

RULES OF ORDER FOR A VIRTUAL CONVENTION

Diocese of Chicago

For

As adopted at the 183rd Convention, November 21, 2020

1. The Constitution and Canons of the Diocese of Chicago and Illinois law do not prohibit the holding of a Diocesan Convention by remote communication (“a Virtual Convention”).
2. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and state-mandated limits on the size of gatherings, the 183rd Convention of the Diocese of Chicago will take place using remote communication such as Zoom or equivalent platform, as will any future Convention during which similar circumstances prevail (as determined by the Ecclesiastical Authority).
3. These Rules of Order for a Virtual Convention are adopted pursuant to Canon 5 of the Diocese of Chicago. These Rules accede to the Constitution and Canons of the Episcopal Church and of the Diocese of Chicago (collectively, “the canons”). Except where inconsistent with the canons or these Rules, Robert’s Rules of Order Newly Revised, the latest edition, shall govern the business proceedings of the Convention. Notwithstanding the foregoing, the Convention may, by unanimous consent, take any action not inconsistent with the canons.

Prior to Convention

4. To participate in the Convention, Members of Convention (“Members”) must have access to the internet with a device (laptop, tablet, smart phone, or desk top computer) that allows for connection to the internet platform. Members must also have an email address to receive materials about convention login information, and links to the electronic voting platform. Members who do not have access to a device or internet can request support and assistance from the Convention planning team who will assist to the fullest extent possible.
5. The Secretary of Convention shall send by e-mail to every member of the Convention, at least 30 days before each meeting, the day and time of the meeting, and information about the internet platform by which the Convention will take place. The Secretary shall also include a copy of, or a link to, these rules. A Member, however, cannot participate solely by telephone and must be connected to the electronic platform via the internet on their device.
6. Resolutions to be proposed and placed before the Convention shall be submitted in writing to the Secretary sufficiently in advance of Convention to permit (a) review by the Resolutions Committee and, where necessary or appropriate, by the Chancellor and Committee on Legislation, (b) inclusion in the pre-Convention materials distributed to Members of Convention, and (c) consideration at pre-Convention area meetings. Submission 60 days prior to Convention shall satisfy this Rule. Later-submitted Resolutions shall not be considered, unless by dispensation of the President or where the Convention suspends the Rules by a two-thirds majority.
7. Every Resolution shall be sponsored by a Member who shall be present at Convention and prepared to move and speak in its favor.

8. Every Resolution whose adoption may foreseeably result in cost or expense to the Diocese shall be accompanied by an estimate of the amount of such cost or expense and a suggestion of possible sources of funding.
9. All Resolutions shall be distributed electronically or read to the Convention prior to consideration. A Resolution not included in the order of business, and not germane to a committee report or other pending item of business, shall be considered at the time indicated in the order of business for other new business, or at a time determined by the President.
10. A report to Convention of a committee or other body shall be in writing and, once submitted to the Secretary, shall be deemed received by the Convention without the necessity of a motion. The President may, but need not, call for an oral reading or summary of the report, but shall at least publish or make known the filing of the report. Any report calling for Convention action or opinion shall be accompanied by a proposed resolution.
11. No later than three (3) days before each meeting, the Secretary of Convention or 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 platform, and, as an alternative and backup to the audio connection included within the Internet service, the phone number and access codes that members need to participate aurally by telephone, and (c) access information, including credentials, to the electronic voting platform. A Member, however, cannot participate solely by telephone and must be connected to the electronic platform via the internet on their device.

Day of Convention

12. The Secretary or designee shall schedule internet meeting service availability to begin at least 2 hours before the start of each meeting for check-in.
13. Any member experiencing technical difficulties can access support by using the technology support line publicized in the Convention materials provided in advance. However, each Member is responsible for their audio and internet connections; and 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 Convention.
14. Members shall identify themselves by name, Congregation, and order (lay delegate or clergy) as required to sign onto the electronic platform and shall maintain internet and audio access throughout the meeting whenever present. Any Member departing before adjournment must sign out by using the Q&A (or analogous) feature.
15. The President may cause or direct the muting of a Member's connection if it is causing undue technical interference with the meeting.
16. In accordance with the Bishop's guidelines for on-line worship, and since celebration of the Holy Eucharist is impossible, Morning Prayer will be celebrated.
17. The presence of a quorum shall be established during meeting check-in by completion of the registration form that will appear on screen when Member logs in. This form must be completed before being admitted to the Convention. Entry of participants into the webinar will be recorded by staff for the purpose of reporting the quorum to the Secretary of Convention. Thereafter, the continued presence of a quorum shall be determined by the online list of participating Members, and a Member may request a report on whether a quorum is present.

18. Questions of order shall be decided without debate by the President or, at the President's direction, by the Parliamentarian, subject to an appeal of the ruling upon motion.
19. The President will be displayed via video throughout the meeting, and when possible, shall also cause display of the video of the Member currently recognized to speak or report.
20. To seek recognition by the President, a Member shall use the raise hand (or analogous) feature to indicate their desire to be recognized by the President. The meeting Host will unmute the Member so that they may speak to the issue at hand. Members will be recognized in the order they request the floor via the raise hand function. Any Member wishing to post a written amendment or post in-writing something germane to the business of convention must use the Q&A feature or other feature designated by the President. The chat feature may be used for non-business postings although it may be disabled as appropriate at the discretion of the President.
21. Only Members may speak during the Convention, except and to the extent the President extends speaking privileges to a non-Member. After first stating their name and congregation or other affiliation, a Member addressing the Convention shall direct all remarks to the President and confine such remarks to the question on the floor. No Member shall speak more than twice on the same pending matter without permission of the President, nor, in the absence of such permission, for more than 3 minutes at a time. Once debate on any matter has taken 15 minutes, the President may end the debate or specify a time period for limited further debate, subject to the Convention's power to extend or limit debate upon motion supported by a two-thirds majority.
22. A member intending to make a main motion or to offer an amendment shall, before or after being recognized, post the motion in writing to the Q&A feature to include the member's full name and congregation (*e.g.*, "Sandra Seabury, St. Swithin's") and if moving to amend a resolution the number of the resolution (*e.g.*, A-183)
23. After the making and seconding of a main motion, and before the question is called, the following subsidiary motions (among others) are in order: motion to amend; motion to refer; motion to postpone to a definite time; and motion to postpone indefinitely. A "motion to table," unless specified to be the emergency motion to lay on the table, shall be construed as a motion to postpone indefinitely.
24. All motions, resolutions, or documents that are before the Convention for action shall be shared on the screen for all Members to view.
25. Except where otherwise provided by canon, by these Rules, or by Robert's Rules, a simple majority of those voting will carry a question. The Convention shall vote using an electronic confidential voting platform, with the President announcing the result of the vote.
26. Neither absentee voting nor proxy voting is recognized. Only Members present in person in the electronic meeting and voting in the affirmative or negative on a particular question shall be counted for that vote, and only such persons shall be included in the denominator used to calculate the percentage of support for the question. Abstentions shall not be counted or recorded except at the request of the President or on motion approved by the Convention.
27. Once an issue has been determined, it shall stand as the decision of the Convention and not again be drawn into debate except upon a motion for reconsideration made by a

Member who previously voted on the prevailing side. Only one motion for reconsideration of a particular earlier question shall be permitted.

28. A Member may not, in one speaking, both debate a question and call the question for a vote. A Member may, in one speaking, both debate the question and call for a vote by Orders. A vote by Orders must be called for prior to the close of debate on the question and must be supported by at least five members of the Clergy or five delegations, in which event it shall be required. A vote by Orders will take place using the electronic voting platform.
29. If a Member making or supporting a non-debatable motion speaks in favor of that motion, or provides an explanation or reasons that tend to support the motion, the motion becomes debatable if so determined by the President, who shall, in that event, specify such limits on the debate as the President deems advisable.
30. When a motion for the previous question covers more than one pending question, the vote will ordinarily cover all pending questions; however, upon the request of any Member or the President to divide the question, separate votes will be taken as to each previous question, such votes to be taken in the order in which the questions are pending (i.e., the reverse order in which the motions were made).
31. Voting shall take place using an electronic confidential voting platform. The President's announcement of the voting result shall include the number of members voting on each side of the question.
32. Business may also be conducted by unanimous consent.

