

2021 Legislative Session: Navigating Virtual Committee Meetings and Public Hearings

Updated 1/7/21



During the COVID-19 public health emergency, Committee Meetings and Public Hearings will be conducted virtually.

Due to the ongoing COVID-19 public health emergency, the Capitol Complex is currently closed to the public. However, the public may still participate in committee meetings and public hearings virtually. Some important things to note:

- **Virtual public hearings and committee meetings will be broadcast contemporaneously** on television or on an Internet website identified in the meeting notice.
- In the event that a technological issue prevents or limits the business of the committee before or during a virtual meeting, the committee chairpersons may take whatever action they deem necessary, including, but not limited to, cancelling or rescheduling the meeting.
- A **limit of ten (10) virtual committee meetings and hearings** may be scheduled for or conducted at the same time.

Committee Meetings and Procedures:

- Committee members **must be visible** on the virtual platform in order to cast a vote.
- Committee meeting agendas **must be made available by 6:00 p.m. the day before the meeting** on the General Assembly website. Meetings with less than one calendar day's notice are only permissible if an announcement of the meeting is made during a session from the floor of the Senate or House.

Public Hearings Procedure:

- Notice of the date, time, manner, and subject matter of virtual public hearings must be published in the Legislative Bulletin and posted on the General Assembly website **at least five (5) calendar days in advance of the hearing**, and include:
 - (A) a list of the numbers and titles of each bill and resolution to be considered,
 - (B) the website address for testifying at such hearing,
 - (C) the website address or television channel in which the meeting will be broadcast, and
 - (D) information relating to how members of the public are to submit the names of persons who wish to testify at such hearing to the committee clerk.
- Members of the public interested in **testifying virtually** may enter a lottery that will determine the order of testimony of witnesses during the public portion of the hearing.
- Anyone wishing to submit **written testimony** to a committee must submit by email, mail, or fax. Written testimony may not be submitted in person while the State Capitol and Legislative Office Building have been closed to the public.

This guidance is based on input from Gallo & Robinson, as well as Senate Joint Resolution No. 1, LCO No. 454: Resolution Concerning the Joint Rules of the Senate and the Housing of Representatives, available at <https://www.cga.ct.gov/2021/TOB/S/PDF/2021SJ-00001-R00-SB.PDF>.

To get the most up-to-date information during the Legislative Session, visit the CGA webpage at: www.cga.ct.gov.

