employment or internship. If Counsel rejects the EEO Officer's recommendation, he shall notify  
1975 the EEO Officer and the Speaker and the Speaker shall determine the action to be implemented.

1976 [Added Mar. 15, 2018.]

1977 96. (a) Upon receipt of a request pursuant to Rule 95, the Speaker and Minority Leader shall  
1978 confidentially convene a Special Committee on Professional Conduct, which shall consist of 7  
1979 members, 5 of whom shall be appointed by the Speaker and 2 of whom shall be appointed by the  
1980 Minority Leader. To the extent practicable, membership on the special committee shall be  
1981 apportioned in a way that takes into account the nature of the complaint and the commitment of  
1982 the House to providing fair and equal opportunity in employment. The Speaker shall appoint a  
1983 member to serve as chair. No member who has declared their candidacy for any other local,  
1984 state or federal office shall be appointed to a special committee. Upon appointment of members  
1985 to the committee, the Speaker and Minority Leader shall notify the EEO Officer and the member  
1986 who is the subject of the complaint of the identity of the members appointed. The existence of  
1987 the committee and the identity of the members appointed to the committee shall otherwise  
1988 remain confidential.

1989 (b) The EEO Officer shall provide the members of the special committee with all records  
1990 relevant to the investigation. The special committee shall review all records and may further  
1991 investigate, to the extent that it is necessary to resolve the complaint. The special committee  
1992 may summon witnesses, administer oaths, take testimony and compel the production of books,  
1993 papers, documents and other evidence in connection with its review.

1994 (c) In the case of a special committee convened under this section upon the request for a review  
1995 by a member pursuant to paragraph (2) of subsection (a) of Rule 95, the committee shall



1996 determine whether the EEO Officer's intended action is proportional and appropriate under the  
1997 circumstances. If a majority of the committee so finds, it shall order that the action  
1998 recommended by EEO Officer be implemented, along with any additional disciplinary, remedial  
1999 or preventative action, or any combination thereof, the committee determines to be proportional  
2000 and appropriate under the circumstances, subject to the limitations set forth in subsection (d). If  
2001 a majority of the committee finds that the intended action was not proportional or appropriate  
2002 under the circumstances, it may make a new recommendation for disciplinary, remedial or  
2003 preventative action, or any combination thereof, subject to the limitations set forth in said  
2004 subsection (d). All determinations of the committee pursuant to this subsection shall be final.

2005 (d) (1) If a majority of the committee finds that a member has violated Rule 88, it may take any  
2006 disciplinary, remedial or preventative action, or any combination thereof, as it determines to be  
2007 proportional and appropriate under the circumstances; provided, however, that if the committee  
2008 determines that reprimand, censure, removal from position as a chair or other position of  
2009 authority, or expulsion is proportional and appropriate under the circumstances, it shall file a  
2010 report with the Clerk recommending that the House vote to implement the disciplinary action.

2011 (2) Upon the filing of a report pursuant to paragraph (1), the Clerk shall promptly: (i) make the  
2012 report available to all members electronically; (ii) cause the report to be posted on the website of  
2013 the General Court; and (iii) place the matter in first position in the Orders of the Day for the next  
2014 calendar day that the House is meeting; provided, however, that no business shall be conducted  
2015 on that calendar day or any day thereafter until the question of acceptance or rejection of the  
2016 special committee's recommendation for discipline is decided by a majority of the members  
2017 voting and present by a recorded roll call vote. If a majority of the members vote to accept the

2018 recommendation for discipline, the member shall be disciplined in the manner so recommended.

2019 Unless a majority of the members vote to accept the report, the member shall not be disciplined.

2020 (3) All findings and determinations of the committee, including instances where the special  
2021 committee does not file a report with the Clerk pursuant to paragraph (1), shall be reported to the  
2022 EEO Officer and shall be final. The EEO Officer shall maintain confidential records of such  
2023 findings and determinations, except that a report filed pursuant to paragraph (1) shall be public.

2024 (e) The committee may consult with Counsel, the EEO Officer or the Director in discharging its  
2025 duties pursuant to Rules 88 to 97, inclusive.

2026 [Added Mar. 15, 2018; Amended Jan. 30, 2019.]

2027 97. (a) Any information obtained by a member or employee in their official capacity and relating  
2028 to a complaint or investigation of harassment pursuant to Rules 93 to 96, inclusive, and any  
2029 records of such information shall be confidential to the fullest extent possible. Confidentiality  
2030 shall be specifically subject to subsections (b), (c), (d) and (e).

2031 (b) (1) The EEO Officer, in reviewing a complaint and conducting an investigation, shall keep  
2032 the complaint confidential and shall not disclose the identity of the complainant or the person  
2033 against whom the complaint is made or any other details of the complaint with any member or  
2034 employee; provided, however, that the EEO Officer may share information to the extent  
2035 necessary to interview witnesses or parties to the investigation or to consult with Counsel if the  
2036 EEO Officer determines that such consultation is required in connection with the investigation.

2037 (2) In the case of a complaint against a staff person, the EEO Officer shall maintain  
2038 confidentiality throughout their investigation and implement all remedial actions and discipline  
2039 short of termination confidentially, without sharing the identity of the complainant or the person

2040 against whom the complaint is made or any other details of the complaint with any member or  
2041 employee; provided, however, that the EEO Officer may share information to the extent  
2042 necessary to implement any remedial actions or discipline or to consult with Counsel if the EEO  
2043 Officer determines that such consultation is required in connection with the investigation. This  
2044 paragraph shall not limit the EEO Officer's ability to transmit the resolution of a complaint,  
2045 including any discipline resulting therefrom, to the Director for inclusion in the employee's  
2046 personnel file.

2047 (3) In the case of a complaint against a staff person, where the EEO Officer recommends  
2048 termination, the EEO Officer shall share information with Counsel for review. If Counsel and  
2049 the EEO Officer disagree as to whether termination is the appropriate discipline, confidentiality  
2050 shall only be expanded to the extent needed to inform the Office of the Speaker and reach a  
2051 resolution.

2052 (4) In the case of a complaint against a member, the EEO officer shall maintain confidentiality  
2053 throughout their investigation by: (i) not disclosing information to any member or employee who  
2054 is not a witness or party to the investigation, except to consult with Counsel if the EEO Officer  
2055 determines that such consultation is required in connection with the investigation; and (ii)  
2056 confidentially recommending all remedial actions short of reprimand, censure, removal from  
2057 position as a chair or other position of authority, or expulsion of a member. This paragraph shall  
2058 not limit the EEO Officer's ability to: (i) share their report with the Office of the Speaker and the  
2059 Minority Leader upon the request for a special committee pursuant to Rule 95; and (ii) share any  
2060 records relevant to the investigation with the special committee convened pursuant to Rule 96;  
2061 provided, that when sharing their report with the Office of the Speaker and the Minority Leader,

2062 the EEO Officer may use pseudonyms, redaction and other methods the EEO Officer considers  
2063 appropriate to address the needs of a complainant or the circumstances of a complaint.

2064 (c) (1) The establishment of a special committee pursuant to Rule 96 shall be completely  
2065 confidential, except that the Speaker and Minority Leader shall disclose the names of their  
2066 respective appointments to the EEO Officer. The EEO Officer shall maintain a confidential  
2067 record of the membership of each special committee that is convened.

2068 (2) All proceedings of a special committee convened pursuant to Rule 96 shall be confidential  
2069 and members of the committee shall not share any information about the complaint and  
2070 investigation for which the committee was convened with any other member or employee,  
2071 including their own appointed staff; provided, however, that the committee may consult with  
2072 Counsel if the chair of the committee determines that such consultation is required in connection  
2073 with the investigation.

2074 (3) A special committee convened pursuant to Rule 96 shall implement all actions short of  
2075 reprimand, censure, removal from position as a chair or other position of authority, or expulsion  
2076 of a member confidentially, except that the special committee shall submit a final report to the  
2077 EEO Officer and may consult with Counsel if the chair of the committee determines that such  
2078 consultation is required in connection with their recommended action. The committee's  
2079 recommendation, if any, for reprimand, censure, removal from position as a chair or other  
2080 position of authority, or expulsion of a member, shall be a public document; provided, however,  
2081 that the committee may use pseudonyms to conceal the identity of the complainant if the  
2082 circumstances of the complaint so warrant.

2083 (d) All authorized parties shall keep complaints confidential, except to share the complaint with  
2084 the EEO Officer.

2085 (e) Nothing in this Rule shall limit the ability of the EEO Officer to share information with a  
2086 complainant, to the extent appropriate, in order to properly conclude the complaint or  
2087 investigation process.

2088 [Added Mar. 15, 2018; Amended Jan. 30, 2019.]

2089 98. The EEO Officer and the Director shall establish all policies, procedures and guidelines  
2090 required by Rules 88 to 97, inclusive, and may develop supplemental policies, procedures and  
2091 guidelines necessary to implement or enforce Rules 88 to 97, inclusive; provided, that no policy,  
2092 procedure or guideline shall take effect without the prior review and written approval of Counsel  
2093 and the committee on Human Resources and Employee Engagement. Where appropriate, these  
2094 policies, procedures and guidelines shall be included in the handbooks.

2095 The EEO Officer and the Director may consult with each other, Counsel, and the committee on  
2096 Human Resources and Employee Engagement to carry out the requirements of Rules 88 to 97,  
2097 inclusive.

2098 [Added Mar. 15, 2018.]

2099 99. In the event of a vacancy in the office of EEO Officer appointed pursuant to Rule 89,  
2100 Counsel may, notwithstanding House Rule 87 and utilizing sound business practices, procure the  
2101 services of an Equal Employment Opportunity Officer, hereinafter the Contract EEO Officer, to  
2102 perform the duties of the EEO Officer established in Rules 88 to 100, inclusive, during said  
2103 vacancy as required.

2104 Notwithstanding Rules 88 to 100, inclusive, all complaints alleging a violation of Rule 88, the  
2105 House Policy Prohibiting Discrimination, Harassment and Retaliation, or the House Equal  
2106 Employment Policy, including, but not limited to complaints alleging harassment or retaliation  
2107 shall be referred to the Contract EEO Officer for review and, if necessary, investigation pursuant  
2108 to Rules 88 through 100.

2109 Counsel shall consult with the Chair of the House Committee on Rules prior to executing a  
2110 contract for services pursuant to this Rule.

2111 [Added March 15, 2018.]

2112 100. (a) No member, officer or employee shall execute any agreement to settle any legal claim or  
2113 potential legal claim by any current or former member, officer or employee unless said  
2114 agreement is executed pursuant to this rule.

2115 (b) No member, officer or employee shall execute any agreement to settle any legal claim or  
2116 potential legal claim brought by any current or former member, officer or employee without the  
2117 approval of Counsel, the Director and the EEO Officer. Counsel, the Director and the EEO  
2118 Officer shall each independently review the claim or potential legal claim brought by any current  
2119 or former member, officer or employee and confirm that the claim or potential claim does not  
2120 relate to sexual harassment or retaliation based on a claim of sexual harassment. Counsel, the  
2121 Director and the EEO Officer shall not approve any settlement of a legal claim or potential legal  
2122 claim brought by any current or former member, officer or employee pursuant to this subsection  
2123 if Counsel, the Director or the EEO Officer reasonably believes such legal claim or potential  
2124 legal claim relates to sexual harassment or retaliation based on a claim of sexual harassment.

2125 (c) No member, officer or employee shall execute any agreement to settle any legal claim or  
2126 potential legal claim of sexual harassment, or retaliation based on a legal claim or potential legal  
2127 claim of sexual harassment, by any current or former member, officer or employee unless said  
2128 agreement is executed pursuant to this subsection.

2129 No member, officer or employee shall execute any agreement to settle a legal claim or potential  
2130 legal claim of sexual harassment, or retaliation based on a legal claim or potential legal claim of  
2131 sexual harassment, by any current or former member, officer or employee unless:

2132 1. the request to negotiate said agreement was initiated, in writing, by the person filing or eligible  
2133 to file the legal claim or potential legal claim or a person legally authorized to represent that  
2134 person;

2135 2. the person filing the legal claim or eligible to file the legal claim is given 15 days to review  
2136 and consider the agreement;

2137 3. the duration of any non-disclosure or non-disparagement provision of the agreement to settle  
2138 the legal claim or potential legal claim is for a finite period of time as agreed to by the parties;

2139 4. the agreement to settle the legal claim or potential legal claim specifically provides that no  
2140 provision of the agreement, including any non-disclosure or non-disparagement provision of the  
2141 agreement, shall preclude any party from participating in an investigation by Counsel, the  
2142 Director, the EEO Officer, a Committee on Professional Conduct or any law enforcement  
2143 agency; and

2144 5. the agreement is approved in writing by Counsel, the Director and the EEO Officer.

2145 (d) In the case of an agreement to settle any legal claim or potential legal claim of sexual  
2146 harassment pursuant to this Rule by a member, the Speaker and Minority Leader shall appoint a  
2147 Special Committee on Professional Conduct pursuant to Rule 96 to determine if the member  
2148 shall be required to personally reimburse the House for all or part of the settlement amount.  
2149 Upon a determination by the Special Committee that the member shall be required to personally  
2150 reimburse the House for all or part of the settlement amount, it shall determine the amount to be  
2151 reimbursed and immediately notify the member of that amount

2152 (e) Upon request of the party described in paragraph numbered 1 above or the complainant,  
2153 Counsel shall waive any non-disclosure or non-disparagement provision of any agreement  
2154 executed prior to the effective date of this Rule by the House and any current or former member,  
2155 officer or employee, to allow said current or former member, officer or employee to report or  
2156 discuss a claim of sexual harassment or retaliation based on sexual harassment.

2157 [Added Mar. 15, 2018; Amended Jan. 30, 2019.]

2158 101. Notwithstanding Rule 7C, the Speaker may, upon recommendation of a majority of the  
2159 committee on Rules, activate remote rules for the operation of the House of Representatives:

2160 Remote Rules for the Operation of the House of Representatives

2161 Remote Rule 1. As used in Remote Rules 1 through 16, inclusive, the following terms shall have  
2162 the following meanings:-

2163 “Clerk”, the Clerk of the House of Representatives.

2164 “Formal session”, a formal session of the House.

2165 “House”, the House of Representatives.



2166 “House Chamber”, the House Chamber within the Massachusetts State House in Boston or the  
2167 location to which the House at its previous formal or informal session adjourned to meet.

2168 “Member”, a member of the House of Representatives.

2169 “Monitor”, one of the members appointed by the Speaker pursuant to Standing Rule 8.

2170 “Participating remotely” or “remotely present”, participating by telephone, teleconference, video  
2171 conference or other means.

2172 “Present”, a member either physically present in the House Chamber for a formal session or  
2173 remotely present, and participating in a formal session.

2174 “Quorum”, eighty-one members present for a formal session.

2175 “Speaker”, the Speaker of the House or the member presiding at the formal session of the House  
2176 after being appointed by the Speaker to perform the duties of the Chair pursuant to Standing Rule  
2177 5.

2178 “Standing rules”, House Rules 1 through 100, inclusive.

2179 Remote Rule 2. (a)(1) , The House may assemble in a formal session with members participating  
2180 remotely. Members participating remotely in a formal session may vote on any question or other  
2181 matter before the House. Members participating remotely in a formal session shall be considered  
2182 present and in attendance at the formal session for all purposes, including for purposes of  
2183 determining a quorum pursuant to Article XXXIII of the Amendments to the Constitution of the  
2184 Commonwealth or any standing rules and for purposes of appearing before the Governor and  
2185 council pursuant to Part the Second, Chapter VI, Article I of the Constitution of the  
2186 Commonwealth.

2187 (2) A member participating remotely in a formal session shall have the same privileges, rights  
2188 and responsibilities as if the member were physically present in the House Chamber, including  
2189 without limitation, the right, privilege and responsibility to cast votes on all questions or other  
2190 matters brought to a vote and the ability to take the oath required pursuant to Part the Second,  
2191 Chapter VI, Article I of the Constitution of the Commonwealth

2192 (3) At the commencement of a formal session, the Speaker shall take the Chair at the hour to  
2193 which the House stands adjourned, call the House to order and immediately order a quorum roll  
2194 call.

2195 (3) (i) The House shall not be called to order before the hour of 10:00 A.M. nor meet beyond the  
2196 hour of midnight unless by unanimous consent of the members present.

2197 (ii) All votes taken on the enactment of any bill or resolve during any formal session where  
2198 members are participating remotely shall be by roll call vote.

2199 (5) The Clerk shall prepare a Journal for the House for any formal session of the House held  
2200 remotely. The Journal for the House may reflect that the formal session was convened pursuant  
2201 to remote rules, but shall not deviate in any substantive manner from the Journal of the House  
2202 required to be prepared by the Clerk pursuant to Standing Rule 10. The Journal of the House for  
2203 any formal session of the House held during the state of emergency within the House shall not  
2204 specify which members participated remotely.

2205 (b)(1) The Speaker shall preside from within the House Chamber over any formal session of the  
2206 House where any member is participating remotely. The Minority Leader, Chair of the  
2207 committee on Ways and Means, Ranking Minority Member of the committee on Ways and  
2208 Means, the House Chair and Ranking Minority Member of the joint committee from which any

2209 bill being debated at the formal session has been reported, or their designees, and the division  
2210 monitors may also be physically present. All other members are strongly encouraged to  
2211 participate remotely in a formal session.

2212 (2) Officers and employees essential to the conduct of the formal session may be present in the  
2213 House Chamber during a formal session with the express authorization of the Speaker in  
2214 consultation with the Minority Leader. The Speaker and Minority Leader may have one  
2215 employee from their office present in the House Chamber during a formal session. No other  
2216 officer or employee shall be physically present in the House Chamber unless deemed essential to  
2217 the conduct of the formal session by the Speaker.

2218 (3) All members, officers and employees physically present in the House Chamber during a  
2219 formal session shall, at the direction of the Speaker, undertake any mitigation measures ordered  
2220 by the Speaker. Court Officers shall strictly enforce mitigation measures directed by the Speaker  
2221 by and between members, officers and employees in and around the House Chamber. Any  
2222 member, officer or employee in violation of the mitigation measures ordered by the Speaker  
2223 shall be removed from the House Chamber.

2224 Remote Rule 3. (a) A member participating remotely may make any motion authorized pursuant  
2225 to the standing rules, raise a point of order, raise a point of personal privilege, or raise a point of  
2226 parliamentary inquiry. Members participating remotely shall notify their division monitor of their  
2227 desire to make a motion, raise a point of order, raise a point of personal privilege or raise a point  
2228 of parliamentary inquiry. The division monitor shall immediately notify the Speaker who shall  
2229 recognize the member seeking to make a motion, raise a point of order, raise a point of personal  
2230 privilege or raise a point of parliamentary inquiry. No member shall interrupt another member

2231 while that member is speaking, including to request that the member speaking yield, except for  
2232 the reasons authorized herein.

2233 (b) A vote on any motion made pursuant to subsection (a) shall be conducted by voice vote as  
2234 prescribed by subsection (b) of Remote Rule 5, unless the Constitution or the standing rules  
2235 specifically require a roll call vote.

2236 (c) A motion made by a member participating remotely may be made and submitted by the  
2237 division monitor for the floor division of the House wherein the seat assigned to said member  
2238 pursuant to Standing Rule 79 is located.

2239 Remote Rule 4. (a) A member participating remotely wishing to speak on any question before  
2240 the House shall notify the monitor for the floor division of the House wherein the seat assigned  
2241 to said member pursuant to Standing Rule 79 is located as follows:

2242 (i) A member wishing to speak on a bill, resolve or the General Appropriation Bill, or an  
2243 amendment thereto, shall notify their floor division monitor no later than 10:00 A.M. on the day  
2244 that the bill, resolve, General Appropriation Bill, or amendment thereto, is scheduled to be  
2245 considered by the House. Said notification shall include: (1) the number of the bill, resolve  
2246 General Appropriation Bill, or amendment thereto, that the member wishes to speak to; and (2)  
2247 whether the member wishes to speak in favor of or in opposition to the bill, resolve, General  
2248 Appropriation Bill, or amendment thereto.

2249 (ii) A member wishing to speak on a consolidated amendment shall notify their floor division  
2250 monitor no later than 45 minutes after the consolidated amendment shall have been first filed  
2251 with the Clerk and made available electronically to the members. Said notification shall include:

2252 (1) the number or letter of the consolidated amendment the member wishes to speak to; and (2)  
2253 whether the member wishes to speak in favor of or in opposition to the consolidated amendment.

2254 (iii) A member wishing to speak on a conference committee report filed pursuant to Joint Rule  
2255 11B shall notify their floor division monitor no later than 10:00 A.M. on the day the conference  
2256 committee report is scheduled to be considered by the House. Said notification shall include: (1)  
2257 the bill number of the conference committee report; and (2) whether the member wishes to speak  
2258 in favor of, or in opposition to the report. The provisions of this paragraph shall be inoperative if  
2259 the conference committee report is filed later than 8:00 P.M. on the day preceding its  
2260 consideration by the House.

2261 (b) The monitor for each division shall prepare a list of members of their division notifying the  
2262 monitor of said member's desire to speak in favor of a question before the House and a list of  
2263 members of their division notifying the monitor of said member's desire to speak in opposition  
2264 to a question before the House. Each list shall be arranged in order of the time the monitor  
2265 received the notification with the notification received the earliest being first.

2266 (c) Upon completion of the lists required pursuant to subsection (b), the monitors for each  
2267 division shall transmit the lists to the Speaker and the Minority Leader. The Speaker shall  
2268 combine the lists received from each of the division monitors and, in consultation with the  
2269 Minority Leader, shall prepare a consolidated list of members notifying their monitor of the  
2270 member's desire to speak in favor of a question before the House and a consolidated list of  
2271 members of their division notifying the monitor of said member's desire to speak in opposition  
2272 to a question before the House.

2273 (d) The Speaker shall distribute the lists compiled pursuant to subsection (c) to all members  
2274 electronically prior to the commencement of the formal session. The Speaker shall distribute the  
2275 list compiled pursuant to subsection (a)(ii) as soon as practicable upon completion.

2276 (e) The consolidated lists prepared by the Speaker pursuant to subsection (c) and distributed to  
2277 the membership pursuant to subsection (d) shall be the order in which members are recognized  
2278 during the debate of the respective question. In recognizing members from said lists, the Speaker  
2279 shall, to the extent practicable, alternate between members wishing to speak in favor of the  
2280 question and members wishing to speak in opposition to the question.

2281 (f) A member participating remotely may, in lieu of speaking on a bill, resolve, amendment,  
2282 consolidated amendment or a conference committee report, submit written remarks in favor of,  
2283 or in opposition to, any bill, resolve, amendment, consolidated amendment or conference  
2284 committee report to the Clerk before the adjournment of the formal session in which said bill,  
2285 resolve, amendment, consolidated amendment or conference committee report was considered by  
2286 the House. Said remarks shall be transmitted to the Clerk electronically in a format prescribed by  
2287 the Clerk. The Clerk shall include any remarks submitted by a member participating remotely  
2288 pursuant to this section in the Journal of the House required to be kept by the Clerk pursuant to  
2289 Standing Rule 10 and Remote Rule 2.

2290 Remote Rule 5. (a) Notwithstanding Standing Rules 50 through 52, inclusive, during a formal  
2291 session where members are participating remotely a vote on any question shall be by either a  
2292 voice vote of the members present and voting pursuant to subsection (b) or a roll call vote of the  
2293 members present and voting pursuant to subsection (c). Any question that would require a

2294 standing vote under the Standing Rules shall be decided by a voice vote of the members present  
2295 and voting pursuant to subsection (b).

2296 (b) When a question is put, the sense of the House shall be taken by the voices of the members,  
2297 and the Speaker shall first announce the vote as it appears to the Speaker by the sound. If the  
2298 Speaker is unable to decide by the sound of the voices, or if the announcement made thereupon is  
2299 doubted by a member, the Speaker shall order the division monitors to ascertain the number of  
2300 members within in their division voting in the affirmative and the number of members within in  
2301 their division voting in the negative, without further debate upon the question. The division  
2302 monitors shall report the total vote of their division count to the Speaker. After receiving the  
2303 reports of the total vote counts from each of the division monitors, the Speaker shall tally said  
2304 votes and then announce the vote.

2305 (c) The sense of the House shall be taken by yeas and nays whenever required by 10 percent of  
2306 the members elected or when required pursuant to the Constitution of the Commonwealth. The  
2307 Speaker shall state the pending question and shall order the division monitors to commence the  
2308 roll call of the members. The division monitors shall call the roll of the members assigned to said  
2309 division in alphabetical order. The division monitors shall record the votes of each member on a  
2310 form prescribed by the Clerk. Upon completion of the roll call, the division monitors shall sign  
2311 the form upon which the roll call for their division was recorded and submit the completed form  
2312 to the Clerk. The Clerk shall tally the votes of the members of each division and shall enter the  
2313 votes into the electronic roll call machine. Upon completion of the tally and the entry of the votes  
2314 into the electronic roll call machine, the Clerk shall notify the Speaker that the vote has been  
2315 completed. Upon instruction from the Speaker, the Clerk shall display the tally of the vote on the  
2316 2 monitors in the House Chamber. The Speaker shall then announce the vote.

2317 (d) If a member doubts the presence of a quorum, the Speaker shall order the division monitors  
2318 to ascertain the number of members within in their divisions who are present. Any member  
2319 confirmed by the division monitor to be participating remotely shall be considered present. The  
2320 division monitors shall report the total number of members present to the Speaker. After  
2321 receiving the reports of the total number of members present from each of the division monitors,  
2322 the Speaker shall tally the numbers and then announce the number of members present. If, after  
2323 tallying the numbers from each of the division monitors a quorum is not present, the Speaker  
2324 shall order a roll call vote pursuant to subsection (c).

2325 (e) The call for yeas and nays shall be decided without debate. If the yeas and nays have been  
2326 ordered before the question is put, the proceedings under subsection (b) shall be omitted.

2327 (f) Except as heretofore provided, any member who shall vote or attempt to vote for another  
2328 member or any person not a member who votes or attempts to vote for a member, or any member  
2329 or other person who willfully tampers with or attempts to impair or destroy in any manner  
2330 whatsoever the voting equipment used by the House, or change the records thereon shall be  
2331 punished in such manner as the House determines; and provided further, that such a violation  
2332 shall be reported to the committee on Ethics.

2333 Remote Rule 6. No consolidated amendment to any bill offered by the committee on Ways and  
2334 Means shall be considered by the House until the expiration of at least 30 minutes after the  
2335 consolidated amendment shall have been first filed with the Clerk and made available  
2336 electronically to the members. This rule shall not be suspended unless by unanimous consent of  
2337 the members present.



2338 Remote Rule 7. No consolidated amendment to any bill offered by the committee on Ways and  
2339 Means shall be adopted except by a roll call vote.

2340 Remote Rule 8. Notwithstanding any standing rule to the contrary, with the approval of the  
2341 Speaker, a member, officer or employee may take photographs and videos of, and in, the House  
2342 Chamber provided said photographs or videos are to facilitate the remote participation in the  
2343 formal session by a member.

2344 Remote Rule 9. (a) Notwithstanding any standing rule to the contrary, unless authorized pursuant  
2345 to subsection (b) or subsection (c), no member participating in a formal session shall be  
2346 recognized more than once on any question before the House without unanimous consent or on  
2347 any question before the House for more than 10 minutes without unanimous consent.

2348 (b) The following members may, notwithstanding subsection (a), be recognized more than once  
2349 on any question before the House: (1) the Minority Leader; (2) the member carrying the report of  
2350 the committee; (3) and the Ranking Minority Member of the committee reporting the bill.

2351 (c) Notwithstanding subsection (a), after all members have been recognized pursuant to Remote  
2352 Rule 4, a member who is the primary sponsor of a bill, resolve or an amendment, or a designee  
2353 of said member, may, in addition to being recognized pursuant to Remote Rule 4, be recognized  
2354 for purposes of providing rebuttal or further explanation. If a member who is the primary sponsor  
2355 of a bill, resolve or amendment or their designee is recognized pursuant to this subsection a  
2356 member from the opposite political party designated by the member carrying the report of the  
2357 committee or the Ranking Minority Member of the committee reporting the bill may also be  
2358 recognized in addition to being recognized pursuant to Remote Rule 4. No member shall be  
2359 recognized pursuant to this subsection for more than 5 minutes without unanimous consent.

2360 Remote Rule 10. Notwithstanding any standing rule to the contrary, any formal session where  
2361 members are participating remotely shall be webcast live on the General Court website. Audio or  
2362 video recordings of all such sessions shall be made available to the public on the General Court  
2363 website. All House sessions conducted by electronic means shall be broadcast on House  
2364 television.

2365 Remote 11. Notwithstanding any standing rule to the contrary, no technical failure that breaks  
2366 the remote connection of a member or members of the House of Representatives participating  
2367 remotely in a formal session shall invalidate any action taken by the House of Representatives.

2368 Remote Rule 12. Notwithstanding Standing Rule 49, members participating remotely may vote  
2369 in a quorum roll call.

2370 Remote Rule 13. Except as otherwise indicated, Remote Rules 1 through 16, inclusive, shall not  
2371 be suspended unless by a 2/3 vote of the members present and voting. Debate upon a motion for  
2372 the suspension of Remote Rules 1 through 16, inclusive, shall be limited to 15 minutes and no  
2373 member shall speak for more than 3 minutes.

2374 Remote Rule 14. The provisions of any standing or remote rules pertaining to procedures of the  
2375 House may be suspended and alternative procedures may be used if said alternative methods are  
2376 approved by a 2/3 majority of the committee on Rules and approved, in writing, by the Speaker  
2377 and the Minority Leader. The Clerk shall enter any such approvals in the House Journal for the  
2378 formal session required to be kept by the Clerk pursuant to Standing Rule 10.

2379 Remote Rule 15. Except to the extent that they conflict with Remote Rules 1 through 16,  
2380 inclusive, the standing rules shall remain in full force and effect.

2381 Remote Rule 16. Remote Rules 1 through 16, inclusive, shall remain activated for no longer than  
2382 30 days after being activated by the Speaker; provided, that the House of Representative shall not  
2383 operate under remote rules beyond 30 days without the adoption of an Order by a majority of the  
2384 House.

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