

**Orange County Area Service Committee Guidelines
(Revised: July 2008)**

Article I

NAME

The name of this committee shall be The Orange County Area Service Committee: (OCASC)

Article II

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

The primary purpose of the OCASC shall be to serve the groups and subcommittees common to the welfare of Narcotics Anonymous, by communicating the needs and problems and organizing ourselves so that we may better carry the message to the addict who still suffers. Narcotics Anonymous groups shall be defined as stated in the *Guide to Local Services*.

As quoted from *It Works How and Why*:

“Unity is the spirit that joins members around the world in a spiritual fellowship that has the power to change lives. By striving to see beyond our individual ideas and the interest of our group, we come to understand that the common welfare of all NA must come first. Through our trust in a loving higher power, we find the strength to work together towards our shared goal of recovery from addiction. In the unity that grows in trust, we are all ready to work together for our common good: (page 133)

Article III

DEFINITION

The OCASC is a committee formed by and is responsible to all of its members in the Orange County Area of Narcotics Anonymous. It is through this committee that the groups are free to concentrate their service on new members of their meetings and to better support other subcommittees and NA as a whole, maintaining flexibility to carry the message to the still suffering addict and the community in a more efficient manner. This committee shall be supported and funded through participation and direct support from groups in the Orange County Area.

Section 1. For the purpose of maintaining order, this committee is generally conducted in accordance with *Roberts Rules of Order*.

Section 2. VOTING

1. Each group as defined in The Guide to Local Services has one vote through either the Group Service Representative (*GSR*) OR Alternate Group Service Representative (*Alt-GSR*), if the GSR is not present.
2. The voting members of the Executive Committee include the ASC Vice Chairperson, Secretary, Treasurer, Vice Treasurer (in the absence of the Treasurer), Regional Committee member(RCM), Alternate Regional Committee Member(in the absence of the RCM),ASO Chairperson or alternate ASO board member (in the absence of the Chairperson), and all subcommittee Chairs or their representatives have one (1) vote. The Area Chairperson votes only in the event of a tie.
3. Any member of Narcotics Anonymous may present input on the meeting floor and may address the OCASC if recognized by the Area Chairperson. Any member of Narcotics Anonymous may submit in writing a motion under new business in order to address the OCASC. A voting member must second all motions.
4. A quorum will be the voting members present at the time of voting. Any Decisions affecting Orange County Area Service Guidelines or money matters require a 2/3rds majority vote of all eligible voting

members participating in the vote to pass (abstentions are not counted in the vote). All other decisions require a simple majority vote except elections of trusted servants. Please see section 3. #2

5. All motions brought to the floor shall generally be limited to 2 pros and 2 cons.
6. Any motion may be referred to the Group Service Representative (GSR) to take back to their group meeting for a wider group conscience by a majority vote. This may be a motion that cannot be clearly decided in the Area Service Committee Meeting.
7. The Area Guidelines may be amended at any regular meeting of this committee by a 2/3rds majority vote provided that the amendment has been submitted in writing with this intent.

Section 3. OFFICERS

Terms of all officers of the OCASC are for one year. Officers may serve more than one year if voted in by the Committee. No officer shall serve more than two consecutive terms in the same position. A member may hold more than one elected position only when there are no qualified or willing members available.

1. Elections for the OCASC officers are held at the regular ASC meeting in December. The elections for the Treasurer and Vice Treasurer will be held in January.
2. OCASC supports the idea of internship and so whenever possible the "Alternate" or "Vice" of any position should succeed to that position with a vote of confidence from the OCASC. Officers are elected by 51% of voting members.
3. Nominees, who have accepted the nomination for a position as an OCASC officer will be asked to qualify, answer questions from the OCASC body and then leave the room so that further discussion and voting by the OCASC body can take place.

Section 4. REMOVAL OF OFFICERS

1. Relapse constitutes automatic removal.
2. Resignation.
3. Two unexcused absences of the regular committee meeting of this committee.
4. An Excusable absence is one given prior to the regular meeting or an unforeseen event.
5. Failure to fulfill duties and responsibilities of the elected position.
6. Misappropriation / misuse of ASC Funds and Misconduct

A. Misappropriation/Misuse of ASC Funds

The 11th Concept of NA Service establishes the sole priority for the use of N.A. funds is to carry the message to the addict who still suffers. The 12th Concept of N.A. Service gives the ASC a mandate from the N.A. groups that call for total fiscal accountability. With this in mind any misappropriation or misuse of funds by any Area Trusted Servant(s) or N.A. member (s) can not be tolerated. The definition of "misappropriation of funds" includes but is not limited to theft, embezzlement, NSF fees or use of N.A. funds for purposes not expressly authorized by the Area Service Committee, subcommittees or ad-hocs. This includes the theft of cash, check or any financial instrument (i.e. refunds, royalties or rebates from vendors to the N.A. fellowship) or asset (i.e. equipment, supplies or physical inventory). A team of auditors, committed to the Orange County Area Service Committee, will conduct an audit of the Area Service Committee, Area Service Office, Dare to Care and Area Activities checking accounts. The auditors will report back to the O.C. Area Service Committee with findings. One audit will be completed per quarter.

B. Misconduct

Misconduct is defined as any action contrary to the 12 Traditions of N.A., The 12 Concepts of N.A. Service, the Guidelines of the ASC, and the Guidelines of an ASC subcommittee or ad-hoc. This includes, if applicable, any violation of California State or US Federal law to the extent that such misconduct is

detrimental to the N.A. fellowship. This also includes conduct that creates a benefit to a member or outside enterprise to the detriment of the N.A. fellowship.

C. Interim Action - Suspension

Should any ASC Executive Committee member, subcommittee member or any non-elected N.A. member be suspected to have misappropriated or misused ASC funds or have been involved in misconduct, the ASC Executive Committee duly elected officers will vote in person or by phone to immediately “suspend” the member(s) involved from further Area Service. Suspension in this instance is not disciplinary action; it is a pause in active service to allow time for investigation of an incident.

1. A suspended officer or member may no longer represent him or her self to the fellowship or Service Board/ Committee as an officer or member of the ASC, its subcommittees or its ad-hocs. Additionally, a member upon notification of being suspended, by phone or letter from the Chair, may not be reimbursed for any services related expenses incurred during the course of their suspension.
2. Upon suspension of any member(s), the ASC Executive Committee duly elected officers must take a full and timely investigation of the matter and report the findings at the next ASC meeting.
3. Any member who participates in or who had knowledge of the suspected misappropriations or misuse of funds or misconduct shall be subject to the same actions taken against the suspected member(s) and are required to be present at the ASC.
4. The presiding officer of the OCASC, immediately upon calling the following ASC to order must report all interim actions/ decisions made by the Executive Committee duly elected officers, fully disclosing the alleged misappropriation or misuse of ASC funds or misconduct and the individuals(s) involved. Any member(s) suspected of misappropriation or misuse of ASC funds or misconduct may exercise the 10th Concept of N.A. Service to redress the issue at this time.

D. OCASC Action: REMOVAL and REINSTATEMENT

Once the OCASC Executive Committee’s duly elected officers investigate and report to the ASC its finding of the suspected violation of the section, the ASC must immediately vote on a motion to remove the individual(s) from the office and/or the committee “ with cause”, to reinstate, or to extend the investigation. The Chair will notify said member by phone or letter.

1. Should the ASC remove an Officer(s) or member(s) with cause, the said individual’s participation with in the ASC is immediately terminated.
 - A. Additionally, any member removed from office and /or committee by the ASC for misappropriation of funds may not hold an area elected office or handle any N.A. funds of the ASC, its subcommittees and /or its ad –hocs for a period of five (5) years.
 - B. Any member removed from office and /or committee by the ASC for misconduct may not hold an area elected office on the ASC, its subcommittees and/or its ad-hocs for a period of two (2) years to five (5) years, at the discretion of the ASC, on a case by case basis. Note: this period of time will be voted on and determined at the time of removal from office and /or committee.
 - C. If a trusted servant resigns from office or a committee prior to the ASC having taken the aforementioned action and reaching a final resolution, the ASC shall proceed to suspend the trusted servant. The ASC shall investigate the matter and follow the aforementioned process to its normal conclusion. This section is meant to be applied retroactively to those cases that would have been subjected to this clause if it had been in effect within the last five years.
2. Upon reinstatement, said members suspension will be lifted and the member will resume their role as full participant in the ASC, its subcommittee or ad-hoc, as applicable.

E. RESTITUTION

1. A member removed from office for the misappropriation or misuse of ASC funds will be subject to criminal and or civil prosecution by the ASC, its subcommittees or its ad-hocs, as applicable.

2. Members removed from office for the misappropriation or misuse of ASC funds may at the discretion of the ASC or ASO Board of Directors, be asked to sign a promissory note and make restitution in full of all misappropriated or misused ASC funds in lieu of prosecution.

Section 5. Money Matters

1. All money matters require a 2/3rds majority vote of voting members. Please see SECTION 3, # 2.
2. The area checking account signature card consists of the Treasurer, Vice Treasurer, Area Chairperson and the Vice Chairperson. Two (2) of these four (4) signatures are required on every check. One (1) being the primary signer (Treasurer or Vice Treasurer) and (1) being a secondary signer (Chairperson or Vice Chairperson). No two (2) signers may reside in the same household. Any and all proprietary information relating to checking accounts is to be shared with the Chair including but not limited to online banking. When checks are originated through online banking/bill paying services, the debit entry in the ASC checkbook will be initialed by the Chair or Vice Chair.
3. All monies and receipts are to be totaled and verified by the Treasurer and Vice treasurer before leaving the premises. An Executive Officer shall count, total and verify monies in the absence of the Treasurer or Vice Treasurer.
4. Any allocations for subcommittees or subcommittee members in regards to travel and other related expenses for attendance at Learning Days, etc. require a 2/3rds majority vote and must be submitted prior to the event attendance.

Section 6. General Fund and Prudent Reserve

1. The Area general fund and Prudent Reserve addresses operating expenses. The ASC's band account should maintain \$500.00 working capital and \$2500.00 as prudent reserve for a total of \$3,000.00 per month. The subcommittee allocations are as follows:
 - A. Hospitals and Institutions: \$600.00 for monthly literature with a \$25.00 monthly operating expense. The OCASC has agreed to allocate 2 cases of Basic Texts and 3 cases of Introductory Guides as needed if funds permit, and that is not to exceed five cases in a year. This request must be submitted to the Treasurer in writing to ensure funds are available.
 - B. Activities: no expense is allocated to Area Activities because the Area Activities subcommittee has a prudent reserve of \$900.00 with a working capital of \$600.00. If there is no active Chair or Vice Chair of Activities Committee, the Area Activities checkbook must be returned to the OCASC Treasurer until such time as positions are filled.
 - C. Public Information: \$200.00 per month.
 - D. Literature Review: \$30.00 per month.
 - E. Regional Activities: \$30.00 per month.
 - F. Help lines: Phone bill \$150.00 and remove \$392.75 for the Answering Service.
 - G. SCRSC: Anything over \$3000.00 is donated to SCRSC.
 - H. OCASC: \$25.00 per month.
 - I. OSASC: Is allocated funds for 10 copies of the Conference Agenda Report (C.A.R.), monies for the copies of the amended Guidelines Process and the GSR Orientation Packets.

Definitions of the Executive Committee: Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, Secretary, Treasurer, Vice Treasurer, Regional Committee Member (RCM), the Alternate Regional Committee Member (Alt-RCM), Area Packet Person, and the Orange County Area Service Office (ASO).

Section 7. REQUIREMENTS AND DUTIES OF THE EXECUTIVE BODY

1. Requirements of the Area Chairperson

- A. Has a minimum of four years clean time.
- B. Experience at Area level preferably as Vice Chair.
- C. Working knowledge of the 12 Steps, 12 Traditions and 12 Concepts of Service with Narcotics Anonymous.

D. Willingness to serve.

2. Duties of the Area Chairperson

- A. To preside over the OCASC meeting, is responsible for keeping order and for conducting the meeting in a fair and responsible manner.
- B. The Chair should coordinate discussion on all matters brought before the OCASC in an unbiased manner so there is a clear understanding by the voting members prior to taking a vote.
- C. Keeps the OCASC activities within the principles of the 12 Steps, 12 Traditions and 12 Concepts of service of Narcotics Anonymous and in accordance with out stated purpose.
- D. Is one of the authorized agents on the OCASC Bank Account.
- E. Is responsible for attending ASO Board of Directors meeting where he/she has voting privileges.
- F. To acknowledge guests or visitors, welcome them to the ASC meeting.
- G. TO state and put to vote all motions that legitimately come before the Area Service Committee. To announce the results of each vote, or in the case that a motion is not in order to rule that motion out of order.
- H. To enforce the rules relating to debate and order within the assembly when appropriate.
- I. To expedite business in every way compatible with the rights of the members.
- J. To arrange the agenda for each OCASC meeting.
- K. In the absence of the Vice Chair, the Chair is responsible for fulfilling the Vice Chair's duties.
- L. Attends the ASC Guideline Review.

3. Requirements of the Vice Chairperson

- A. Is to have a minimum of three years clean time.
- B. Working knowledge of the 12 Steps, 12 Traditions and 12 Concepts of Service with Narcotics Anonymous.
- C. Willingness to serve

4. Duties of the Vice Chairperson

- A. In the absence of the Chairperson, the Vice Chairperson would assume the duties of the Chairperson.
- B. Is one of the authorized signers on the OCASC checking account.
- C. May fill any subcommittee chair position in the absence of the subcommittee Chair in the event that their position has been vacated before their term is complete or a new officer elected.
- D. Coordinates and chairs any special ad-hoc committee of the OCASC.
- E. Is the direct liaison between the subcommittee and the OCASC.
- F. Coordinates and chairs the ASC Guideline review.
- G. Coordinates meeting roster sheet and volunteer's list.
- H. Attends all ASO Board of Directors meetings.
- I. Report to the OCASO any meetings that have had no GSR representative for six consecutive months so that the meeting will then be removed from the directory.
- J. Confirm the existence of each Spanish speaking meeting which is located in the Orange County Area Directory on a quarterly basis, (every 3 months). Meetings which are found to be non existent will be reported to the ASO and removed from the Orange County Area Directory.
With this duty being done by the Area Vice Chair; it will negate the need for the Spanish speaking meetings to send a GSR representative to the OCASC every six months to remain in the Orange County Area Directory.

5. Requirements of the Secretary

- A. Has a minimum of one year clean time.

- B. Working knowledge of the 12 Steps, 12 Traditions and the 12 Concepts of Service in Narcotics Anonymous.
- C. Willingness to Serve.
- D. Previous experience at group level (i.e. Group Secretary, Treasurer, and or GSR).
- E. Should be able to type and have access to a typewriter, word processor or computer.

6. Duties of the Secretary

- A. The Secretary will take the minutes and records and make available to any member of the OCASC a copy upon request in a manner prescribed by the committee.
- B. To maintain record books in which guidelines, special standing rules and minutes are entered with any amendments to these as required. Attends annual ASC guideline review and prepares Copies for GSR's and Executive Body.
- C. Attends ASC meeting.
- D. Responsible for the minutes being available to the ASC meeting or getting them to the packet coordinator.

7. Requirements of the Treasurer

- A. Have a minimum of four years Clean Time.
- B. Working knowledge of the 12 Steps, 12 Traditions and the 12 Concepts of Service in Narcotics Anonymous.
- C. Willingness to Serve.
- D. At least one year of previous Service at an Area level.
- E. Experience in business, accounting, and bookkeeping or as a successful group Treasurer.
- F. Have a job or source of income.

8. Duties of the Treasurer

- A. Is responsible for the OCASC Treasury, pay bills, receives and deposits contributions from the groups and subcommittees.
- B. Is an authorized signer on the OCASC bank account.
- C. Makes written financial reports to the ASC on a monthly basis including an account of Group donations on a quarterly basis.
- D. Is responsible for keeping an accurate balance and records of the OCASC checking account and of all monies.
- E. Is responsible for making donations to our region when funds exceed \$3,000.00.
- F. Makes available upon request financial records and receipts to any member of the OCASC.
- G. Sees that the account signature cards are kept current and up to date.
- H. Is responsible for the distribution of approved funds to the OCASC subcommittees.
- I. Attends Guideline review meeting.
- J. To share any and all proprietary information relating to the OCASC bank accounts with The Executive Committee (body). This includes but is not limited to on-line banking.
- K. Will be a signer on all Area Subcommittee checking accounts.
- L. Will retain Financial Services Acknowledgement of Responsibility forms for the Area Subcommittee Treasurers (see enclosure I).

9. Requirements of the Vice Treasurer

- A. Have minimum of three years clean time.
- B. Working knowledge of the 12 Steps, 12 Traditions and the 12 Concepts of Service in Narcotics Anonymous.
- C. Willingness to Serve.
- D. Experience in business, Accounting, bookkeeping or as a successful group Treasurer.

- E. Have a job or source of income.

10. Duties of the Vice Treasurer

- A. It is the duty of the Vice Treasurer to work closely with the OCASC Treasurer at monthly OCASC meetings.
- B. To collect donations and make receipts for donations.
- C. To assist in the preparations for the monthly financial report.
- D. In the absence of the Treasurer the Vice Treasurer performs all tasks of the OCASC Treasurer.
- E. Must attend the Guideline Review meeting.
- F. Note: When the Treasurer is present the Vice Treasurer has no signature authorization.

11. Responsibilities of the Regional Committee Member (RCM)

- A. Have a minimum of three years clean time.
- B. Working knowledge of the 12 Steps, 12 Traditions and the 12 Concepts of Service in Narcotics Anonymous.
- C. Willingness to serve.

12. Duties of the RCM

- A. Is the primary link of communication between the Orange County Area and the Southern California Region.
- B. Represents the OCASC at the monthly Southern California Regional Service Conference.
- C. Is responsible for seeing that the AREA'S "Group Conscience" is represented at the Regional Level.
- D. Gives an accurate oral account of the RSC meeting in an unbiased manner, covering motions made and how he/she voted and submits a monthly written report to the OCASC.
- E. Delivers OCASC donations to the Region.
- F. Chairs ad-hoc committee on C.A.R.
- G. Passes out "WELCOME GSR INFORMATION PAMPHLETS" to any new GSR's.
- H. If the Chair and Vice Chair are not present, he/ she chairs the OCASC meeting.
- I. Attends Guideline review meeting.
- J. Is responsible for providing meeting information to Regional Office and or web-site coordinator.
- K. Is responsible for providing world registration forms.

13. Requirements for the RCM Alternate

- A. Have minimum of two years clean time.
- B. Working knowledge of the 12 Steps, 12 Traditions and 12 Concepts of Service in Narcotics Anonymous.
- C. Willingness to serve and to become the RCM at the completion of term as alternate.

14. Duties of RCM- Alternate

- A. Works closely with the RCM and shares the responsibility of the position.
- B. In absence of The RCM, the Alternate will assume the position of the RCM.
- C. Attends the regular monthly Regional Service Conference meetings with the RCM.
- D. Chairs the ASC meeting if the Chair, Vice Chair and RCM are not there.
- E. Assists the RCM with C.A.R. ad -hoc committee meeting.
- F. Attends the ASC Guidelines Review meeting.

15. Requirements of Area Packet Person

- A. Have a minimum of six months clean time.
- B. Have available transportation.
- C. Willingness to be of service.

16. Duties of the Area Packet Person

- A. TO coordinate with Regional Activities Rep, Orange County Area Activities Committee, OCASC Secretary and any other subcommittee to arrange for pick up of flyers for the GSR Packet.
- B. Make up GSR packets.
- C. Deliver packets to the OCASC meeting before the meeting begins on a monthly basis.

17. Orange County Service Office (ASO)

- A. The ASC should maintain a pool of members for the ASO to draw from when a position becomes available or needs to be filled. Two years is the suggested requirement of clean time and service at the Area level to fulfill a position in the ASO.
- B. Three of the Directors of the ASO are provided by the ASC through an election process. These three Directors are called Direct Elect and the term for Direct Elect is one year.
- C. The ASO is responsible for providing an accurate financial report monthly to the OCASC.
- D. The ASO is also responsible for providing an accurate inventory report monthly to the OCASC.
- E. The ASO makes available upon request financial reports to OCASC.
- F. The ASO is responsible for making a monthly written report available to the OCASC.
- G. The ASO is to keep the OCASC informed of any changes regarding the purchase of literature.
- H. The ASO is responsible for maintaining and storing OCASC ARCHIVES.
- I. The ASO shall abide by any motions by the OCASC and implement those decisions reached by the OCASC as stated in the ASO Guidelines.

<p style="text-align: center;">SIMPLE RULES OF ORDER (From The NA Guide To Local Service)</p>
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On the following pages, you'll find a simple set of rules of order. They have been adapted from *Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised*, which in turn are based on the Rules of the US House of Representatives. These sample rules differ in some details from *Robert's Rules*; to cover such differences, your committee may wish to make a blanket decision to accept these rules as authoritative. In countries where *Robert's Rules of Order* are not in common use and where some other body of parliamentary rules is more commonly used by deliberative assemblies, service committees may want to consider adapting these rules so that they conform to those commonly in use in their own lands.

DECORUM STATEMENT

Meetings will be conducted according to these rules of order, adapted from *Robert's Rules of Order*. This time-honored system for conducting business is the clearest way yet devised for getting a maximum amount of business done in a minimum of time, regardless of the degree of disagreement among the participants.

These rules are meant to be used as tools to help us make orderly collective decisions in a cooperative, respectful way in the spirit of our Twelve Concepts; please do not use them as weapons against one another. We encourage all participants to become familiar with these rules of order and conduct themselves accordingly.

Once the meeting is under way, only one matter will be before the committee at any one time and no other discussion is in order. Please respect the chairperson's right to be in control of the process of this meeting so that you can have maximum benefit of its content.

DEBATE, LIMITS

Debate is the formal exchange of views on an idea. Unless otherwise specified, debate on both main motions and parliamentary motions is usually limited to two or three pros and two or three cons (speakers for and against the motion). Speakers addressing a motion in debate usually have two or three minutes in which to speak their minds.

MOTIONS

There are two basic types of motions. It is important to understand the difference between them. The two kinds of motions are *main motions* and *parliamentary motions*.

MAIN MOTIONS

A *motion* is a statement of an idea a committee member wants the committee to put into practice. After being recognized by the chairperson, the member says, "I move that such-and-such be done by (this committee, one of its subcommittees, or a particular individual) under these terms." The person making the motion then speaks briefly about why he or she feels the idea is important; this is called speaking to the intent of a motion. Because the exact wording of all motions must be recorded in the minutes, the maker of the motion should write it out whenever possible. This is especially important for long or complicated motions.

Every motion requires a *second*—the backing of another person who either wants the idea put into practice or simply wants to see further discussion of the idea take place. After one person makes a motion, the chairperson will ask whether the motion has a second. The seconder simply raises a hand and, when recognized by the chair, says, “I second that.” If nobody seconds a motion, the chair will say, “The motion dies for lack of a second.” This means that the idea will not be discussed any further because there is not enough interest in it. The committee then moves on to other business.

Once a motion has been made, the chairperson may rule it *out of order*. A motion may be ruled out of order for any one of a number of reasons: the motion goes against the committee’s standing policy, clearly contradicts one of the Twelve Traditions or Twelve Concepts for NA Service, or is inappropriate at the particular point in the meeting at which it is made. *Robert’s Rules of Order* can be consulted for more specific examples of motions, which are out of order at any given time.

Any member of the committee who wishes to challenge a ruling made by the chairperson may *appeal* that ruling, as described below. If no appeal is made, or if the decision of the chair is upheld, the committee moves on to other business.

PARLIAMENTARY MOTIONS

Parliamentary motions can be best understood as “sub-motions” made during debate on a main motion that affect that motion in some way. There are many more of these than space and practicality permit us to include here, but a few that seem to be the most practical are discussed below.

1. Motion to AMEND. SIMPLE majority required. Is DEBATABLE.

This is perhaps the most commonly used parliamentary motion. During debate on a motion, if a member feels that the motion would benefit from a change in its language, that member can say, “*I move to amend the motion...*” and suggest specific language changes in the motion. Ordinarily, an amendment must be moved and seconded before it can be debated. When debate on the amendment is exhausted, the body votes on the amendment. Then, debate resumes on the merits of the main motion (as amended, if the amendment has carried). When debate is exhausted on the merits of the main motion itself, a vote is taken and the body moves on to the next item of business.

If an amendment is offered and the persons making and seconding the original motion accept it, no second is required, no debate is called for, and no vote need be taken on the amendment; debate proceeds as if the main motion had been formally amended. This is called making a *friendly amendment*.

2. Motion to call the PREVIOUS QUESTION. TWO-THIRDS majority required. Is NOT DEBATABLE.

For our purposes, this may be the most important parliamentary motion. Use it often. This motion is made by a member saying, “*I call for the question,*” or “*I move the previous question.*” It is another way of saying, “I move that debate stop right now and that we vote immediately.” This is one of many motions that can be used to prevent needless, lengthy debate once an issue is clearly understood. This motion is in order after any speaker is finished. You need not be called on. The chair must recognize you when you make this motion, and a vote must be taken with no debate. If two-thirds of the body feels that no more debate is necessary, then it is

time to vote and move on.

One point worth making about this motion is that you must be careful not to squelch debate before an issue has been thoroughly aired. Be sure to vote “no” to this motion if you are still confused about the issue at hand or are unsure of how to vote. By allowing debate to continue, we avoid half-baked decisions about half-understood questions. On the other hand, the liberal use of this motion makes it unnecessary for the chair to be heavy-handed in stopping discussion, because the chair knows you will stop it soon enough.

3. Motion to TABLE. SIMPLE majority required. Is NOT DEBATABLE.

One way of disposing of a motion that is not ready for a vote is to *table* it. This is done by saying, “*I move we table this motion until such-and-such a date/meeting.*” This motion is not debatable; if it is made and seconded, it is voted on immediately. If it fails, debate continues on the motion itself. If it passes, the committee moves on to its next item of business. The tabled motion will be included in the committee agenda on the date specified.

4. Motion to REMOVE FROM THE TABLE. SIMPLE majority required. Is NOT DEBATABLE.

A motion that has been tabled can be taken up before the time originally set in the motion to table. This is done by saying, “I move to remove from the table the motion to such-and-such.” If this motion passes, the motion that had been tabled becomes the main motion and debate on it begins again. If the motion to remove from the table fails, the body moves on to the next item of business.

5. Motion to REFER. SIMPLE majority required. Is DEBATABLE.

Sometimes the committee does not have enough information to make an immediate decision on a main motion. Such motions can be removed from debate and sent to either a standing subcommittee or an ad hoc committee for further study. This can be done by a member saying, “*I move to refer the motion to the such-and-such subcommittee.*” If the motion to refer is seconded, the body may debate it before voting. If the motion to refer passes, the committee moves on to its next item of business. If the motion to refer does not pass, the committee either continues debating the main motion or votes on it.

The subcommittee to which a motion is referred will take it up at its next meeting. The subcommittee will report back on what it has come up with at the next meeting of the full committee.

6. Motions to RECONSIDER or RESCIND. MAJORITY required varies. Is DEBATABLE.

Sometimes a member feels that a motion the committee has passed will prove harmful. That member can move to either *reconsider* (reopen for debate and voting) or *rescind* (void the effect of) the original motion.

There are a few conditions on motions to reconsider or rescind:

- ③ The motion must have been passed in either the last or the current meeting.
- ③ The member making the motion must have information on the issue that was not available in the original debate on the motion.
- ③ The member must have been with the winning side in the original vote.

These limits are placed to protect the committee from having to reconsider again and again

the motions it passes while still allowing it to examine potentially harmful situations it has created inadvertently. If any of these requirements are not met, the chairperson will declare the motion out of order.

The motion to reconsider requires a simple majority.

The motion to rescind requires a simple majority, provided that committee members were informed prior to the meeting that such a motion would be made. If prior notice is not given, the motion to rescind requires a two-thirds majority.

7. Request to WITHDRAW A MOTION. UNANIMOUS CONSENT required. Is NOT DEBATABLE.

Once a motion is made and the debate begins, the maker of the motion may ask to withdraw it. The chair asks if there are any objections. If there is even one objection, the motion stays on the floor and debate resumes. If there are no objections, the motion is withdrawn and the body moves on.

8. Offering a SUBSTITUTE MOTION. SIMPLE majority required. Is DEBATABLE.

A *substitute motion* is the same thing as an amendment to a main motion. The only difference is that it is offered to entirely replace the original idea, instead of merely revising a portion of it. It is handled in the same way an amendment is handled.

9. Motion to ADJOURN. SIMPLE majority required. Is NOT DEBATABLE.

Any voting member may move to adjourn at any time. This motion is always in order, is not debatable, and requires a simple majority to pass. Obviously frivolous motions to adjourn may be ruled out of order. After all business is finished, the chair may declare the meeting adjourned without a motion.

OTHER PROCEDURES

In addition to parliamentary motions, there are other ways in which members may alter or clarify the proceedings. Here are a few of the most common.

Order of the day

If a committee member feels that business is going too far astray from the original agenda, that member can help get things back on track. The member says, "*I call for the order of the day.*" This means, "I move that the chair bring us back on track and conduct the meeting according to procedure, adhering to the agenda." This does not require a second, is not debatable, and does not even *require* a vote—the chairperson is obligated to enforce the request unless two-thirds of the body tell the chair otherwise.

Point of information

If a committee member needs certain information before making a decision about a motion at hand, that member can say at any time to the chairperson, "*Point of information.*" This means, "I have a question to ask," *not* "I have information to offer." One does not need a second to raise a point of information; it is neither debatable nor to be voted upon. The person raising the point of information may ask the question of either the chairperson or another member of the body.

Point of order

If it appears to a committee member that something is happening in violation of the rules of order, and if the chairperson has not yet done anything about it, the member can ask the

chairperson for clarification of the rules at any time. The member may simply say out loud, "*Point of order.*" The chairperson then says, "What is your point of order?" The member then states the question and asks the chairperson for clarification. If the chair agrees that the rules are not being followed, the chair says "Your point is well taken" and restates the appropriate rule. If the chair does not agree, the chair says, "Overruled." This decision, as all others, can be appealed.

Point of appeal

Any time the chair makes a decision, that decision may be appealed. Any voting member who wishes to appeal a decision may do so by saying, "*I appeal the decision of the chair.*" If the appeal is seconded, the chair then asks, "On what grounds do you appeal my decision?" The member states the reasons. The chairperson then speaks briefly to the intent of the ruling being appealed. The body may then debate the ruling and the merits of the appeal. A vote is taken, requiring a simple majority to overrule the original decision of the chairperson.

Parliamentary inquiry

If a committee member wants to do something but doesn't know how it fits in with the rules of order, all that member has to do is ask. At any time, a member may simply say out loud, "*Point of parliamentary inquiry.*" The chairperson must immediately recognize the member so that person may ask how to do such-and-such. The chair will answer the question, possibly by referring to a specific passage in this document in explanation. A point of parliamentary inquiry needs no second, is not debatable, and is not voted upon.

Point of personal privilege

If the smoke is getting too heavy for you, the air conditioner or heater is on too high, or if there is too much noise in the room, you can ask that something be done about it. If the matter is urgent, you may interrupt the proceedings by saying, "*Point of personal privilege;*" if the matter is not particularly urgent, you are encouraged to wait until the person speaking has finished. Such a request generally requires no second, and the chairperson must recognize you immediately. State the situation and ask that it be corrected. If your request seems reasonable, the chair will accommodate you.

VOTING PROCEDURES

There are several ways that votes can be taken. The most commonly used method is the *show of hands*. With rare exceptions, votes will be taken by a request from the chair to see the hands of all in favor, then all opposed, then all abstaining on each issue. The chairperson should ask for all three categories every time, just to be thorough, even when the majority is overwhelming.

These are only brief notes on rules of order for business meetings. For further information, see *Robert's Rules of Order—Newly Revised*.

MOTION TABLE

TYPE OF MOTION	PURPOSE	INTERRUPT	SECOND	DEBATABLE	VOTE
Adjourn	To end the committee meeting.	No	Yes	No	Simple
Amend	To change part of the language in a main motion.	No	Yes	Yes	Simple
Amend by substitution	To alter a main motion by completely rewriting it, while preserving its intent.	No	Yes	Yes	Simple
Appeal ruling of chair	To challenge a decision the chair has made about the rules of order.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Simple
Information, point of	To be allowed to ask a question about a motion being discussed, <i>not</i> to offer information.	Yes	No	No	None
Main motion	An idea a committee member wants the committee to put into practice.	No	Yes	Yes	Varies
Order of the day	To make the committee return to its agenda if it gets onto another track.	Yes	No	No	None
Order, point of	To request clarification of rules of order when it appears they are being broken.	Yes	No	No	None
Parliamentary inquiry	To ask the chair about how to do something according to rules of order.	Yes	No	No	None
Previous question	To stop debate and vote right now on whatever motion is at hand.	No	Yes	No	Two-thirds
Privilege, personal	To make a personal request of the chair or the committee.	If urgent	No	No	None
Reconsider	To reopen for debate a motion previously passed.	No	Yes	Yes	Simple
Refer, commit	To halt debate, send motion to subcommittee or ad hoc committee before vote.	No	Yes	Yes	Simple
Remove from the table	To resume consideration of a motion previously tabled before the time set.	No	Yes	No	Simple
Rescind, repeal	To void the effect of a motion previously passed.	No	Yes	Yes	Two-thirds
Table	To put off further consideration of a motion until a later date and time.	No	Yes	No	Simple
Withdraw a motion	To allow a motion's maker to take back that motion after debate has begun.	Yes	No	No	Unanimous