

PARLIAMENTARY PRIMER

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Governance of the NCIMS

Procedures Governing
the
Cooperative State-Public Health Service
Food and Drug Administration Program
of the
National Conference on Interstate Milk Shipments

Commonly referred to as “The Procedures” which includes:

- Constitution of the NCIMS
- Bylaws of the NCIMS
- Memorandum of Understanding Between the U.S. FDA and the NCIMS
- Other Related Documents

The Delegate Assembly, Councils, Committees, and Executive Board of the Conference all employ the current version of Robert’s Rules of Order in the conduct of their meetings. In any issue of governance or operation of the Conference in which the Procedures are at odds with Robert’s Rules of Order, the Procedures take precedence.

PARLIAMENTARY LAW RESTS ON **CERTAIN PRINCIPLES:**

THE PRINCIPLE OF RIGHTS

- THE RIGHT OF THE MAJORITY TO ULTIMATELY RULE
- THE RIGHT OF THE MINORITY TO BE HEARD
- THE RIGHT OF THE INDIVIDUAL TO PARTICIPATE IN DECISION MAKING

THE PRINCIPLE OF ONE THING AT A TIME

THE PRINCIPLE OF BALANCE

BETWEEN AFFIRMATIVE AND NEGATIVE ...ALTERNATING PRO AND CON DEBATE AND BOTH AFFIRMATIVE AND NEGATIVE VOTES BE TAKEN ON MOTIONS

RIGHT OF PARLIAMENTARY COURTESY

ONE MUST DEBATE MEASURES, NOT MEMBERS

DEFINITIONS

- **CHAIR** – The presiding officer or the position from which that person presides.
- **FLOOR** – The position of persons other than the presiding officers or the right to have the attention of the group.
- **FORM** - Typical wording usually applied to motions or documents.
- **MEETING** - An official gathering of members to transact business for a period during which there is no interruption longer than a recess.
- **MEMBER** - A person with the right to full participation, including the right to vote.
- **MOTION** - A formal proposal by a member in a meeting that the assembly take certain action.
- **PENDING** - Being processed by the chair...not yet disposed of.
- **PRECEDENCE** - Priority of rank applied to motions.
- **QUESTION** - A synonym for motion...calling for a vote on a motion.
- **SESSION** - One or more connected meetings transacting a single order of business.
- **TABLE** - The desk...to lay on the table means entrusting to the care of the secretary for consideration at a future point in time.

INTRODUCTION OF BUSINESS

- **GENERAL METHOD** – All business should be brought before the assembly by a motion of a member or by the presentation of communication to the assembly.
- **OBTAINING THE FLOOR** – Before a member can make a motion or address the assembly on any motion it is necessary that he/she obtain the floor, that is to obtain the right to speak from the chair.
- **MOTIONS** – Before a subject is open to debate, three steps are necessary: first, a motion must be made; secondly, the motion must receive a second; finally, the presiding officer states the motion and discussion may begin.
- **OPENING DEBATE** – The chair opens debate on a debatable motion by stating “are you ready for the question” (not to be confused with a call for question as in calling for the vote). More typically the chair states “is there discussion”?
- **DIVIDING A MOTION** – When a motion is complicated and capable of being made into several motions, a member may make a motion to divide the question. this motion requires a second and is amendable.

MOTIONS REVIEWED BY THEIR OBJECTS

The object of a motion is essentially the purpose for which the motion is offered. There are eight common objects and the motions commonly employed with those objects. (Motions marked with * are less common in the meetings of the NCIMS.)

TO CHANGE

- AMEND
- COMMIT
- MODIFY A MOTION

TO DEFER

- POSTPONE DEFINITELY
- LAY ON THE TABLE
- COMMIT

TO SUPPRESS DEBATE

- ORDER THE PREVIOUS QUESTION *
- LIMIT DEBATE *

TO SUPPRESS THE MOTION

- OBJECT TO CONSIDERATION *
- POSTPONE INDEFINITELY *
- LAY ON THE TABLE

TO CONSIDER AGAIN

- RECONSIDER
- RENEW *
- AMEND AFTER ADOPTION

TO CORRECT ERRORS OR DEAL WITH EXCEPTIONS

- POINT OF ORDER
- APPEAL *
- CALL FOR THE ORDERS OF THE DAY *
- SUSPEND THE RULES TO INTERRUPT OR END A MEETING *

TO INTERRUPT OR END A MEETING

- ADJOURN
- RECESS

OTHER

- READ PAPERS
- WITHDRAW A MOTION
- RAISE A QUESTION OF PRIVILEGE

ORDER OF PRECEDENCE OF MOTIONS

Parliamentary motions have a fixed rank, called the order of precedence among themselves. When one of them is pending, any motion higher on the list is permitted, with a few rare exceptions - any motion lower on the list is prohibited, again with several exceptions. They are proposed in any upward sequence and put to vote in the opposite downward sequence.

- **ADJOURN**
- **RECESS**
- **RAISE A QUESTION OF PRIVILEGE**
- **CALL FOR THE ORDERS OF THE DAY**
- **LAY ON THE TABLE**
- **ORDER THE PREVIOUS QUESTION (CLOSE DEBATE)**
- **LIMIT OR EXTEND LIMITS OF DEBATE**
- **POSTPONE DEFINITELY**
- **COMMIT OR REFER**
- **AMEND**
- **POSTPONE INDEFINITELY**
- **MAIN MOTION**

SIX BASIC FACTS ABOUT EACH MOTION

The following table gives six basic facts about each motion. The motions are in alphabetical order by their key words. Because no table can include all exceptions and variations, the reader should use this table as a quick reference. Two-thirds votes, for instance, are *especially likely to have important qualifications*.

The abbreviations are the following:

- Anoth** = is in order when another person has the floor
- Sec** = requires a second
- Deb** = is debatable
- Amd** = is amendable
- Maj** = requires a majority vote
- 2/3** = requires a two-thirds vote
- C** = is decided by the chair
- Auto** = automatic upon demand
- Rec** = is re-considerable
- A** = only in the affirmative
- N** = only if negative.
- = NOT.... [Thus, -Deb means NOT DEBATABLE]
- RecA** = means re-considerable only if the vote was affirmative

Adjourn (when privileged)	-Anoth	Sec	-Deb	Amd	Maj	-Rec
Agenda, adopt an	-Anoth	Sec	Deb	Amd	Maj	RecN
Agenda, amend an adopted	-Anoth	Sec	Deb	Amd	2/3	RecN
Agenda, suspend the	-Anoth	Sec	-Deb	-Amd	2/3	-Rec
Amend a pending motion	-Anoth	Sec	Deb	Amd	Maj	Rec
Amend after adoption	-Anoth	Sec	Deb	Amd	2/3	RecN
Appeal (general case)	Anoth	Sec	Deb	-Amd	Maj	Rec
Appeal (exceptional case)	Anoth	Sec	-Deb	-Amd	Maj	Rec
Blank, create a	-Anoth	Sec	-Deb	-Amd	Maj	-Rec
Blank, fill a	-Anoth	-Sec	Deb	-Amd	Maj	Rec
By Laws, adopt original	-Anoth	Sec	Deb	Amd	Maj	RecN
By Laws, amend adopted	-Anoth	Sec	Deb	Amd	2/3	RecN
Commit	-Anoth	Sec	Deb	Amd	Maj	Rec
Committee, discharge a	-Anoth	Sec	Deb	Amd	Maj	RedN
Committee of the whole, go into	-Anoth	Sec	Deb	Amd	Maj	Rec
Consider informally	-Anoth	Sec	Deb	-Amd	Maj	RecN
Debate, close	-Anoth	Sec	-Deb	-Amd	2/3	Rec
Debate, limit or extend limits of	-Anoth	Sec	-Deb	Amd	2/3	Rec
Divide the assembly	Anoth	-Sec	-Deb	Amd	Auto	-Rec
Divide the motion (on demand)	Anoth	-Sec	-Deb	-Amd	Auto	-Rec
Divide the motion (not on demand)	-Anoth	Sec	-Deb	Amd	Maj	-Rec
MAIN MOTION OR QUESTION	-Anoth	Sec	Deb	Amd	Maj	Rec
Minority views, receive	-Anoth	Sec	-Deb	Amd	Maj	Rec
Minutes, approve or correct pending	-Anoth	Sec	Deb	Amd	Maj	Rec
Minutes, approve without reading	-Anoth	Sec	-Deb	-Amd	2/3	-Rec
Minutes, dispense with reading the	-Anoth	Sec	-Deb	-Amd	Maj	-Rec
Nominate	-Anoth	-Sec	Deb	-Amd	Maj	-Red
Nominations, adopt motions related to	-Anoth	Sec	-Deb	Amd	Maj	Red
Nominations, close	-Anoth	Sec	-Deb	Amd	2/3	-Rec
Nominations, reopen	-Anoth	Sec	-Deb	-Amd	Maj	RecN

Object to consideration	Anoth	-Sec	-Deb	-Amd	2/3	RecN
Order of business, adopt an	-Anoth	Sec	Deb	Amd	2/3	RecN
Orders of the day, call for the	Anoth	-Sec	-Deb	-Amd	Auto	-Rec
Orders of the day, make general	Anoth	Sec	Deb	Amd	Maj	Rec
Orders of the day, make special	Anoth	Sec	Deb	Amd	2/3	Rec
Papers, giving permission to read	Anoth	-Sec	-Deb	-Amd	Maj	Rec
Parliamentary inquiry, make a	Anoth	-Sec	-Deb	-Amd	C	-Rec
Point of order	Anoth	-Sec	-Deb	-Amd	C	-Rec
Postpone definitely	-Anoth	Sec	Deb	Amd	Maj	Rec
Postpone indefinitely	-Anoth	Sec	Deb	-Amd	Maj	RecA
Previous question, order the (Call the)	Anoth	Sec	-Deb	-Amd	2/3	Rec
Question of privilege, raise a	Anoth	-Sec-	Deb	-Amd	C	-Rec
Question of privilege, adopt a	-Anoth	Sec	Deb	Amd	Maj	Rec
Recess (when privileged)	-Anoth	Sec	-Deb	Amd	Maj	-Rec
Reconsider a debatable motion	Anoth	Sec	Deb	-Amd	Maj	Rec
Reconsider an undebatable motion	Anoth	Sec	-Deb	-Amd	Maj	Rec
Refer	-Anoth	Sec	Deb	Amd	Maj	Rec
Report, adopt or approve a	-Anoth	Sec	Deb	Amd	Maj	Rec
Rescind or repeal	-Anoth	Sec	Deb	Amd	2/3	RecN
Resolution, adopt or approve a	-Anoth	Sec	Deb	Amd	Maj	Rec
Rules of order, suspend special/other	-Anoth	Sec	-Deb	-Amd	2/3	-Rec
Rules of order, adopt special	-Anoth	Sec	Deb	Amd	2/3	RecN
Rules of order, amend adopted special	Anoth	Sec	Deb	Amd	2/3	RecN
Standing rules, adopt	-Anoth	Sec	Deb	Amd	Maj	Red
Standing rules, amend adopted	-Anoth	Sec	Deb	Amd	2/3	RecN
Standing rules, suspend	-Anoth	Sec	-Deb	-Amd	Maj	-Rec
Table, lay on/Take from the	-Anoth	Sec	-Deb	-Amd	Maj	-Rec
Time, set the effective	-Anoth	Sec	Deb	Amd	Maj	Rec
Voting, adopt motions related to	-Anoth	Sec	-Deb	Amd	Maj	Rec
Withdraw a motion, give permission to	Anoth	-Sec	-Deb	-Amd	Maj	RedN

Recommendations...

For all participants:

- Obtain a copy of the .pdf version of this presentation as a reference

For Delegates, Council and Committee members, Chairs and Vice Chairs:

- Consider purchasing a copy of Robert's Rules of Order, 12th Edition
- Obtain a copy of the 2023 version of the NCIMS Procedures
[Available as a .pdf download at <https://ncims.org/ncims-documents/>]