

*Cocaine Anonymous
World Service
Manual*



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Reflecting actions from the
2018 World Service Conference*

WSC PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE GUIDELINES

(Adapted From Robert's Rules of Order)

The purpose of parliamentary procedure is ...“to permit a majority to accomplish its ultimate purpose within a reasonable period of time but only after allowing the minority reasonable opportunity to express its views on the question at issue.”

- Lehr Fess, Former Parliamentarian, U.S. House of Representatives

This brief summary of parliamentary procedure, drawn largely from Robert's Rules of Order, was prepared for use at the World Service Conference. The Conference believes that it may also be of use to Areas and Districts. Please use it in the spirit that it is intended; to aid in the orderly conduct of business meetings. It does not replace or take precedence over a charter, bylaws, standing rules, or the principles upon which the traditions, the steps and the Twelve Concepts for Service are based.

A potential exists for one or more people to use parliamentary procedure to control and/or otherwise manipulate a group away from its intention. Scrupulous and incessant attention to principle is the only way to prevent these guidelines for business meetings from being used to circumvent or unjustly influence the Group Conscience.

RECOGNITION

A member desiring to speak or make a motion shall raise their hand until recognized by the Chairperson. For motions not requiring recognition, the member must stand and speak, interrupting the current speaker. The ONLY motions where this is in order are:

1. The Motion to Reconsider;
2. Objection to Consideration;
3. Appeal from Decision,
4. To Rise to a Point of Order; and
5. Parliamentary Inquiry.

MAIN MOTIONS

A Main Motion is any motion that brings business before the Conference. Main Motions must be seconded, are debatable and require a majority vote for adoption. Main Motions should be simply worded and not include arguments for their adoption. Complicated or long motions may be divided by a Motion to Divide so that portions of the Main Motion may be debated and voted upon separately.

FRIENDLY AMENDMENT

The offering and acceptance of “friendly” amendments is a regular practice on the Conference floor. Speakers are permitted to suggest changes to the wording, grammar, punctuation or minor changes in the content of Main Motions As practiced by the Conference, if accepted by the maker of the Main Motion and there are no objections from the floor, the changes are added to the Main Motion without a separate vote. If there is an objection, a Motion to Amend may be made.

AMEND

Main Motions and the Motions to Limit Debate and Refer to Committee may be amended. Motions to Amend must be seconded, are debatable and require a majority vote for their adoption. Amendments to amendments are permitted but an amendment to an amendment may not be amended.

LAY ON THE TABLE

A motion tabled may not be taken from the table the same day. “Tabling” therefore has the effect of postponing action on the motion in question. The Motion to Table requires a second, but is not debatable. It requires a majority vote to Table.

REFER TO COMMITTEE

Motions may require the attention of a standing committee (which always exists) or an ad hoc committee (created for a special purpose). The Motion to Refer must be seconded, is debatable and requires a majority to adopt. A motion “referred to committee” may be renewed on the floor after review by the committee.

CLOSE (OR LIMIT) DEBATE

Otherwise known as “Calling the Question,” the Motion to Close Debate and vote immediately on the Main Question requires a second, is not debatable and requires a 2/3rds majority to pass. The Motion to Limit Debate to, for example, 20 minutes, applies only to the Main Motion being considered and requires a 2/3rds majority.

WITHDRAW THE CURRENT MOTION

A member making a motion may decide, after it has been seconded that they wish to withdraw the motion. The Chairperson will ask for objections. If there are any, the Chair will call for a vote on whether to allow the motion to be withdrawn. The Withdraw Motion is not debatable and requires a majority of those voting for adoption.

RECONSIDER

A Motion to Reconsider a previous vote, if successful, returns the previous motion to the floor as if no vote had ever been taken, and debate begins anew. The Motion to Reconsider may only be made and seconded by members who voted with the prevailing side. The Motion to Reconsider must be made in the same day as the motion being reconsidered. It is debatable, if the motion to which it applies was debatable. Adoption of a Motion to Reconsider requires a simple majority vote. No motion may be twice reconsidered.

RESCIND (PASSED MOTION)

The Motion to Rescind, unlike the Motion to Reconsider, overturns the passage of the previous motion. If the Motion to Rescind succeeds, the affected motion (which previously passed) now fails. Any member may make or second a Motion to Rescind, and it may apply to any motion passed at any time during the Conference. It requires a second and is debatable. It requires a 2/3 vote, to pass unless at least one day's notice is given of the attempt to rescind. If previous notice is given, only a simple majority is required to adopt.

SUSPEND THE RULES

This Motion must be qualified by stating why the rules should be suspended, i.e. to consider a motion out of order of the agenda or accepted procedure. Suspending the rules may not be used to bypass the charter or bylaws, but may be used to suspend the effect of standing rules or previous motions only when passed by a 2/3rds majority. "Simple" suspensions, which are used to consider a motion out of its order in the agenda, require a simple majority. Neither motion is debatable; both require a second and are in effect only until the reason for suspension is resolved.

EXAMPLE: I move we suspend the rules to elect a new Conference Committee Chairperson before taking action on the Conference Committee's recommendations. (Requires simple majority)

EXAMPLE: I move we suspend Standing Rule #11 to allow a motion to be displayed using an overhead projector. (Requires 2/3 majority)

OBJECTION TO CONSIDERATION

Occasionally, a ridiculous, offensive or repugnant motion is made by an obstreperous member to insult or otherwise waste the Conference's time. A member may rise without being recognized, saying, and "Madame /Mr. Chairperson, I object to the consideration of this motion." This motion requires no second and is not debatable, and must be made before debate starts. The Chairperson must immediately call for a vote. If more than one third vote for the consideration of the motion, the objection is overruled.

APPEAL FROM DECISION

Any decision by the Chairperson (or Parliamentarian) may be appealed. The appeal is debatable only if the challenged decision refers to a debatable motion. The appeal requires a second and a majority vote reverses the decision of the Chair. All appeals must be made immediately after the decision in question.

REQUESTS AND INQUIRIES

1. Parliamentary Inquiry- A member who has a question regarding parliamentary procedures, rules of order, and items in the World Service Manual or parliamentary strategies may make a parliamentary inquiry of the chair. Without being recognized by the chair, a member may rise saying "Madame/Mr. Chairperson, I have a parliamentary inquiry". The question must be related to the business at hand and asks for the opinion of the chair. It is not a ruling of the chair and cannot be

appealed. If a motion is made despite the chair's opinion, and the chair then rules the motion out of order, that ruling may be appealed.

3. Point of Order- A member who feels that the parliamentary procedure is out of order may rise saying "Madame/Mr. Chairperson, I rise to a point of order!". When the chairperson asks for his/her point, (s)he states where a motion is out of order, where a parliamentary procedure is incorrect, where a proposed motion violates the charter, a previously enacted bylaw, a standing rule or a motion. The Chairperson immediately rules on the validity of the point, subject only to appeals.
4. Point of Information- A "Point of Information" is a request for information about a motion or the suspected impact of a motion being considered.

MOTION TO ADJOURN (RECESS)

The Motion to Adjourn is debatable only when there are no other motions before the Conference. It is in order only when the time for the next meeting has been determined. To adjourn for a short period (Recess), the motion to Recess may be made. The duration of the Recess is required in the motion. It is advisable that the reason for the Recess be stated.

EXAMPLE: I move we recess until 1 PM for lunch.

EXAMPLE: I move we recess for 15 minutes to get coffee.

RULES FOR VOTES ON MOTIONS

QUORUM

A quorum shall be defined to be 2/3 of the Conference votes present at Roll Call for that particular Conference Session. The membership of the Conference shall be determined by a call of the roll at the first regularly scheduled session of each Conference day. It is the Chairperson's responsibility to verify that a quorum is present whenever there is a vote on any motion. A member doubtful of the quorum may rise to a Point of Order by saying, "I question the quorum" or "I challenge the quorum." Rules and precedence are the same as for Rise to a Point of Order.

NOTE: A quorum is not necessary for discussion, debate, or committee reports.

PASS/FAIL

A simple majority is defined to be 50 % plus 1 of votes cast excluding abstentions. Most motions require only a simple majority. The following motions require a 2/3rds margin:

- Motion to Close (or Limit) Debate
- Motion to Suspend the Rules (Charter or Bylaws)
- Motion to Object to the Consideration

Determination of whether a motion passes or fails shall be as follows:

- If AYES > NAYS then Motion passes.
- If AYES < NAYS then Motion fails.
- If AYES = NAYS then Chairperson casts deciding vote.

METHODS: Voting shall be by one of five methods.

1. Voice: If the Chairperson or a member is in doubt of the outcome, either may call “Division” of the House. The Chairperson will then call for show of Hands.
2. Hands: The Chairperson makes a visual inspection of hands raised for and against and declares the result. Questionable results will be counted.
3. Count: The Chairperson shall appoint two assistants to help count the votes. When all three counters agree, the outcome will be announced.
4. Secret: Rarely used, but the Chairperson may call for a ballot where the anonymity of votes is considered important.
5. Electronic: To be used at the discretion of the Chairperson.

The Chairperson decides which method of voting will best serve the interests of the Conference, except when a Division of the House is called.

ELECTIONS

The Chairperson shall call for elections where necessary or as the agenda specifies. The procedure shall be to ask for nominations from the floor. Nominations must be seconded. After a cogent pause in nominations, the Chairperson shall ask someone to move that nominations be closed. This requires a second before voting. The Chairperson shall determine if those nominated shall speak. The election shall proceed after the candidates have left the room. If one candidate does not receive a majority of the votes, the two receiving the most votes shall remain outside the room while a runoff election is held. If a secret ballot is held, it is not necessary for the candidates to leave the room.

ROBERT'S RULE OF ORDER MOTION CHART

Based on *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised (10th Edition)*

Main Motions:

These motions are listed in order of precedence. A motion can be introduced if it is higher on the chart than the pending motion.

§	PURPOSE:	YOU SAY:	INTERRUPT?	2ND?	DEBATE?	AMEND?	VOTE?
§21	Close meeting	I move to adjourn	No	Yes	No	No	Majority
§20	Take break	I move to recess for ...	No	Yes	No	Yes	Majority
§19	Register complaint	I rise to a question of privilege	Yes	No	No	No	None
§18	Make follow agenda	I call for the orders of the day	Yes	No	No	No	None
§17	Lay aside temporarily	I move to lay the question on the table	No	Yes	No	No	Majority
§16	Close debate	I move the previous question	No	Yes	No	No	2/3
§15	Limit or extend debate	I move that debate be limited to ...	No	Yes	No	Yes	2/3
§14	Postpone to a certain time	I move to postpone the motion to ...	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority
§13	Refer to committee	I move to refer the motion to ...	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority
§12	Modify wording of motion	I move to amend the motion by ...	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority
§11	Kill main motion	I move that the motion be postponed indefinitely	No	Yes	Yes	No	Majority
§10	Bring business before assembly (a main motion)	I move that [or "to"] ...	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority

Incidental Motions:

No order of precedence. These motions arise incidentally and are decided immediately.

§	PURPOSE:	YOU SAY:	INTERRUPT?	2ND?	DEBATE?	AMEND?	VOTE?
§23	Enforce rules	Point of Order	Yes	No	No	No	None
§24	Submit matter to assembly	I appeal from the decision of the chair	Yes	Yes	Varies	No	Majority
§25	Suspend rules	I move to suspend the rules	No	Yes	No	No	2/3
§26	Avoid main motion altogether	I object to the consideration of the question	Yes	No	No	No	2/3
§27	Divide motion	I move to divide the question	No	Yes	No	Yes	Majority
§29	Demand a rising vote	I move for a rising vote	Yes	No	No	No	None
§33	Parliamentary law question	Parliamentary inquiry	Yes	No	No	No	None
§33	Request for information	Point of information	No	No	No	No	None

Motions that bring a question again before the assembly

No order of precedence. Introduce only when nothing else is pending.

§	PURPOSE:	YOU SAY:	INTERRUPT?	2ND?	DEBATE?	AMEND?	VOTE?
§34	Take matter from table	I move to take from the table ...	No	Yes	No	No	Majority
§35	Cancel previous action	I move to rescind ...	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	2/3 or Majority with notice
§37	Reconsider motion	I move to reconsider ...	No	Yes	Varies	No	Majority

§ indicates the section from Robert's Rules.