

**Diocese of New Jersey
Rules of Order, Annual Convention March 9, 2024**

I. Terminology, Notice and Broadcast Provisions for Electronic Meetings

1. For purposes of Conventions held in part or in whole by electronic means, these constitutional and canonical terms shall have the following interpretation:
"Convention": The meeting of clergy and laity of the Diocese of New Jersey conducted wholly or in part via remote electronic participation by its members;
"seat": The ability to participate in the Convention physically or via electronic connection;
"voice": The right to make oral statements during the Convention; and
"vote": The right to cast an oral voice or electronic poll vote or file an electronic ballot during the Convention.
2. In order to facilitate the conduct of an electronic meeting of the Convention, the Ecclesiastical Authority shall appoint one or more Convention Managers to assist the President and Secretary of the Convention.
3. Notice of Meeting of Virtual Convention and Connection Information
 - A. If the Ecclesiastical Authority shall call for a meeting of Convention in whole or in part by electronic means, the notice for such meeting shall be given by publication on the diocesan website and otherwise no later than four weeks prior to the date called for the opening of the meeting.
 - B. No later than three weeks before any such meeting, every member of the clergy entitled to seat, voice, or vote in Convention must notify the Ecclesiastical Authority of his or her email address in order to receive the ability to participate in a Convention held electronically. No later than such date, every rector, vicar, or a warden of any congregation entitled to representation in Convention must notify the Ecclesiastical Authority of the email address of (a) every Lay Deputy of such congregation or (b) any Alternate who pursuant to Canon 2, Section 3 will replace an elected Lay Deputy who will be unable to attend the Convention.
 - C. No later than three days before such meeting, the Secretary of Convention or his or her designee shall send an email to every member of Convention setting forth (a) the time of the meeting, (b) the URL and codes necessary to connect to the Internet meeting service, and, as an alternative and backup to the audio connection included within the Internet service, the phone number and access codes the member needs to participate aurally by telephone, and (c) if applicable, a Voter ID code.
 - D. Each member is responsible for his or her audio and Internet connections; no action shall be invalidated on the grounds that the loss of, or poor quality of, a member's individual connection prevented participation in the meeting.
 - E. All electronic participants' microphones will be muted until they are recognized to speak by the President of Convention. The President of Convention may cause or direct the disconnection or muting of a member's connection if it is causing undue interference with the meeting. The President's decision to do so, which is subject to an undebatable appeal that can be made by any member, shall be announced during the meeting and recorded in the minutes.
4. The President, the Secretary, or their assistants shall cause a video of the President to be displayed throughout the meeting except during play of prerecorded matter or during a recess, and shall also cause display of the video of the member currently recognized to speak (if such display is permitted by them) or report.
5. The Convention Managers shall arrange for broadcasting via livestreaming or otherwise so that the public and members of the Diocese other than members of the Convention may observe the proceedings.

II. Opening of Convention

1. The Convention shall be opened and closed with prayer, and at noonday there shall be appropriate intercessions for missions.
2. At or following each session of the Convention there shall be such worship services as the Ecclesiastical Authority may direct.
3. All Members of the Clergy and all lay Deputies must register their attendance at each opening session of the Convention in such manner as the Secretary of Convention may direct. For electronic meetings, members must identify themselves as required to sign in to the Internet meeting service, and shall maintain Internet and audio access throughout the meeting whenever present, but shall sign out upon any departure before adjournment.
4. The Convention shall be called to order on Friday at one o'clock p.m. (or such other time as may be directed by notice) by the Bishop or an alternate President specified in the Constitution of the Diocese, if present; otherwise, the Secretary of Convention shall call the meeting to order and, provided a quorum is present, shall supervise the election of a President pro tempore.
5. The Convention Managers shall determine and report to the Secretary the presence of a quorum as required by the Constitution on the basis of (a) those members physically present and (b) for those participating remotely, the members' login information and a subsequent confirmation. The members so present may continue to do business until adjournment, notwithstanding the withdrawal of enough members to leave less than a quorum. Less than a quorum can adjourn.

III. The President

1. When the President of Convention takes the chair in a meeting held in person, all members shall be seated.
2. Members desiring to leave the Convention before it adjourns are to ask permission of the President.

IV. Order of Business

The Order of Business shall begin as follows:

1. Report of the Secretary as to whether a quorum is present.
2. Report of the Committee on the Credentials of Lay Deputies.
3. Report of the Committee on the Classification of Congregations.
4. Report of the Committee on Rules of Order and Dispatch of Business.
5. Other business.

V. Agenda

1. The Committee on Rules of Order and Dispatch of Business shall propose a form of Agenda to be adopted by the Convention. Once adopted, the Agenda may be modified or suspended upon a two-thirds vote.
2. Any request to place a matter on the agenda of the annual meeting of the Convention must be presented to the Chair of the Committee on Rules of Order and Dispatch of Business by January 15 in each year.
3. (a) The Committee on Rules of Order and Dispatch of Business may publish a Consent Calendar which shall contain all resolutions for action by the Convention other than (i) elections, (ii) budget approvals, (iii) a resolution from any diocesan body that the body votes to exclude from the Consent Calendar, or (iv) any resolution removed from the Consent Calendar by paragraph 3(b) of this Rule.

(b) At any time before a final vote on the Consent Calendar, any resolution may be removed from the Consent Calendar by written notice to the Secretary or by announcement on the floor of Convention by (i) the individual or diocesan body that proposed the resolution, (ii) any four voting members of the Convention, or (iii) the President of the Convention. Any resolution removed from the Consent Calendar shall be taken up for debate and consideration at a time to be determined by the President.

(c) When voting on the Consent Calendar, the Convention will vote on all items at once, by a majority vote. A vote to adopt the Consent Calendar is a vote to take the action, if any, recommended by the diocesan body proposing each resolution. If the vote to approve the Consent Calendar is not carried, then all items on the Consent Calendar shall be taken up for debate and consideration at a time to be determined by the President.

VI. Nominations

1. The Report of the Nominating Committee shall be received without reading aloud the names of the individuals nominated for each office. The persons named in the report as standing for particular offices will, without more, be treated as nominated for the offices indicated, and no separate motion or second shall be required for this purpose. Opportunity will be allowed for a person nominated by the Report of the Nominating Committee to withdraw from consideration for election and for the Chair to invite further nominations from the floor.
2. For meetings held in whole or in part electronically, any persons who have not been nominated through the Nominating Committee or the Secretary of Convention may be nominated for office by written nomination form for such purpose, completed and submitted to the Secretary no later than a week prior to the opening of Convention, provided that when the President invites nominations from the floor for that office the person making the nomination confirms the nomination and the person nominated confirms willingness to serve if elected.
3. For meetings held in person, nominations from the floor must be presented at one of the several microphones, and each nomination so made must be accompanied by a Nominating Slip in a form supplied by the Secretary, properly filled in with the printed name and parish, or other affiliation, of the nominee and the name and affiliation of the nominator. Each Nominating Slip will be taken immediately to the desk of the Secretary of Convention. No further nomination may be made until the Secretary indicates that the previous Nominating Slip is deemed correct.
4. Nominations from the floor of the Convention shall be made without a second and without any nominating speech.

VII. Elections

1. All elections shall be by ballot except for offices where nominations are unopposed, in which case a motion to elect by acclamation for such office will be in order.
2. For each office to be elected, each ballot cast must contain votes for no more than the number of persons as there are positions to be filled or else the ballot will be disqualified as to that office.
3. In case of a vote by orders, a concurrent majority in both orders shall be required. No action shall pass in the affirmative unless it receives the majority of all votes cast and unless the sum of all the affirmative votes shall exceed the sum of other votes by at least one whole vote in each order.
4. In all elections, a majority of the votes cast shall be necessary, except as otherwise provided by canon. In case more than the required number of persons shall have a majority of votes, a sufficient number of those having the highest number of such votes shall be declared elected.
5. In the case of a tie between two or more persons upon any ballot, there must be another ballot.
6. Balloting may begin in the first business session of the Convention once opportunity has been given for nominations from the floor. For meetings held electronically or in person and remotely, balloting shall be by the anonymous voting feature of the internet voting service, using members' assigned Voter ID code.

7. For all elections, the Chair of the Balloting Committee or the Secretary of Convention shall report to the President for each office (a) the total number of valid ballots cast, (b) the number of votes necessary for election, and (c) the number of votes for each candidate. Upon any vote by orders, this information shall be given separately for each order, along with the percentage information if required by these rules. The President shall thereupon declare the result of the ballot for such office and announce the names of the persons elected.
8. When Deputies to the General Convention, Alternate Deputies to the General Convention, and members of the Standing Committee are elected, the vote shall be by orders, with a concurrent majority required in both orders. The order of precedence in which persons are elected shall be determined according to the ballot on which they are elected. When two or more persons receive the number of votes necessary for election on the same ballot, the order of precedence shall be determined in the following way: The Chair of the Balloting Committee or the Secretary of Convention shall report to the President, according to each order separately, the total number of valid ballots cast, the number of votes necessary for election, the number of votes for the respective candidates, and the percentage of votes received by each candidate as determined by dividing the number of votes received by the total number of valid ballots cast. For each candidate who receives a concurrent majority of the votes in both orders, the Chair of the Balloting Committee shall report to the President the percentage of votes received by the respective candidates in each order and the combined total of the two percentages. Candidates with a higher combined total percentage shall take precedence over those with a lower combined total percentage.
9. If there is a vacancy in the office of deputy to the General Convention at the time the Convention is to elect alternate deputies, there shall be a sufficient number of persons to serve as deputy elected and four alternate deputies elected. The person or persons receiving the greatest number of votes in excess of a majority shall be declared the replacement deputy or deputies; the next four persons receiving the greatest number of votes in excess of a majority shall be declared the alternate deputies. Balloting shall continue until all offices are filled.
10. After any ballot, any nominee may withdraw his or her name from nomination. In all elections in which all vacancies have not been filled on the third ballot, the names of those nominees receiving the fewest number of ballots, or, for elections by order, the smallest combined total percentage, shall be withdrawn, in order to leave on the fourth ballot no more than twice the number of nominees for the number of remaining vacancies to be filled. In all elections in which all vacancies have not been filled on the fifth ballot, the names of those nominees receiving the fewest number of ballots, or, for elections by order, the smallest combined total percentage, shall be withdrawn, in order to leave on the sixth ballot one more nominee than the number of remaining vacancies to be filled.

VIII. Committees

1. All Committees not required by canon to be elected by the Convention shall be appointed by the Ecclesiastical Authority and announced by the President at or after the Convention.
2. Reports of Committees shall be in writing and when made shall be the property of the Convention, without any motion for acceptance. All reports recommending action of the Convention shall be accompanied by a separate resolution to that effect, which must be distributed with the report.

IX. Resolutions

1. There shall be a Committee on Resolutions made up of three clerical and three lay persons plus a chair who may be a clerical or lay person, for the purpose of screening those original main motions (other than those made through another committee) which may be considered at the annual meeting of Convention. Members of the Committee shall serve a one-year term from the close of the Convention at which they are appointed and may be reappointed. Vacancies between Conventions shall be filled by appointment of the Ecclesiastical Authority.

2. Resolutions may be proposed by any communicant of any congregation of the diocese. All proposed resolutions must be sent to the Chair of the Committee by January 15 in each year. Proposed resolutions must be legible and must contain at least two sections: the RESOLVED, naming the desired action, and a FURTHER RESOLVED, as appropriate, providing for the implementation of the resolution if adopted. Proposed resolutions must not include any whereas clause or other preamble. Each resolution must be accompanied by a short explanatory statement by its proponent. Any proposed resolutions not submitted to the Committee by this date may come before Convention for consideration only if accompanied by a statement in writing of the circumstances that led to the late request for consideration, and only upon a two-thirds vote of Convention.
3. The Committee, by any one or more of its members, shall hold one or more open hearings during the month of February in each year at which comments and explanations may be offered with respect to proposed resolutions. The Committee shall prepare a Preliminary Report to facilitate such discussions.
4. In its Final Report to Convention the Committee may put proposed resolutions into proper form, eliminate duplication, determine the order of presentation of resolutions to Convention, and make recommendations with respect to proposed resolutions. The Final Report of the Committee must contain all proposed resolutions timely submitted to it. The Committee may recommend substantive amendments to proposed resolutions and shall either recommend their adoption, recommend against their adoption, or make no recommendation. Reasons for any recommendation against adoption must be stated in the report.

X. Motions and Amendments

1. No motion shall be debated or voted on until it is seconded.
2. For meetings held in person, a member must stand by a microphone and ask to be recognized by the President. For meetings held electronically, a member shall use the Zoom "raise hand" request and await recognition, provided, that members responding "so moved" to a request from the President for a motion, or seconding any motion that requires a second, must do so using the Zoom "raise hand" feature without needing to be recognized by the President. Once the pending action is completed, the Convention Manager shall clear the online queue.
3. No vote shall be taken on a nonprocedural motion until a written copy of the text of the motion with the mover's name and parish affiliation is given to the Secretary and restated by the President immediately before the vote is taken. For meetings held electronically, shall, in addition to using the Zoom "raise hand" request, before or after being recognized, post the motion in writing by an email to info@dioceseofnj.org, preceded by the member's name and parish affiliation. The Secretary may furnish forms for such submissions. In addition, the Secretary shall designate an online area exclusively for the display of the immediately pending question and other relevant pending questions (such as the main motion, or the pertinent part of the main motion, when an amendment to it is immediately pending); and, to the extent feasible, the Secretary, or any assistants appointed by him or her for this purpose, shall cause such questions, or any other documents that are currently before the meeting for action or information, to be displayed therein until disposed of.
4. For meetings held in whole or in part electronically, votes not requiring ballots may be taken by the Zoom polling feature unless otherwise provided by canon or a vote by ballot is directed by a majority vote of the convention. Votes requiring balloting shall be taken by the anonymous voting feature of the internet voting service, using members' assigned Voter ID code. Results of votes may be reported to the President by the Chair of the Balloting Committee or the Secretary. For meetings held solely in person, all questions shall be decided viva voce unless otherwise provided by canon or a vote by ballot is directed by a majority vote of the convention. At such a meeting, any member of the Convention may call for a division of the Convention, in which case the vote shall be retaken using voting panels, and any member of the Convention may further call for a tally of votes upon a division, in which case the President shall report the tally of votes.

5. When a question is under consideration, no further motion may be made unless to lay upon the table, to postpone it to a time certain, to postpone it indefinitely, to correct it, to amend or divide it, or to offer a substitute; and motions for any of those purposes shall have precedence in the order herein named, provided that an amendment, once amended, may not be further amended before a vote. A motion to lay upon the table shall be in order only when its purpose is to lay aside the matter under consideration for more urgent business. A proper motion to lay upon the table, or a motion to postpone, shall always be in order unless some member is speaking.
6. Motions to make changes in the Revised Preliminary Diocesan Budget as adopted by Diocesan Council and proposed to the Convention shall not be in order if the proposed change is to increase an item of expenditure or establish a new item of expenditure, unless the same motion includes a provision for funding the change, either by reducing another item of expenditure contained in the budget as then proposed or by identifying another source of funds not contemplated by the budget as then proposed and legally available for purposes of the same budget for the same fiscal year. Motions which require the expenditure of funds in the current fiscal year other than in connection with the consideration of the diocesan budget shall be subject to the same requirements.

XI. Rules for Debate

1. Any members desiring to speak must first identify themselves and their church or other affiliation, must with due respect address their remarks to the President, and must speak directly to the point.
2. No member shall speak more than twice (except the mover, who is entitled to reply) in the same debate or for a period longer than three minutes without leave of the Convention. In the case of a motion or resolution moved by a committee, the proposer of the motion or resolution (or if there is more than one proposer, one representative of the proposers) shall have the rights of a mover under the preceding sentence.
3. If any member, in speaking or otherwise, transgresses the rules of the Convention, the President shall, or any member through the Chair may, call him or her to order; and if ruled out of order said person shall immediately yield the floor unless permitted by the Convention to explain or to proceed in order.

XII. Order for Special Debate

1. The Committee on Rules of Order and Dispatch of Business may propose an order for special debate on a particular question, to include a time limit for consideration of the question, and a limit on the length of each speech.
2. The Convention may, by a two-thirds majority, call for an order for Special Debate.
3. Whenever such special order has been adopted, no motion to table, postpone, call the question, or otherwise terminate debate shall be in order until the time to terminate debate set forth in the order shall have expired, or until there are no further members who desire to speak, whichever occurs first. To the extent practicable, the President shall recognize speakers of opposite views in alternate succession.

XIII. Committee of the Whole

At the direction of the President or on motion, the Convention may resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole.

XIV. Referrals

Subject matter coming before Convention may be referred at any time prior to a vote to an appropriate Board, Committee, Commission, or Agency at the discretion of the President, with a direction to report either at the same session of the Convention or a future meeting.

XV. Points of Order

All questions of order shall be determined by the President without debate; any member may appeal from the decision, and on such appeal no member shall speak more than once without leave of the Convention.

XVI. Adjournment

1. A motion to adjourn is always in order unless some member is speaking.
2. Any vote to adjourn, if carried, is subject to the consideration by the Convention of closing motions by the Secretary or Assistant Secretary. Such closing motions as directing that the treasurer of the diocese be directed to pay convention expenses, sending greetings to retired bishops and members of the clergy who were unable to be present due to illness, and the like, are prior to the closing prayers.

XVII. Amendments to and Suspension of Rules of Order

These Rules of Order may be amended by a majority vote after reference to and report from the Committee on Rules of Order and Dispatch of Business, or by a two-thirds vote without such reference. They may also be suspended by a three-fourths vote.

XVIII. Other Matters of Parliamentary Procedure

Except when in conflict with the Constitution or Canons or any rule hereof, the latest edition of Robert's Rules of Order shall govern the procedure of the Convention.