





55 provide for an even distribution and orderly consideration of reports of legislative committees on the daily  
56 Calendar.

57 The committee on Steering, Policy and Scheduling shall not be authorized to recommend changes or  
58 amendments to legislation or recommend that a matter ought to pass or ought not to pass, but shall only  
59 report asking to be discharged from further consideration of a bill, and recommending that it be referred  
60 or recommitted to another committee, provided, however, that it shall not recommend that a matter be  
61 referred or recommitted to the committee on Rules or the committees on Rules of the two branches, acting  
62 concurrently, or what date a matter shall be scheduled for consideration by the House and placed in the  
63 Orders of the Day. All reports by the committee on petitions filed or approved by the voters of a city or  
64 town, or by the mayor and city council, or other legislative body of a city or the town meeting of a town  
65 with respect to a law relating to that city or town shall be read and considered by the House at a formal or  
66 informal session before being accepted, rejected or otherwise acted upon.

67 All matters received from the Senate or reported from standing committees of the House and joint  
68 standing committees of the General Court shall, unless subject to provisions of any other House or joint  
69 rules, be referred to the committee on Steering, Policy and Scheduling. All matters reported by said  
70 committee on Steering, Policy and Scheduling recommending that a matter shall be scheduled for  
71 consideration by the House shall be placed in the Orders of the Day for the next sitting. Said committee  
72 may report on a legislative matter within thirty days following the day the matter was referred. If the  
73 committee fails to report a matter within thirty days following the date of its reference, the Clerk shall  
74 place the matter on the Calendar of the House as if it had been scheduled for consideration by said  
75 committee on Steering, Policy and Scheduling.

76 [Adopted Jan. 14, 1997; Amended Jan. 26, 1999; Jan. 24, 2001; Jan. 9, 2003; Jan. 26, 2005.]

77 **7B.** The committee on Rules shall be authorized to originate and report special orders for the  
78 scheduling and consideration of legislation on the floor of the House. Said committee shall not be subject  
79 to the notification provisions contained in Rule 17A but may hold public hearings and shall accept  
80 testimony only from the members of the House. A majority of the members appointed to the committee  
81 shall constitute a quorum. When reported, such orders may be amended by a two-thirds vote of the  
82 members present and voting, and shall be subject to approval by a majority of the members of the House  
83 present and voting. Debate on the question on adoption of such orders shall be limited to one hour. No  
84 orders adopted pursuant to this paragraph shall limit the powers of the Speaker as provided in Rules 1 to  
85 6, inclusive. Such orders shall not be subject to reconsideration.

86 [Adopted Jan. 14, 1997; Amended Jan. 24, 2001, Feb. 11, 2009.]

87 **7C.** The committee on Rules may consider and make recommendations designed to improve and  
88 expedite the business and procedures of the House and its committees, and to recommend to the House

89 any amendments to the Rules deemed necessary; provided that a majority of the members of the House  
90 present and voting shall be required to approve such recommendations.

91 The committee shall be privileged to report at any time.

92 [Adopted Jan. 14, 1997.]

93 **7D.** The Speaker shall, in consultation with the committee on Rules and the committee on Steering,  
94 Policy and Scheduling, establish a committee scheduling system that would minimize to the greatest  
95 extent possible scheduling conflicts for members of committees.

96 The Speaker shall determine a schedule for the House for each week relative to formal and informal  
97 sessions and shall make such schedule available to the members by Thursday of the preceding week;  
98 provided, however, that the Speaker may make, notwithstanding the provisions of Rule 7A, changes in  
99 the schedules to facilitate the business of the House in an efficient and timely fashion. The Speaker shall  
100 communicate notice of any such scheduling change to the members in writing or by way of electronic  
101 mail as soon as practicable, and whenever possible, the Speaker shall provide such notice not less than  
102 twenty-four hours before the event so rescheduled is set to commence.

103 [Adopted Jan. 14, 1997; January 9, 2003.]

#### 104 **MONITORS.**

105 **8.** Two monitors shall be appointed by the Speaker for each division of the House, whose duty it  
106 shall be to see to the due observance of the rules, and, on request of the Speaker, to return the number of  
107 votes and members in their respective divisions. [9.]

108 **9.** If a member transgresses any of the rules after being notified thereof by a monitor, it shall be the  
109 duty of such monitor to report the case to the House.

110 It shall be the duty of a monitor to report his or her knowledge of the occurrence of a member voting  
111 for another member, in his or her division of the House, to the Speaker of the House and to the Minority  
112 Leader. [10.] [See Rules 16 and 16A.]

113 [Amended Jan. 9, 1991; May 5, 1993.]

114 **9A.** There shall be established a Floor Division Committee for each of the four divisions of the  
115 House. The Speaker shall appoint a Floor Division chairperson for each of the four divisions. Said  
116 committee shall consist of the members assigned to the respective divisions.

117 In order to create a continuous flow of debate, each chairperson shall be responsible for reviewing the  
118 daily Calendar and providing advance notice to committee members in the respective divisions of all  
119 matters scheduled for consideration in the Orders of the Day. Said committee chairpersons shall provide  
120 information to members of their committees on pending legislation and other matters of business before  
121 the House.

122 In addition to the legislative duties, chairpersons shall oversee the physical appearance of the Chamber  
123 and the various areas under the jurisdiction of the House of Representatives. Said chairpersons shall be  
124 authorized to act as a committee and may meet at any time at the request of at least two chairpersons. Said  
125 chairpersons, as a committee, shall be authorized to meet with the appropriate agencies and historical  
126 commissions of the Commonwealth for the purpose of requesting expeditious appraisals and necessary  
127 repairs and renovations to the interior and exterior of the State House. The committee of chairpersons  
128 shall report directly to the Speaker the results of all consultations.

129 [Adopted Jan. 14, 1997.]

130

**CLERK.**

131 **10.** The Clerk shall keep the Journal of the House. The Clerk shall enter therein a record of each  
132 day's proceedings and, whenever practicable, submit it to the Speaker and the Minority Leader before the  
133 hour fixed for the next sitting, and shall cause the same to be available daily in a format to be determined  
134 by the Clerk; and provided further that a copy of said Journal shall also be made available to each  
135 member of the House. Any objection to the Journal shall be made before the House proceeds to the  
136 consideration of the Orders of the Day. [11.] (6.)

137 [Amended Jan. 12, 1981; Jan 11, 1985; Jan. 17, 1995; Jan. 9, 2003.]

138 **10A.** The Clerk shall be the official parliamentarian of the House of Representatives.

139 [Adopted Jan. 9, 1991.]

140 **11.** Every question of order with the decision thereof shall be entered at large in the Journal, and  
141 shall be noted in an appendix, which shall also contain the rules of the House and of the two branches.

142 [12.] (6.)

143 **12.** The Clerk shall prepare and make available on each day of formal session a Calendar of matters  
144 in order for consideration and such other memoranda as the House or the Speaker may direct. The Clerk  
145 shall prepare a Calendar on which shall appear any question on passage of a bill or resolve  
146 notwithstanding the objections of His Excellency the Governor which may be considered forthwith at the  
147 direction of the House or Speaker.

148 When, in the determination of the Clerk, a volume of matters exists for the next legislative day, the  
149 Clerk shall be authorized to prepare and cause to be made available an advance calendar of the matters in  
150 order of consideration for the next legislative day and such other memoranda as the House or Speaker  
151 may direct. The Clerk may indicate on the advance calendar that the matters contained therein are subject  
152 to change.

153 The Clerk shall be authorized to dispense with preparing and making available a Calendar for  
154 designated formal sessions of the House only after two-thirds of the members present and voting consent

155 thereto on a recorded yea and nay vote. Debate on this question shall be limited to fifteen minutes, no  
156 member shall speak more than three minutes, and such question shall not be subject to reconsideration.

157 The Clerk shall dispense with preparing and making available a Calendar for designated Informal  
158 Sessions of the House.

159 As soon as practicable whenever the Clerk prepares a Calendar or advance Calendar under this rule, he  
160 also shall cause a true copy thereof to be posted on the Legislative Web Page that is generally available to  
161 all members and their staff, and reasonably promptly thereafter he shall cause the members and their staff  
162 to be notified of the same by way of electronic mail. [13.] (7.) [Amended Jan. 12, 1983; Jan. 11, 1985;  
163 Jan. 12, 1987; May 5, 1993; Jan. 17, 1995; Jan. 24, 2001; Jan. 9, 2003; Jan. 26, 2005, Jan. 23, 2007.]

164 **13.** Any objection to the Calendar shall be made and disposed of before the House proceeds to the  
165 consideration of the Orders of the Day. [14.]

166 **13A.** The clerk shall make available to all members electronically and, to the public via the  
167 Internet, the text of all bills introduced and admitted for consideration in the House.

#### 168 **MEMBERS.**

169 **14.** No member shall stand up, to the inconvenience of others, while a member is speaking; or be  
170 involved in disturbing conversation while another member is speaking in debate; or pass unnecessarily  
171 between the Speaker of the House and the member speaking; or stand in the passages, or in the area in  
172 front of the Chair; or stand at the Clerk's desk while a roll call is in progress. [16.]

173 [Amended Jan. 12, 1987; Jan. 9, 1989; Jan. 26, 1999.]

174 **14A.** No member shall hold, for more than eight consecutive years, the office of Speaker of the  
175 House. For purposes of this rule, the counting of consecutive years shall commence on January 7, 2009.

176 **15.** When it appears to the presiding officer that the presence of a quorum is endangered, the Chair  
177 shall order the doors closed. If a quorum is doubted the Chair shall order the doors closed and thereafter  
178 no member shall enter or leave the House until an initial determination has been made as to the presence  
179 of a quorum or lack thereof; and thereafter, provided that no quorum is present, no member shall leave the  
180 House unless by permission of the presiding officer, but members shall be admitted, at any time.

181 Upon the doubting of a quorum and after ascertaining that a quorum is not present, the Speaker may order  
182 a recorded attendance roll call to be taken by use of the electronic roll call system.

183 Said roll call, if ordered, shall be taken at a time determined by the Speaker.

184 Members answering a quorum call shall vote "YES" on the roll call system. [17.] (11.)

185 [Amended Jan. 12, 1981; Feb. 22, 1982; Jan. 12, 1983; Jan. 12, 1987; Jan. 9, 1991.]

#### 186 **ETHICS.**

187           **16.** There shall be appointed a committee on Ethics as authorized by Rule 17. The committee shall  
188 consist of eleven members, seven of whom shall be appointed by the Speaker, four of whom shall be  
189 appointed by the Minority Leader.

190           A member appointed to the committee shall not be considered to be a member of the committee  
191 subsequent to the declaration of candidacy for any other state or federal elective office.

192           The committee shall investigate and evaluate, at the direction of the Speaker, by a sworn written  
193 complaint filed and delivered by a member, officer or employee to the chairman, or by a majority vote of  
194 the members appointed to the Ethics committee, any matters relative to alleged violations of Rule 16A by  
195 a member, officer or employee.

196           Upon the receipt of said sworn written complaint, at the direction of the Speaker or by a majority vote  
197 of the members appointed to the Ethics committee, the committee shall notify any person named of the  
198 nature of the alleged violation and a list of prospective witnesses, and also shall notify said person of the  
199 final disposition and the recommendations, if any, of the committee.

200           Any member, officer, or employee of the House named relative to an alleged violation shall be afforded  
201 the opportunity to appear before the committee on Ethics with counsel.

202           All proceedings including the filing of the initial complaint shall be considered confidential information.

203           If the alleged violation received in the manner described above is deemed to have merit by a majority  
204 vote of the members appointed to the committee, the committee shall file a report with the Clerk of the  
205 House. Said report shall be a public document. The committee shall not disclose any allegation deemed to  
206 be frivolous or without merit.

207           If a majority appointed finds that any member of the House, officer, or employee has violated any  
208 provision of Rule 16A, a majority appointed may, in the case of a member, recommend a reprimand,  
209 censure, removal from a chairmanship or other position of authority, or expulsion; and in the case of an  
210 officer or employee, a majority appointed may recommend a reprimand, suspension, or removal from  
211 employment.

212           Should such an alleged violation be filed with the committee regarding a member or members of the  
213 House Ethics committee, said member or members shall not participate in the committee deliberations on  
214 said alleged violation.

215           Any member, officer, or employee of the House may request in writing from the House committee on  
216 Ethics an advisory opinion concerning any contemplated personal action or potential personal conflict.  
217 The committee on Ethics shall issue written advisory opinions and clarification in response to said written  
218 request. The committee shall respond within sixty days of receipt of such a request, unless the General  
219 Court has prorogued. In that event, the committee shall respond within thirty days following the opening  
220 of the new session.

221 No member, officer, or employee of the House shall be penalized in any manner for having acted  
222 within the guidelines of an advisory opinion, provided that all pertinent facts are stated in the original  
223 request for an advisory opinion. Any advisory opinion issued by the committee on Ethics shall be valid  
224 only for biennial session in which it was issued.

225 The chairman of the Ethics committee may convene the committee at any time.

226 The chairman shall also convene the committee at the written request of at least five members of the  
227 committee.

228 The Committee may, upon the written and signed report of two-thirds of the members of the  
229 committee, file a special report containing legislation without said legislation being founded upon petition  
230 which shall be referred under the provisions of Rule 24 and consistent with the provisions of Joint Rule  
231 13, to the appropriate joint standing committee. Any special report containing legislation filed pursuant to  
232 this paragraph shall be germane to subject matters regularly considered by the committee. The committee  
233 shall not include in any such special report a bill that would have a fiscal impact as described in Rule 33.

234 Upon convening of the first annual session of the General Court and after the adoption of rules, all  
235 members, officers and employees of the House shall be provided with a current copy of the Code of  
236 Ethics contained in Rule 16A. [19.] (12A.)

237 [Amended Jan. 12, 1987; May 5, 1993; Jan. 17, 1995; Mar. 6, 1995; Jan. 14, 1997; Jan. 20, 2011.]

238 **CODE OF ETHICS.**

239 **16A.** (1.) While members, officers and employees should not be denied those opportunities available  
240 to all other citizens to acquire and retain private, economic and other interests, members, officers, and  
241 employees should exercise prudence in any and all such endeavors and make every reasonable effort to  
242 avoid transactions, activities, or obligations, which are in substantial conflict with or will substantially  
243 impair their independence of judgment.

244 (2.) No member, officer or employee shall solicit or accept any compensation or political contribution  
245 other than that provided for by law for the performance of official legislative duties.

246 (3.) No member, officer or employee shall serve as a legislative agent as defined in Chapter 3 of the  
247 General Laws regarding any legislation before the General Court.

248 (4.) No member, officer or employee shall receive any compensation or permit any compensation to  
249 accrue to his or her beneficial interest by virtue of influence improperly exerted from his or her official  
250 position in the House.

251 (5.) No member, officer or employee shall accept employment or engage in any business or  
252 professional activity, which will require the disclosure of confidential information gained in the course of,  
253 and by reason of, his or her official position.

254 (6.) No member, officer or employee shall willfully and knowingly disclose or use confidential  
255 information gained in the course of his or her official position to further his or her own economic interest  
256 or that of any other person.

257 (7.) Except as provided in Rule 49, no member shall cast a vote for any other member, nor shall any  
258 officer or employee vote for any member, except that the Clerk or an assistant Clerk may record a vote for  
259 a member who votes late under the provisions of Rule 52, or is prohibited from voting from his desk due  
260 to a malfunction of the electronic roll call voting system; provided the Clerk's action shall not be  
261 construed as voting for said member.

262 (8.) No member shall use profane, insulting, or abusive language in the course of public debate in the  
263 House Chamber or in testimony before any committee of the General Court.

264 (9.) No member, officer or employee shall employ anyone from public funds who does not perform  
265 tasks which contribute substantially to the work of the House and which are commensurate with the  
266 compensation received; and no officer or full time employee of the House shall engage in any outside  
267 business activity during regular business hours, whether the House is in session or not. All employees of  
268 the House are assumed to be full time unless their personnel record indicates otherwise.

269 (10.) No member, officer or employee shall accept or solicit compensation for non-legislative services  
270 which is in excess of the usual and customary value of such services.

271 (11.) No member, officer or employee shall accept or solicit an honorarium for a speech, writing for  
272 publication, or other activity from any person, organization or enterprise having a direct interest in  
273 legislation or matters before any agency, authority, board or commission of the Commonwealth which is  
274 in excess of the usual and customary value of such services.

275 (12.) No member, officer or employee shall knowingly accept any gifts from any legislative or  
276 executive agent. No member, officer or employee shall accept any gift from any person or entity having a  
277 direct interest in legislation before the General Court (For the purpose of this paragraph, the definitions of  
278 "gift" and "person" are defined in chapter 268B, section 1(g) and 1(m).).

279 (13.) No member shall convert campaign funds to personal use in excess of reimbursements for  
280 legitimate and verifiable campaign expenditures. Members shall consider all proceeds from testimonial  
281 dinners and other fund raising activities as campaign funds.

282 (14.) No member shall serve on any committee or vote on any question in which his/her private right is  
283 immediately concerned, distinct from the public interest. [19.]

284 (15.) No member, officer or employee shall violate the confidentiality of any proceeding before the  
285 Ethics committee. [19A.]

286 [Amended Jan. 12, 1981; May 5, 1993; Jan. 24, 2001.]



320 (to consist of eleven members).

321 Committee meetings, insofar as practicable, shall not be scheduled in conflict with formal  
322 sessions of the House of Representatives. [20.] (12, 12A, 12B.)

323 [Amended March 6, 1979; Sept. 16, 1981; Jan. 11, 1985; Jan. 12, 1987; May 5, 1993; Oct. 6, 1993;  
324 May 23, 1996; Jan. 14, 1997; Jul. 17, 2003; Jan. 26, 2005.]

325 **17A.** (a) For the purposes of this rule, the following terms shall, unless the context clearly requires  
326 otherwise, have the following meanings:

327 “*Deliberation*”, a verbal exchange between a quorum of members of a committee attempting to arrive  
328 at a decision on any public business within its jurisdiction.

329 “*Emergency*”, a sudden generally unexpected occurrence or set of circumstances demanding  
330 immediate action.

331 “*Executive conference*”, any meeting or part of a meeting of a committee which is closed to certain  
332 persons for deliberation on certain matters.

333 “*Executive session*”, any meeting or part of a meeting of a committee wherein the committee is voting  
334 on legislation and where public participation is limited to observance.

335 “*Meeting*”, any corporal convening and deliberation of a committee for which a quorum is required in  
336 order to make a decision at which any public policy matter over which the committee has supervision,  
337 control, jurisdiction or advisory power is discussed or considered; provided, however, that “meeting”  
338 shall not include an on-site visitation or inspection of any project or program.

339 “*Quorum*”, a simple majority of a committee unless otherwise defined by constitution, rule or law  
340 applicable to such committee; provided further, that a quorum shall be presumed to be present unless  
341 otherwise doubted.

342 (b) All meetings, except executive conferences, of House standing and special committees, shall be  
343 open to the public and any person shall be permitted to attend any meeting except as otherwise provided  
344 pursuant to this rule or Rule 7A.

345 No quorum of a committee shall meet in private for the purpose of deliberation except as provided  
346 pursuant to this rule.

347 No executive session shall be held until: (i) the committee has first convened in an open session for  
348 which notice has been given; (ii) the presiding officer has stated the authorized purpose of the executive  
349 session; (iii) a majority of the members of the committee present have voted to go into executive session  
350 and the vote of each member has been recorded on a roll call vote and entered into the minutes; and (iv)  
351 the presiding officer has stated before the executive session if the committee will reconvene after the  
352 executive session.

353 (c) Executive conferences shall be held only for the following purposes: (i) to discuss the reputation,  
354 character, physical condition or mental health rather than the professional competence of a member,  
355 officer or employee;

356 (ii) to consider the discipline or dismissal of, or to hear complaints or charges brought against, a  
357 member, officer or employee; (iii) to discuss strategy with respect to litigation if an executive session or  
358 other open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the legal position of the committee; or (iv) to  
359 consider the purchase, exchange, lease or value of real property, if such discussions may have a  
360 detrimental effect on the negotiating position of the Commonwealth or a person, firm or corporation.

361 A member, officer or employee subject to an executive conference pursuant to clause (i) or clause (ii)  
362 shall be notified in writing no less than 48 hours prior to the proposed executive conference; provided,  
363 however, that upon agreement of the parties involved, the notification requirements of clause (i) and  
364 clause (ii) may be waived. Upon request of the member, officer or employee subject to an executive  
365 conference pursuant to clause (i) or clause (ii) the executive conference shall be open to the public.

366 A member, officer or employee subject to an executive conference pursuant to clause (i) or clause (ii)  
367 shall have the right to: (a) be present at such executive conference during discussions or considerations  
368 which involve that member, officer or employee; (b) have counsel or a representative of his/her own  
369 choosing present and attending for the purpose of advising said member, officer or employee; provided,  
370 however, that said counsel or representative shall not actively participate in the executive conference; and  
371 (c) to speak on his/her own behalf to the committee assembled in executive conference.

372 (d) This rule shall not apply to any chance meeting or social meeting at which matters relating to  
373 official business are discussed so long as no final agreement is reached. No chance meeting or social  
374 meeting shall be used in circumvention of the spirit or requirements of this section to discuss or act upon  
375 a matter over which the committee has supervision, control, jurisdiction, or advisory power.

376 (e) Except pursuant to an emergency, a notice and agenda of every meeting of a committee subject to  
377 this rule shall be filed with the Clerk of the House, publicly posted by the Clerk on the bulletin board  
378 outside the Clerk's Office and in such other places as are designated in advance for such purpose by said  
379 Clerk, made available to all members electronically and made available to the public via the Internet at  
380 least forty-eight hours, including Saturdays, but not Sundays and legal holidays, prior to the time of such  
381 meeting and a list of the bills, petitions, and resolutions to be considered for a vote or other action by the  
382 committee. The notice shall include the date, time and place of such meeting. Such filing and posting  
383 shall be the responsibility of the committee scheduling such meeting. The notice and posting requirements  
384 shall not apply to executive conferences held pursuant to clause (i) or clause (ii) of part (c) of this rule  
385 unless the member, officer or employee subject to the executive conference requests that the executive  
386 conference be open to the public,

387 (f) A committee shall maintain accurate records of its meetings and hearings setting forth the date, time  
388 and place thereof, and recording any action taken at each meeting, hearing, executive conference or  
389 executive session. All votes requested to be taken in executive sessions shall be recorded roll call votes  
390 and shall become a part of the record of said executive sessions. The record of each meeting shall become  
391 a public record and be available to the public; provided, however, that the records of any executive  
392 conference shall remain secret as long as publication may defeat the lawful purposes of the executive  
393 conference.

394 (g) Upon prior notification and approval of the chair, a meeting of a committee may be recorded by a  
395 person in attendance by means of a recorder or any other means of audio/visual reproduction; provided,  
396 however, that said recording shall not interfere with the conduct of the meeting. Executive conferences  
397 conducted pursuant to clause (i) or clause (11) of part (c) of this rule shall not be recorded unless upon the  
398 request of the member, officer or employee who is subject to said executive conference. Executive  
399 conferences conducted pursuant to clause (iii) or (iv) of part (c) of this rule may be recorded at the  
400 discretion of the chair.

401 (h) Copies of all redrafted bills that are to be voted on at an executive session by the House Ways  
402 and Means Committee shall be available to all members of the committee electronically in the form they  
403 will be considered no less than twenty-four hours prior to their consideration; provided, however, that  
404 said committee may vote on a bill that has not been available for said period of time by vote of a majority  
405 of the committee members present.

406 [Adopted Nov. 17, 1983; Amended Jan. 12, 1987; Jan. 9, 1991; May 5, 1993; Jan. 17, 1995; Jan. 14,  
407 1997; Jan. 9, 2003, Jan. 23, 2007, Feb. 11, 2009.]

408 **17B.** Whenever any member of a House committee present at the committee meeting so requests,  
409 the vote to give any legislation a favorable or adverse report shall be a recorded vote of the full  
410 committee. Such votes shall be recorded on appropriate forms that show all votes for and against the  
411 particular committee action. The record of all such roll calls shall be kept in the offices of the committee  
412 and shall be available for public inspection.

413 No report of a House committee on any legislation shall be final until those members of the committee  
414 present and voting with the majority have been given the opportunity to sign such appropriate forms  
415 before the report is made to the House. No signature shall be valid unless the forms to which the  
416 signatures are affixed include the substantially complete text of the legislation being reported.

417 [Adopted Nov. 17, 1983; Amended Jan. 12, 1987.]

418 **17C.** There shall be a committee on Personnel and Administration on the part of the House  
419 consisting of thirteen members. Said committee shall be responsible for the allocation of office space as  
420 equitably as possible among the various members and joint and standing committees on the part of the

421 House and their respective staff.

422 The committee shall allocate space among the various committees on the part of the House taking into  
423 account the work load, duties and responsibilities and size of staff of each.

424 The Speaker may make temporary office assignments in accordance with the foregoing principles.

425 The committee on Personnel and Administration may from time to time make changes in the  
426 assignment of office space for committees and the various staffs in accordance with the established  
427 standards.

428 Said committee shall establish the staffing levels and positions for each joint and standing committee of  
429 the House together with a classification plan for all employees of the House of Representatives.

430 For each person who is employed or is to be employed by a joint or standing committee on the part of  
431 the House, each committee chairman shall nominate each such person and the House members of the  
432 committee by a majority vote shall vote on whether to approve each said nominee. The House members  
433 of the committee shall approve such persons whose character and qualifications are acceptable to the  
434 majority of the House members of the committee and are in accordance with the qualifications established  
435 by the Personnel and Administration committee.

436 The chairman of each standing committee shall have the authority to discharge an employee.

437 The House staff members of each committee shall be appointed solely on the basis of fitness to perform  
438 the duties of their respective positions and consistent with section four of chapter one hundred fifty-one B  
439 of the General Laws. The committee staff shall not:

440 (1) engage in any work other than committee business during business hours; and

441 (2) be assigned any duties other than those pertaining to committee business.

442 The committee shall meet on request of the chairman or any three members of the committee. Any such  
443 meeting requested shall be convened on or within the fifth business day following such request. All such  
444 requests shall be in writing and forwarded to the chairman and each member of the committee.

445 Funds shall be allocated from the budget to carry out the determination of the committee.

446 [Adopted Jan. 11, 1985; Amended Jan. 16, 1985; Jan. 12, 1987; Jan. 9, 1991.]

447 **17D.** [Omitted Jan. 26, 2005.]

448 **17E.** [Omitted Jan. 26, 2005.]

449 **17F.** [Omitted Jan. 26, 2005.]

450 **17G.** The committee on Bonding, Capital Expenditures and State Assets shall review all legislation  
451 providing for the giving, loaning or pledging of the credit of the Commonwealth (see Article LXII of the  
452 Amendments to the Constitution, as amended by Article LXXXIV). Said committee shall be responsible  
453 for evaluating such legislation and determining the appropriateness of enacting legislation containing  
454 increased bond authorizations for the Commonwealth. The committee shall periodically review and hold

455 open public hearings, accepting oral and written testimony on the status of the bonds and notes of the  
456 Commonwealth, including (1) general obligation debt; (2) dedicated income tax debt; and (3) special  
457 obligation debt. The committee shall also, in its continuing study of the state's bonding practices, review  
458 the Commonwealth's liabilities relative to (a) state-supported debt; (b) state-guaranteed debt; and (3)  
459 indirect obligations.

460 Any bill providing for borrowing for new projects, and requiring the Commonwealth to issue bonds  
461 for such purpose, shall, prior to its reference to the committee on Ways and Means, be referred to the  
462 committee on Bonding, Capital Expenditures and State Assets for report on its relationship to the finances  
463 of the Commonwealth. A measure may initially be referred to a joint committee with jurisdiction over the  
464 subject matter before being referred to the committee on Bonding, Capital Expenditures and State Assets.

465 The committee on Bonding, Capital Expenditures and State Assets shall consult with the various  
466 agencies of the executive branch and the office of the Treasurer and Receiver-General relative to project  
467 expenditures, availability of funds, the sale of new bonds and the resultant debt obligations, federal  
468 reimbursements and other related funding and bonding issues.

469 The committee on Bonding, Capital Expenditures and State Assets shall be authorized to conduct  
470 hearings relative to the statutory authority of the executive branch and the Treasurer and Receiver-  
471 General in the issuance and sale of bonds and notes and the expenditure of capital funds by the various  
472 agencies and authorities of the Commonwealth. The committee shall determine whether such laws,  
473 administrative regulations and programs are being implemented in accordance with the intent of the  
474 General Court. The committee shall be authorized to make recommendations for statutory changes and  
475 changes in the Constitution which would grant discretion to the General Court over the allotment and  
476 expenditure of fund authorized by capital appropriations.

477 The committee on Bonding, Capital Expenditures and State Assets shall be authorized to report to the  
478 General Court from time to time on the results of its hearings and to file drafts of legislation and  
479 proposals for amendments to the Constitution necessary to carry its recommendations into effect.

480 Messages from the Governor setting terms of bonds and notes, or for the de-authorization or  
481 authorization of bonds and notes shall be referred to the committee on Bonding, Capital Expenditures and  
482 State Assets.

483 **18.** The Speaker shall appoint, and may recommend the removal of, the Speaker pro Tempore,  
484 the Majority Floor Leader, Assistant Majority Floor Leader, and Second Assistant Majority Floor Leader.  
485 The Minority Leader shall appoint, and may recommend the removal of, the Assistant Minority Floor  
486 Leader, Second Assistant Minority Floor Leader, and Third Assistant Minority Floor Leader. The  
487 Minority Leader shall be that member of the minority party who is selected for that position by the  
488 members of his/her party.

489 Each of the foregoing appointments and/or removals shall be ratified by a majority vote of the  
490 respective party caucus. In the event that an appointment is rejected by such caucus another appointment  
491 shall be made by the person designated to make the initial appointment, which shall also be subject to  
492 ratification in the same manner.

493 The Speaker shall appoint, and may recommend the removal of, the chair of each standing committee.  
494 The Speaker shall appoint, and may recommend the removal of, the vice chair and assistant vice chair of  
495 the Ways and Means committee and the vice chair of the Post Audit and Oversight committee.

496 The majority party shall then vote to accept or reject each such appointment and/or recommendation  
497 for removal by a majority vote.

498 In the event that any such appointment is rejected by the caucus, the procedure of this rule shall be  
499 repeated until an appointment for the said position has been approved by the caucus. A vacancy in any  
500 position to which the provisions of this section apply shall be filled in the same manner as provided in this  
501 section for original appointment.

502 The Speaker and the Minority Leader may, without a majority vote of their respective parties,  
503 remove a member appointed to pursuant to this rule who has been criminally indicted by a court of  
504 competent jurisdiction.

505 [Amended Jan. 16, 1979; Nov. 17, 1983; Jan. 11, 1985; Jan. 9, 1991; Jan. 14, 1997, Jan. 23, 2007.]

506 **18A.** There shall be one member of the minority party on all committees of conference and one on  
507 the committee on Bills in the Third Reading. On all other standing and joint committees, the percent of  
508 minority party membership shall be at least equal to the percent of minority party membership in the  
509 House of Representatives as of the first day of the session; provided, further, that where such percentage  
510 results in a fraction of a number, the fraction shall be rounded off to the nearest whole; provided,  
511 however, that the minority party shall under no circumstances have less than four members on the  
512 committee on Ethics, four on the committee on Personnel and Administration, three on the committee on  
513 Rules and six on the committee on Ways and Means. In no case shall minority party representation be less  
514 than two members on all other standing and joint committees.

515 The Speaker and the Minority Leader shall appoint the members of their respective party caucuses to  
516 be assigned to each standing committee. The Speaker shall appoint the vice chair of each standing  
517 committee. The appointments, except those to which Rule 18 applies, shall be voted upon together and  
518 shall be subject to ratification by majority vote of the appropriate party caucus.

519 No member shall be removed from a standing committee except upon the recommendation of the  
520 Speaker or Minority Leader, as the case may be, subject to the ratification by their respective caucuses;  
521 provided, however, that the Speaker and the Minority Leader may, without a majority vote of their  
522 respective parties, remove a member appointed to pursuant to this rule who has been criminally indicted

523 by a court of competent jurisdiction; and provided further, that if any vacancy occurs in a position to  
524 which Rule 18 does not apply, subsequent to the initial ratification, the Speaker or Minority Leader shall  
525 fill such vacancy.

526 The Speaker shall announce committee appointments of majority party members, and the member first  
527 named shall be chairman, and the second named member shall be vice-chairman. The Minority Leader  
528 shall announce committee appointments of minority party members. (13.)

529 [Adopted Jan. 11, 1985; Amended Jan. 12, 1987; Jan. 9, 1991; Jan. 14, 1997.]

530 **18B.** All votes on ratification by the caucus required by these rules shall be by written ballot and  
531 shall require a majority of those present and voting.

532 [Adopted Jan. 11, 1985.]

533 **19.** A majority and minority party caucus may be called by the Speaker or Minority Leader,  
534 respectively, or upon petition of twenty-five percent of the members of the respective party caucus. A  
535 caucus may entertain resolutions, motions, or other means of ascertaining the sense of the respective party  
536 members on any subject. (13B.)

537 [Adopted Nov. 17, 1983; Amended Jan. 11, 1985.]

538 **19A.** The majority party and minority party shall establish caucus rules that shall dictate the  
539 procedures of each caucus.

540 [Adopted Nov. 17, 1983; Amended Jan. 14, 1997.]

541 **20.** The committee on Ways and Means shall report in appropriation bills the total amount  
542 appropriated. The General Appropriation Bill shall be available to the members at least seven calendar  
543 days prior to consideration thereof by the House. [25.] (27A.)

544 [Amended Jan. 11, 1985; Mar. 24, 1986; Jan. 14, 1997; Jan. 26, 2005.]

545 **20A.** Notwithstanding the provisions of Rule 33A, amendments to the General Appropriation Bill  
546 shall be filed with the Clerk of the House in a format to be determined by the Clerk by five o'clock P.M.  
547 within the close of three business days of said General Appropriation bill being made available in a  
548 format to be determined by the Clerk and release of said document by said Clerk if the release of said  
549 document occurs by two o'clock P.M. Otherwise, the day following the release shall be considered the  
550 first business day. The Clerk, with the assistance of the committee on Ways and Means, shall categorize  
551 the subject-matter of the amendments and arrange such amendments for consideration sequentially by  
552 subject as appearing in the published version of the General Appropriation Bill, or the Clerk, with the  
553 assistance of the committee on Ways and Means, shall categorize the subject-matter of the amendments  
554 and arrange such subject matters for consideration as determined by the committee on Ways and Means.  
555 Debate on the General Appropriation Bill shall not commence until a date and time to be determined by  
556 the House which is subsequent to the designated time established for filing of amendments.

557 Before the main question on the General Appropriation Bill is placed before the House, an amendment  
558 may be postponed or withdrawn at the request of the primary sponsor of the amendment or postponed by  
559 the committee on Ways and Means; provided that further consideration of any amendment so postponed  
560 shall take place immediately subsequent to consideration of the amendments within the particular subject-  
561 matter to which the postponed amendment was assigned according to the provisions of paragraph one of  
562 said rule; provided that if more than one amendment is so postponed, subsequent consideration of said  
563 amendments shall be in the order determined by the committee on Ways and Means; provided further, an  
564 amendment so postponed shall not be subsequently considered outside of its assigned subject-matter; and  
565 provided further, that notwithstanding the provisions of Rule 33A, amendments submitted to the Clerk  
566 shall be in a format to be determined by the Speaker in consultation with said Clerk and shall include an  
567 original copy only; and provided further that perfecting or substitute amendments, including, but not  
568 limited to an amendment consolidating more than one amendment, may be submitted by the committee on  
569 Ways and Means during consideration of the subject category to which the amendment or amendments  
570 were assigned; provided, however, that an amendment may be removed from the consolidated  
571 amendment at the request of the sponsor of said amendment for the purpose of it being offered as a  
572 further amendment to the consolidated amendment.

573 [Adopted Jan. 24, 2001; Amended Jan. 9, 2003; Jan. 26, 2005, Jan. 23, 2007; Jan 20, 2011.]

574 **20B.** When the General Appropriation Bill is reported by the committee on Ways and Means it shall  
575 be made available to all members electronically and to the public via the Internet in a format to be  
576 determined by the Speaker in consultation with the Clerk. The committee on Ways and Means shall  
577 provide the membership with a copy of its proposed text of said General Appropriation Bill, and an  
578 executive summary which shall include a list of outside sections, and a short summary of each outside  
579 section prior to full House consideration of such bill. When the House considers said General  
580 Appropriation Bill, it shall be read a second time and forthwith ordered to a third reading without any  
581 amendments. The bill shall be immediately read a third time and then be open to amendments as  
582 previously determined by the House.

583 [Adopted Jan. 9, 2003, Jan. 23, 2007.]

584 **21.** Whenever the committee on Ways and Means reports an appropriation bill or capital outlay  
585 bill, it shall make available to the members a report which includes an explanation of any increase or  
586 decrease of five percent or more which results in an increase or decrease of one million dollars or more  
587 for any item for which the Governor has made a recommendation, and an explanation for the deletion of  
588 an item recommended by the Governor, and for the addition of an item for which the Governor has made  
589 no recommendation. [25A.] (27A.)

590           **22.** Bills and resolves when ordered to a third reading shall be referred forthwith to the committee  
591 on Bills in the Third Reading, which shall examine and correct them, for the purpose of avoiding  
592 repetitions and unconstitutional provisions, and insuring accuracy in the text and references, and  
593 consistency with the language of existing statutes; but any change in the sense or legal effect, or any  
594 material change in construction, shall be reported to the House as an amendment.

595           The committee may consolidate into one bill any two or more related bills referred to it, whenever  
596 legislation may be simplified thereby.

597 Resolutions received from and adopted by the Senate or introduced or reported into the House, after they  
598 are read and before they are adopted, shall be referred to the committee on Bills in the Third Reading.

599           Amendments of bills, resolves and resolutions adopted by the Senate and sent to the House for  
600 concurrence, shall, subsequently to the procedure required by rule thirty-five in respect to amendments,  
601 also be referred, in like manner, to the committee on Bills in the Third Reading.

602           When a bill, resolve or resolution has been so referred, no further action shall be taken until report  
603 thereon has been made by the committee. Accompanying said report shall be a written explanation  
604 prepared by the committee defining any changes made in a bill, resolve or resolution so as to facilitate the  
605 proceedings of the House.

606           If a bill or resolve referred to the committee on Bills in the Third Reading requires a two-thirds vote  
607 because it contains an emergency preamble, or if it provides for the borrowing of money by the  
608 Commonwealth and comes within the provisions of Section 3 of Article LXII of the Amendments to the  
609 Constitution, or provides for the giving, loaning or pledging of the credit of the Commonwealth and  
610 comes within the provisions of Section 1 of Article LXII (as amended by Article LXXXIV) of the  
611 Amendments to the Constitution, or provides, upon recommendation of the Governor, for a special law  
612 relating to an individual city or town and comes within the provisions of clause (2) of Section 8 of Article  
613 LXXXIX of the Amendments to the Constitution or provides for environmental protection within the  
614 provisions of Article XLIX as amended by Article XCVII, the committee shall plainly indicate the fact on  
615 the outside of the bill or resolve, or on a wrapper or label attached thereto. [26.] (33.)

616           [Amended Jan. 12, 1983; Jan. 11, 1985; May 5, 1993.]

617           **23.** Bills and resolves prepared for final passage shall be certified by the Clerk of the House, after  
618 comparison, to be the same as the bills or resolves passed to be engrossed; and if found to be properly  
619 prepared, the Clerk shall so endorse on the envelope thereof; and the question on enactment or final  
620 passage or adopting an emergency preamble shall be taken thereon, without further reading, unless  
621 specifically ordered.

622           When a bill or resolve prepared for final passage contains an emergency preamble or when it provides  
623 for the borrowing of money by the Commonwealth and comes within the provisions of Section 3 of

624 Article LXII of the Amendments to the Constitution, or provides for the giving, loaning or pledging of the  
625 credit of the Commonwealth and comes within the provisions of Section 1 of Article LXII (as amended  
626 by Article LXXXIV) of the Amendments to the Constitution, or provides, upon recommendation of the  
627 Governor, for a special law relating to an individual city or town and comes within the provisions of  
628 clause (2) of Section 8 of Article LXXXIX of the Amendments to the Constitution, or provides for  
629 environmental protection within the provisions of Article XLIX as amended by Article XCVII, the Clerk  
630 shall plainly indicate the fact on the envelope thereof. [27.] (34.) [See Rule 40.]

631 [Amended Jan. 12, 1983.]

632 **23A.** No member of the House, except the Speaker, Speaker pro tempore, Majority Leader, Assistant  
633 Majority Leader, Second Assistant Majority Leader, Minority Leader, Assistant Minority Leader, Second  
634 Assistant Minority Leader, Third Assistant Minority Leader, Vice-Chairperson of the Committee on  
635 Ways and Means, Assistant Vice-Chairperson of the Committee on Ways and Means and committee  
636 chairmen with respect to committee business, shall receive privileges or compensation for postage which  
637 is greater than seventy-five percent of the amount allowed as standard practice during the 186<sup>th</sup> biennial  
638 session of the General Court, as determined by the House Business Manager. [Adopted Jan. 11, 1985;  
639 Amended Jan. 24, 2001; Jan. 26, 2005; Jan. 20, 2011.]

640 **24.** (1) Petitions, recommendations and reports of state officials, departments, commissions and  
641 boards, special reports including legislation initiated by the Committee on Ethics Pursuant to Rule 16,  
642 legislation initiated by the committee on Bonding, Capital Expenditures and State Assets pursuant to Rule  
643 17G and reports of special committees and commissions, shall be filed with the Clerk in a format to be  
644 determined by said Clerk, who shall, unless they are subject to other provisions of these rules or the rules  
645 of the two branches, refer them, with the approval of the Speaker, to the appropriate committees, subject  
646 to such change of reference as the House may make. The reading of all such documents may be dispensed  
647 with, but they shall be entered in the Journal of the same or the next legislative day after such reference  
648 except as provided in joint rule thirteen.

649 (2) All orders, including motions or orders proposed for joint adoption, resolutions and other papers  
650 intended for presentation, except those hereinbefore mentioned, shall be filed with the Clerk in a format to  
651 be determined by said Clerk, who shall, prior to the procedure required by other provisions of these rules  
652 or of the rules of the two branches, refer them to the committee on Rules.

653 (3) Petitions and other papers so filed which are subject to the provisions of joint rule seven A, seven  
654 B, or nine, shall be referred by the Clerk to the committee on Rules. Petitions and other papers so filed,  
655 which are subject to the provisions of the second paragraph of Joint Rule 12, shall, prior to the procedure  
656 required by said rule, be referred by the Clerk to the committee on Rules. The reading of all such papers  
657 may be dispensed with, but they shall be entered in the Journal of the same or the next legislative day

658 after such reference.

659 (4) Matters which have been placed on file during the preceding year may be taken from the files by  
660 the Clerk upon request of any member or member-elect; and matters so taken from the files shall be  
661 referred or otherwise disposed of as provided above.

662 (5) Recommendations and special reports of state officials, departments, commissions and boards,  
663 reports of special committees and commissions, bills and resolves accompanying petitions,  
664 recommendations and reports, and resolutions shall be made available under the direction of the Clerk,  
665 who may cause to be made available, with the approval of the Speaker, any other documents filed as  
666 herein provided.

667 (6) All such legislation and reports filed with the Clerk shall be submitted in a format prescribed  
668 by said Clerk. Said documents shall contain the name or names of the primary sponsors and a list of the  
669 names of all petitioners praying for the legislation. Additional names may be added to the list of the  
670 petitioners; provided, however, that, such additional names shall be submitted in a format to be  
671 determined by the Clerk.

672 (7) Any petition so submitted that is a refile of a measure submitted in a previous session shall  
673 include, in the appropriate space provided, the session year for which the measure was filed and the  
674 House or Senate bill number or docket number assigned to such measure in such previous session.

675 (8) Debate upon the suspension of this rule shall be limited to ten minutes, three minutes for each  
676 member, and the Speaker shall recognize the member presenting the order, resolution or petition first;  
677 provided, however, that suspension of this rule shall require unanimous consent of the members present.  
678 Any order, except such order that would amend the Rules of the House, resolution or petition referred to  
679 the committee on Rules after the question of suspension of this rule has been negatived, or any order,  
680 resolution or petition filed after the beginning of the session and referred to the committee on Rules, shall  
681 not be discharged from said committee except by unanimous consent of the House. Motions to discharge  
682 the committee on Rules shall be subject to the provisions of paragraph 2 of Rule 28. [28.] (20.) [See Rules  
683 36 and 85.]

684 [Amended April 27, 1981; Jan. 9, 1989; Jan. 9, 1991; Jan. 26, 2005.]

685 **25.** Every petition for legislation shall be accompanied by a bill or resolve embodying the  
686 legislation prayed for. [29.] [See Joint Rule 12.]

687 **26.** When the object of an application can be secured without a special act under existing laws, or,  
688 without detriment to the public interests, by a general law, the committee to which the matter is referred  
689 shall report such general law or ought not to pass, as the case may be. The committee may report a special  
690 law on matters referred to it upon (1) a petition filed or approved by the voters of a city or town, or the  
691 mayor and city council, or other legislative body, of a city, or the town meeting of a town, with respect to

692 a law relating to that city or town; (2) a recommendation by the Governor; or (3) matters relating to  
693 erecting and constituting metropolitan or regional entities, embracing any two or more cities and towns,  
694 or established with other than existing city or town boundaries, for any general or special public purpose  
695 or purposes. [30.] (16.) [See Joint Rule 7.]

696 **27.** With the exception of matters referred to the committee on Rules under the provisions of  
697 paragraph (3) of rule twenty-four, committees shall report on all matters referred to them. The committee  
698 on Ways and Means shall report the General Appropriation Bill not later than the second Wednesday of  
699 May; and provided further that said committee shall make available to the members all data compiled for  
700 justification of budgetary recommendations in all appropriation bills. [33.]

701 [Amended April 18, 1979; Jan. 14, 1997.]

702 **27A.** [Omitted Jan. 23, 2007.]

703 **28.** (1) Motions directing the committee on Ways and Means to report certain matters to the House,  
704 or motions discharging said committees from further consideration of certain matters, shall not be  
705 considered until the expiration of seven calendar days and shall require a majority vote of the members  
706 present and voting for adoption. Committees so directed to report shall file a report with the Clerk within  
707 four legislative days. The committee on Ways and Means may not be directed to report or be discharged  
708 from further consideration of any appropriation or capital outlay measure.

709 (2) The committee on Rules, except as provided in Rule 24, and the committee on Bills in the Third  
710 Reading shall not be discharged from consideration of any measure or be directed to report on any  
711 measure within ten calendar days of its reference without the unanimous consent of the House, or after  
712 such ten day period except by a vote of a majority of the members present and voting thereon.

713 (3) Matters discharged under the provisions of this rule shall be placed in the Orders of the Day for the  
714 next sitting. Petitions discharged under the provisions of this rule shall be considered as favorably  
715 reported and the bill, resolve, resolution or order accompanying such petitions shall be placed in the  
716 Orders of the Day for the next sitting.

717 (4) During the last week of the session the provisions of paragraphs (1) and (3) of this rule shall be  
718 inoperative.

719 (5) A second motion to discharge a matter from a committee or a second motion to direct a committee  
720 to report a matter shall not be entertained until the first such motion has been disposed of.

721 (6) As an alternative procedure to that provided under the provisions of this rule, the members of the  
722 House may, by filing a petition signed by a majority of the members elected to the House, discharge the  
723 House committee on Ways and Means, the House committee on Bills in the Third Reading, and the  
724 House committee on Rules from further consideration of a legislative matter. Seven days following the  
725 filing of the petition with the House Clerk, the committee shall be discharged from further consideration

726 of the legislative matter specified in the petition and the House Clerk shall place the matter in the Orders  
727 of the Day for the next calendar day that the House is meeting.

728 (7) For the purpose of this rule, matters not appearing on the Calendar which are not before any  
729 committee shall be deemed to be before the Rules committee. Notwithstanding the previous sentence, a  
730 bill which has been engrossed by the House and Senate, shall be placed before the House for enactment.  
731 Any member may request to the House that a matter, engrossed in the House and Senate, returned for  
732 final passage by the engrossing division and reviewed and released by the Committee on Bills in Third  
733 Reading be placed before the House for enactment. The Speaker shall, in response to such a request of a  
734 member, put the matter before the House at the conclusion of the matter then pending.

735 (8) This rule shall not be suspended unless by unanimous consent of the members present. (27C, 32A.)

736 [Amended Jan. 12, 1981; April 27, 1981; Jan. 12, 1983; Nov. 17, 1983; Jan. 11, 1985; Jan. 9, 1989;  
737 Jan. 9, 1991; Jan. 24, 2001; Jan. 9, 2003; Jan. 26, 2005, Jan. 23, 2007.]

738 **28A.** The committee on Bills in the Third Reading shall report on a legislative matter not later than  
739 forty-five days following the day the matter was referred to it. The Clerk shall indicate on the Calendar  
740 entry of every matter before the Committee on Bills in the Third Reading the date that said matter was  
741 referred to said committee.

742 [Adopted Jan. 11, 1985; Amended Jan. 9, 2003.]

## 743 **REGULAR COURSE OF PROCEEDINGS.**

### 744 *Petitions.*

745 **29.** The member presenting a petition shall endorse his/her name thereon; and the reading thereof  
746 shall be dispensed with, unless specially ordered. [37.] (18.)

747 [Amended Jan. 11, 1985.]

### 748 *Motions Contemplating Legislation, etc.*

749 **30.** All motions contemplating legislation shall be founded upon petition, except as follows:

750 The committee on Ways and Means may originate and report appropriation bills as provided in rule  
751 twenty. Messages from the Governor shall, unless otherwise ordered, be referred to the appropriate  
752 committee, which may report by bill or otherwise thereon. A similar disposition shall, unless otherwise  
753 ordered, be made of reports by state officers and committees authorized to report to the Legislature, and  
754 similar action may be had thereon.

755 Messages from the Governor returning appropriation bills, or parts of appropriation bills, with  
756 objections or reductions of sections or items thereof, shall be reconsidered subsequent to a report of the

757 committee on Ways and Means. [40.] (19.)  
758 [Amended Jan. 24, 2001.]

759 *Bills and Resolves.*

760 **31.** Bills shall be drafted in a format approved by the Counsel to the House and submitted in a  
761 format to be determined by the Clerk. Bills amending existing laws shall not provide for striking words  
762 from, or inserting words in, such laws, unless such course is best calculated to show clearly the subject  
763 and nature of the amendment. No repealed law, and no part of any repealed law, shall be re-enacted by  
764 reference merely. [42.] (17.)

765 [Amended Jan. 9, 2003; Jan. 26, 2005.]

766 **32.** If a committee to which a bill is referred reports that the same ought not to pass, the question  
767 shall be “Shall this bill be rejected?”. If the question on rejection is negatived, the bill, if it has been read  
768 but once, shall go to a second reading without question; otherwise it shall be placed in the Orders of the  
769 Day for the next day, pending the question on ordering to a third reading, or to engrossment, as the case  
770 may be. [43.] (30.)

771 **32A.** [Omitted Jan. 26, 2005.]

772 **33.** Bills involving an expenditure of public money or grant of public property, or otherwise  
773 affecting the state finances, unless the subject matter has been acted upon by the joint committee on Ways  
774 and Means, shall, after their first reading, be referred to the committee on Ways and Means, for report on  
775 their relation to the finances of the Commonwealth.

776 New provisions shall not be added to such bills by the committee on Ways and Means, unless directly  
777 connected with the financial features thereof.

778 Orders reported in the House or received from the Senate involving the expenditure of public money  
779 for special committees, shall, before the question is taken on the adoption thereof, be referred to the  
780 committee on Ways and Means, whose duty it shall be to report on their relation to the finances of the  
781 Commonwealth.

782 Every such bill involving a capital expenditure for new projects, or an appropriation for repairs, or any  
783 legislation, the cost of which, in the opinion of the committee, exceeds the sum of one hundred thousand  
784 dollars when reported into the House by the committee on Ways and Means, shall be accompanied by a  
785 fiscal note indicating the amount of public money which will be required to be expended to carry out the  
786 provisions of the proposed legislation, together with an estimate of the cost of operation and maintenance  
787 for the first year if a new project is involved. [44.] (27.)

788 [Amended April 18, 1979; Jan. 12, 1981; Jul. 17, 2003; Jan. 26, 2005.]

789           **33A.** Copies of all bills shall be available, in a format to be determined by the Speaker in  
790 consultation with the Clerk, to all members of the House and the public at least twenty-four hours in  
791 advance of consideration by the House.

792           All amendments offered by members to any legislative matter in the House shall be submitted in a  
793 format to be determined by the Speaker in consultation with the Clerk; and shall be considered  
794 chronologically as submitted to the Clerk, except for an amendment in the second degree; provided that  
795 all of said amendments shall be double spaced and drafted in proper form; and provided further that there  
796 shall be available to the members a duplicate copy of each amendment. (33A.)

797           [Adopted Nov. 17, 1983; Amended Nov. 28, 1984; Jan. 12, 1987; Jan. 9, 1991; Jan. 17, 1995; Jan. 9,  
798 2003; Jan. 26, 2005, Jan. 23, 2007.]

799           **33B.** [Omitted Jan. 26, 2005.]

800           **33C.** [Omitted Jan. 26, 2005.]

801           **33D.** [Omitted Jan. 26, 2005.]

802           **33E.** No consolidated amendment offered by the committee on ways and means shall be considered  
803 by the House until the expiration of at least thirty minutes after the consolidated amendment shall have  
804 been first filed with the Clerk and made available to the members. This rule shall not be suspended unless  
805 by unanimous consent of the members present.

806           [Added Feb. 4, 2010.]

807           **34.** Bills from the Senate, after their first reading, shall be referred to a committee of the House. [45.]  
808 (26.)

809           [Amended Jan. 26, 1999.]

810           **35.** Amendments proposed by the Senate, and sent back to the House for concurrence, shall be  
811 referred to the committee on Bills in Third Reading, provided that amendments affecting state finances  
812 shall be referred to the committee on Ways and Means on the part of the House. [46.] (36.)

813           [Amended April 18, 1979; Jan. 12, 1981; Jan. 26, 2005, Jan. 23, 2007.]

814           **36.** No bill shall be proposed or introduced unless received from the Senate, reported by a  
815 committee, or moved as an amendment to the report of a committee. [47.] (36.)

816           **37.** Bills, resolves and other papers that have been, or, under the rules or usage of the House, are to  
817 be made available in a format to be determined by the Speaker in consultation with the Clerk, shall be  
818 read by their titles only, unless the full reading is requested by vote of a majority of those members  
819 present and voting.

820           [Amended Jan. 9, 2003, Amended, Jan. 23, 2007.] [48.] (29.)

821           **38.** When a bill, resolve, order, petition or memorial has been finally rejected or disposed of by the  
822 House, no measure substantially the same shall be introduced by any committee or member during the

823 same session. This rule shall not be suspended unless by unanimous consent of the members present. [49.]  
824 (54.)

825 **39.** No bill shall be passed to be engrossed without having been read on three separate legislative  
826 days. [51.] (28.)

827 [Amended Jan. 11, 1985.]

828 **40.** No engrossed bill shall be amended, except by striking out the enacting clause. A motion to  
829 strike out the enacting clause of a bill shall be received when the bill is before the House for enactment. If  
830 the bill contains an emergency preamble, a motion to suspend this rule may be received before the  
831 adoption of the emergency preamble and, if suspended, the amendment may contain a new emergency  
832 preamble. This rule shall not apply to a bill or resolve returned by the Governor with a recommendation  
833 of amendment in accordance with the provisions of Article LVI of the Amendments to the Constitution;  
834 nor shall it apply to amendments of engrossed bills proposed by the Senate and sent to the House for  
835 concurrence, which amendments shall be subject to the provisions of rule thirty-five, provided, however,  
836 that a motion to suspend this rule shall be required in order to amend such an engrossed bill when the  
837 question before the House is on adoption of an emergency preamble, re-enactment or enactment, as the  
838 case may be.. [53.] (49.) [Amended, Jan. 23, 2007; Jan. 20, 2011.]

839 **41.** Bills received from the Senate and bills reported favorably by committees, when not referred to  
840 another standing committee of the House, shall, prior to being placed in the Orders of the Day, be referred  
841 to the committee on Steering, Policy and Scheduling. Resolutions received from and adopted by the  
842 Senate, or reported in the House by committees, shall, if proposed for joint adoption, be referred to said  
843 committee on Steering, Policy and Scheduling. [56.] (26.)

844 [Amended Jan. 14, 1997; Jan. 26, 1999.]

845 **42.** Reports of committees, not by bill or resolve, including orders if proposed for joint adoption,  
846 after they are received from the Senate, or made in the House, as the case may be, shall, unless subject to  
847 the provisions of any other House or joint rules, be referred to the committee on Steering, Policy and  
848 Scheduling; provided that the report of a committee asking to be discharged from further consideration of  
849 a subject, and recommending that it be referred or recommitted to another committee, or a report of a  
850 committee recommending that a matter be placed on file, shall be immediately considered. Reports of  
851 committees on proposals for amendments to the Constitution shall be dealt with in accordance with the  
852 provisions of joint rule twenty-three. [57.] (36.)

853 [Amended Jan. 14, 1997.]

854 **42A.** The Clerk shall, prior to three o'clock P.M., on the day preceding a session, make available by  
855 electronic communication or other means, a list of all reports of the committee on Steering, Policy and

856 Scheduling, asking to be discharged from further consideration of subjects, and recommending that the  
857 subjects be referred to other committees.

858 [Adopted Jan. 26, 2005.]

859 **43.** Bills ordered to a third reading shall be placed in the Orders of the Day for the next day for  
860 such reading. [58.] (32.)

861 *Special Rules Affecting the Course of Proceedings.*

862 **44.** The Speaker may designate when an informal session of the House shall be held provided said  
863 Speaker gives notice of such informal session at a prior session of the House. The Speaker may, in cases  
864 of emergency, cancel a session or declare any session of the House to be an informal session. At an  
865 informal session the House shall only consider reports of committees, papers from the Senate, bills for  
866 enactment or resolves for final passage, bills containing emergency preambles and the matters in the  
867 Orders of the Day. Motions to reconsider moved at such informal session shall be placed in the Orders of  
868 the Day for the succeeding day, and no new business shall be entertained, except by unanimous consent.

869 Formal debate, or the taking of the sense of the House by yeas and nays shall not be conducted during  
870 such informal session.

871 Upon the receipt of a petition signed by at least a majority of the members elected to the House, so  
872 requesting, the Speaker shall, when the House is meeting in informal session under the provisions of Joint  
873 Rule 12A, designate a formal session, to be held within seven days of said receipt, for the purpose of  
874 considering the question of passage of a bill, notwithstanding the objections of the Governor, returned  
875 pursuant to Article 2, Section 1, Clause 1, Part 2 of the Massachusetts Constitution. This rule shall not be  
876 suspended unless by unanimous consent of the members present. [59.] (5A.)

877 [Amended Jan. 11, 1985; Jan. 12, 1987; Jan. 17, 1995; Jan. 14, 1997; Jan. 24, 2001; Jan. 9, 2003.]

878 **45.** After entering upon the consideration of the Orders of the Day, the House shall proceed with  
879 them in regular course as follows: Matters not giving rise to a motion or debate shall first be disposed of  
880 in the order in which they stand in the Calendar; after which the matters that were passed over shall be  
881 considered in like order and disposed. The provisions of this paragraph shall not be suspended unless by  
882 unanimous consent of the members present.

883 Notwithstanding the provisions of this rule, during consideration of the Orders of the Day, the  
884 committee on Ways and Means and the committee on Bills in the Third Reading may present matters for  
885 consideration of the House after approval of two-thirds of the members present and voting, without  
886 debate. [59.] (37.) [See Rule 47.]

887 [Amended Jan. 12, 1981; Jan. 12, 1983.]



921 said member’s vote so long as said physical disability continues; provided that the Speaker shall  
922 announce the action of the Chair to the membership prior to assigning a court officer to cast the member’s  
923 vote and provided further that the Speaker shall announce the action to the membership the first time a  
924 vote is cast for that member on each successive day. [65.]

925 [Amended April 18, 1979; Jan. 12, 1987; Jan. 9, 1991; Jan. 9, 2003; Jan. 20, 2011.]

926 **50.** When a question is put, the sense of the House shall be taken by the voices of the members, and  
927 the Speaker shall first announce the vote as it appears to the Speaker by the sound. If the Speaker is  
928 unable to decide by the sound of the voices, or if the announcement made thereupon is doubted by a  
929 member rising in his/her place for that purpose, the Speaker shall order a division of the number voting in  
930 the affirmative and in the negative, without further debate upon the question. [66.] (55.)

931 [Amended Jan. 11, 1985.]

932 **51.** When a return by division of the members voting in the affirmative and in the negative is  
933 ordered, the members for or against the question, when called on by the Speaker, shall rise in their places,  
934 and stand until they are counted. If, upon the taking of such a vote, the presence of a quorum is doubted, a  
935 count of the House shall be had, and if a quorum is present the vote shall stand. [67.]

936 52. The sense of the House shall be taken by yeas and nays whenever required by ten percent of the  
937 members elected. The Speaker shall, after waiting up to an interval of twelve minutes, state the pending  
938 question and, after opening the electronic voting system, instruct the members to vote for not less than  
939 two minutes and no more than twenty-two minutes, the Speaker shall close said system and cause totals to  
940 be displayed and a record made of how each member present voted; provided, that if at any time during  
941 said voting period any standing, joint or conference committee is meeting in public or executive sessions,  
942 the Speaker shall leave the electronic voting machine open for not less than 5 minutes.

943 Any member desiring to be recorded as being “present” when a yea and nay vote is taken on the  
944 electronic roll call system shall so notify the Clerk in person after said vote is ordered and before the vote  
945 is announced.

946 In the event the electronic voting system is not in operating order, the roll of the House shall be called  
947 in alphabetical order; provided, however, that no member shall be allowed to vote or to answer “present”  
948 who was not on the floor before the vote is declared; provided, however, that a member, who was in the  
949 State House on a previous roll call, may be recorded by reporting to the Clerk within five minutes after  
950 such vote is closed, unless objection is made thereto and it is seconded; and provided further that the  
951 presiding officer shall not, for said purpose, interrupt the member who is speaking on the floor; provided,  
952 however, that such request may be announced to the House subsequent to the five minutes. The Speaker  
953 shall not entertain any requests beyond said five minute period. Once the voting has begun it shall not be  
954 interrupted except for the purpose of questioning the validity of a member’s vote before the result is

955 announced. Except as heretofore provided, any member who shall vote or attempt to vote for another  
956 member or any person not a member who votes or attempts to vote for a member, or any member or other  
957 person who willfully tampers with or attempts to impair or destroy in any manner whatsoever the voting  
958 equipment used by the House, or change the records thereon shall be punished in such manner as the  
959 House determines; and provided further, that such a violation shall be reported to the Ethics Committee.  
960 [68.] (56, 57.)

961 [Amended Jan. 12, 1983; Jan. 11, 1985; Jan. 12, 1987; Jan. 9, 1991; Jan. 24, 2001; Jan. 9, 2003; Jan.  
962 26, 2005; Jan 20, 2011.]

963 **53.** The call for yeas and nays shall be decided without debate. If the yeas and nays have been  
964 ordered before the question is put, the proceedings under rules fifty and fifty-one relative to verification  
965 of the vote by the voices of the members or by a return of divisions shall be omitted; if not, they may be  
966 called for in lieu of a return by divisions when the Speaker's announcement is doubted by a member  
967 rising in his/her place, and, if then ordered, the proceedings under rules fifty and fifty-one shall be  
968 omitted. [69.] (52.)

969 [Amended Jan. 26, 1999.]

970 *Reconsideration.*

971 **54.** No motion to reconsider a vote shall be entertained unless it is made on the same day on which  
972 the vote was taken, or before the Orders of the Day have been taken up on the next day thereafter on  
973 which a quorum is present. If reconsideration is moved on the same day, the motion shall be placed first  
974 in the Orders of the Day for the succeeding day; but, if it is moved on the succeeding day, the motion  
975 shall be considered forthwith except that if said motion is moved on a day on which an informal session  
976 has been designated, it shall be placed in the Orders of the Day for the succeeding day. If reconsideration  
977 is moved after July first of the second annual session and thereafter, on any main question, it shall be  
978 considered forthwith. This rule shall not prevent the reconsideration of a vote on a subsidiary, incidental  
979 or dependent question at any time when the main question to which it relates is under consideration; and  
980 provided, further, that a motion to reconsider a vote on any subsidiary, incidental or dependent question  
981 shall not remove the main subject under consideration from before the House, but shall be considered at  
982 the time when it is made. This rule shall not be suspended unless by unanimous consent of the members  
983 present. [70.] (53.)

984 [Amended Jan. 12, 1981, Jan. 23, 2007.]

985 **55.** When a motion for reconsideration is decided, that decision shall not be reconsidered, and no  
986 question shall be twice reconsidered; nor shall any vote be reconsidered upon any of the following  
987 motions:

988 to recess,  
989 to adjourn,  
990 on sustaining a ruling of the Chair,  
991 to close debate at a specified time,  
992 to postpone if voted in the negative,  
993 to discharge or direct a committee to report,  
994 to commit or recommit,  
995 for second or subsequent legislative days,  
996 for the previous question, or  
997 for suspension of rules.

998 This rule shall not be suspended unless by unanimous consent of the members present. [71.] (53.)  
999 [Amended Jan. 12, 1981; Jan. 12, 1983; Jan. 9, 1991.]

1000 **56.** Debate on motions to reconsider shall be limited to fifteen minutes, and no member shall  
1001 occupy more than three minutes, but on a motion to reconsider a vote upon any subsidiary or incidental  
1002 question, debate shall be limited to ten minutes, and no member shall occupy more than three minutes.

1003 If the House has voted to close debate on any question, a motion to reconsider said question shall be  
1004 decided without debate. [72.] (52.)

1005 [Amended Jan. 12, 1981; Jan. 12, 1987.]

#### 1006 **RULES OF DEBATE.**

1007 **57.** Every member, when about to speak, shall rise and respectfully address the Speaker and shall  
1008 confine himself/herself to the question under debate. [73.] (39.)

1009 [Amended Jan. 11, 1985.]

1010 **58.** Every member while speaking shall avoid personalities; and shall sit down when finished. No  
1011 member shall speak out of his/her place without leave of the Speaker. [73.] (39.)

1012 When two or more members rise at the same time, the Speaker shall name the member entitled to the  
1013 floor, preferring one who rises in his/her place to one who does not. [74.] (40.)

1014 [Amended Jan. 11, 1985.]

1015 **59.** If a member repeatedly violates any of the rules of the House, or disrupts the orderly procedure  
1016 of the House, the Speaker, after warning the member of such violations, shall call the member to order,  
1017 and order that member to take his/her seat. A member so called to order shall lose the right to speak on  
1018 the pending subject-matter but shall not be debarred from voting. A member so called to order shall  
1019 remain seated until the House begins consideration of another subject-matter or unless the Speaker earlier  
1020 returns to the member his/her rights to the floor.

1021 If a member so called to order refuses to immediately take his/her seat, the Speaker shall immediately  
1022 name that member, who shall be escorted from the Chamber under escort of the Sergeant-at-Arms. The  
1023 matter shall thereupon, on motion, be referred to a special committee of three to be appointed by the  
1024 Speaker. Said special committee shall make a report to the House of its recommendations, which report  
1025 shall be read and accepted.

1026 Having been named, a member shall not be allowed to resume his/her seat until said member has  
1027 complied with the recommendations of the committee as accepted by the House.

1028 If, after a member is seated or named, the action of the Speaker is appealed, the House shall decide the  
1029 case by a majority vote of the members present and voting, but if there is no immediate appeal, the  
1030 decision of the Speaker shall be conclusive.

1031 [Amended Jan. 12, 1981; Jan. 11, 1985.]

1032 **60.** No member shall interrupt another while speaking except by rising to a point of order, to a  
1033 question of personal privilege, to doubt the presence of a quorum, or to ask the person speaking to yield.

1034 Members may rise to explain matters personal to them by leave of the presiding officer, but shall not  
1035 discuss pending questions in such explanations.

1036 Questions of personal privilege shall be limited to questions affecting the rights, reputation, and conduct  
1037 of the member in his/her representative capacities.

1038 Members may rise to ask questions of parliamentary inquiry concerning the pending matter by leave of  
1039 the presiding officer, but shall not debate the pending questions. [75.] (42.)

1040 [Amended Jan. 12, 1981.]

1041 **61.** No member shall speak more than once to the prevention of those who have not spoken and  
1042 desire to speak on the same question.

1043 This prohibition shall not apply to those members designated by the committee or committees reporting  
1044 the bill.

1045 No member shall occupy more than thirty minutes at a time while speaking on any question where  
1046 debate is unlimited.

1047 Unless the operation of another rule provides to the contrary (such as previous question, limitation of  
1048 debate, etc.), no member shall be prohibited from speaking more than once on any question when no other  
1049 member who has not spoken is seeking recognition by the Chair. [76.] (41.)

1050 *Motions.*

1051 **62.** Every motion shall be reduced to writing, if the Speaker so directs. [77.] (44.)





1111 a joint selected committee;  
1112 and a subject may be recommitted to the same committee or to another committee at the pleasure of the  
1113 House. [88.] (48.)

1114 *Motion to Amend.*

1115 **72.** A motion to amend an amendment may be received; but no amendment in the third degree shall  
1116 be allowed. This rule shall not be suspended unless by unanimous consent of the members present. [89.]  
1117 [Amended Jan. 12, 1983.]

1118 **73.** No motion or proposition on a subject different from that under consideration shall be admitted  
1119 under color of amendment. This rule shall not be suspended unless by unanimous consent of the members  
1120 present. [90.] (50.)  
1121 [Amended Jan. 12, 1987.]

1122 **73A.** No motion to amend a report from the committee on Ways and Means or a report from the  
1123 committee on Bills in the Third Reading, when such an amendment contains an expenditure of public  
1124 money or an increase or decrease in taxes, shall be considered unless a brief explanation of the  
1125 amendment is stated.  
1126 [Adopted Jan. 17, 1995; Amended Jan. 26, 1999.]

1127 **74.** A question containing two or more propositions capable of division shall be divided whenever  
1128 desired by any member, if the question includes points so distinct and separate that, one of them being  
1129 taken away, the other will stand as a complete proposition. The motion to strike out and insert shall be  
1130 considered as one proposition and therefore indivisible. The question on ordering a bill or resolve to a  
1131 third reading, or to be engrossed, or to be enacted, or similar main motions shall be considered as  
1132 indivisible under this rule. This rule shall not be suspended unless by unanimous consent of the members  
1133 present. [91.] (45.)  
1134 [Amended Jan. 12, 1983.]

1135 **75.** In filling blanks, the largest sum and longest time shall be put first. [92.] (51.) [See Rule 70.]  
1136 *Declaration of Recess.*

1137 **76.** The Speaker may declare a recess of fifteen minutes duration, or less.  
1138 [Amended Jan. 9, 1991.]

1139 **APPEAL.**

1140 **77.** No appeal from the decision of the Speaker shall be entertained unless it is seconded; and no  
1141 other business shall be in order until the question on the appeal has been disposed of. Debate shall be  
1142 limited to fifteen minutes on the question of sustaining a ruling by the Chair, and no member shall occupy

1143 more than three minutes. [94.] (43A.) [See Rule 2.]  
1144 [Amended Jan. 9, 1989.]

1145 **RESOLVES.**

1146 **78.** Such of these rules as are applicable to bills, whether of the House or of the Senate, shall apply  
1147 likewise to such resolves as require the concurrence of the Senate and approval by the Governor in order  
1148 to become law and have force as such. [95.]

1149 **SEATS.**

1150 **79.** (1) The desk on the right of the Speaker shall be assigned to the use of the Clerk and such  
1151 persons as he/she may employ to assist said Clerk, and that on the left to the use of the chairman and vice-  
1152 chairman of the committee on Bills in the Third Reading.

1153 (2) The Speaker shall assign members to vacant seats. The seat assigned to any member, other than  
1154 seats assigned under paragraph (1) of this rule, shall be his/her seat for the year and for such additional  
1155 years as said member may elect so long as service in the House remains continuous. An exchange of seats  
1156 may be made with the approval of the Speaker. [98.]

1157 [Amended Jan. 11, 1985; May 5, 1993.]

1158 **PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR.**

1159 **80.** The following persons shall be entitled to admission to the House of Representatives, during  
1160 the session thereof, to stand in an area designated by the Speaker in the rear of the Chamber, unless  
1161 otherwise invited by said Speaker to occupy seats not numbered:

1162 (1) The Governor and the Lieutenant-Governor, members of the Executive Council, Secretary of the  
1163 Commonwealth, Treasurer and Receiver-General, Auditor of the Commonwealth, Attorney-General,  
1164 Librarian and Assistant Librarian.

1165 (2) The members of the Senate.

1166 (3) Persons in the exercise of an official duty directly connected with the business of the House.

1167 (4) Contestants for seats in the House, whose papers are in the hands of a special committee of the  
1168 House, may be admitted, while their cases are pending, to seats to be assigned by the Speaker.

1169 No other person shall be admitted to the floor during the session, except upon the permission of the  
1170 Speaker.

1171 No legislative agent or counsel may be admitted to the floor of the House Chamber during a  
1172 session unless that part of the session is ceremonial in nature in which no other legislative business is  
1173 conducted.

1174 The legislative reporters shall be entitled to the privileges of the reporters' galleries.

1175 This rule shall not be suspended unless by unanimous consent of the members present. [99.] (60, 61.)  
1176 [Amended Jan. 9, 1991, Jan. 23, 2007.]

1177 **REPRESENTATIVES' CHAMBER AND ADJOINING ROOMS.**

1178 **81.** Use of the Representatives' Chamber shall be subject to the approval of the Speaker or the  
1179 committee on Rules.

1180 No legislative agent or counsel shall be admitted to the members' corridor or adjoining rooms. No  
1181 other person shall be admitted to the members' corridor or adjoining rooms, except persons entitled to the  
1182 privileges of the floor of the House unless upon written invitation of a member bearing the name of the  
1183 member and the person the member invites. Upon entering, the invitation shall be given to the court  
1184 officer assigned to the area. The provisions of this paragraph shall not apply if the purpose of admittance  
1185 is to attend a meeting in an adjoining room to which members of the general public are allowed to attend.

1186 No person shall be admitted to the north gallery of the House except upon a card of the Speaker.

1187 Subject to the approval and direction of the committee on Rules during the session and of the Speaker  
1188 after prorogation, the use of the reporters' galleries of the House Chamber shall be under the control of  
1189 the organization of legislative reporters known as the Massachusetts State House Press Association and  
1190 the State House Broadcasters Association.

1191 Every legislative reporter desiring admission to the reporters' galleries shall state in writing that he/she  
1192 is not the agent or representative of any person or corporation interested in legislation before the General  
1193 Court, and will not act as representative of any such person or corporation while retaining a place in the  
1194 galleries; but nothing herein contained shall prevent such legislative reporter from engaging in other  
1195 employment, provided such other employment is specifically approved by the committee on Rules and  
1196 reported to the House.

1197 All formal sessions of the House of Representatives shall be open to both commercial and public radio  
1198 and television, except designated times during such sessions, as determined by the House, reserved for the  
1199 consideration of non-controversial business which does not give rise to debate. The manner and  
1200 conditions of such broadcasts shall be established by the Speaker. Television, radio or web-broadcasts  
1201 may be prohibited on any given day by the Speaker with the approval of the House.

1202 This rule shall not be suspended unless by unanimous consent of the members present. [100.] (59.)  
1203 [Amended April 18, 1979; Jan. 12, 1983; Jan. 12, 1987; Jan. 9, 1991; Jan. 26, 1999, Jan. 23, 2007.]

1204 **QUORUM.**

1205 **82.** Eighty-one members shall constitute a quorum for the organization of the House and the  
1206 transaction of business. [See amendments to the Constitution, Art. XXXIII.]

1207 In the event that a quorum is not present, the presiding officer shall compel the attendance of a quorum.

1208 During the absence of a quorum, no other business may be transacted or motions entertained except a  
1209 declaration of adjournment or a recess by the Speaker. [105.]  
1210 [Amended Jan. 12, 1981; Jan. 14, 1997.]

#### 1211 **DEBATE ON MOTIONS FOR SUSPENSION OF RULES.**

1212 **83.** The question of suspension of House rules 45, 47, 56, 61, 64, 66, 67, 68, 69, 77 and 83 shall be  
1213 decided without debate. Debate upon the motion for the suspension of any other House rule, unless  
1214 otherwise indicated, or any joint rule shall be limited to fifteen minutes and no member shall occupy more  
1215 than three minutes. This rule shall not be suspended unless by unanimous consent of the members  
1216 present. [102.] (52.)

1217 [Amended Jan. 12, 1981; Jan. 9, 1989.]

1218 **84.** Unless otherwise indicated, nothing in the House rules or joint rules shall be suspended, altered  
1219 or repealed unless two-thirds of the members present and voting consent thereto. This rule shall not be  
1220 suspended unless by unanimous consent of the members present. [103.] (63.)

1221 [Amended Jan. 12, 1981.]

1222 **84A.** The clerk may, due to technical limitations or upon exigent circumstances, elect to waive any  
1223 requirement relative to the electronic availability and posting on the internet of any bills, resolves,  
1224 summaries or other documents contained herein; provided, however, that if the clerk so waives any such  
1225 requirement he shall make paper copies of the documents available to all members and the public within  
1226 the limitation established for the electronic availability and posting on the internet of any bills, resolves,  
1227 summaries or other documents contained herein.

#### 1228 **REFERENCE TO COMMITTEE ON RULES.**

1229 **85.** All motions or orders authorizing committees of the House to travel or to employ  
1230 stenographers, all propositions involving special investigations by committees of the House, all  
1231 resolutions presented for adoption by the House only, and all motions and orders except those which  
1232 relate to the procedure of the House or are privileged in their nature or are authorized by rule sixty-five,  
1233 shall be referred without debate to the committee on Rules, which shall report thereon, recommending  
1234 what action should be taken. The committee shall not recommend suspension of joint rule nine, unless  
1235 evidence satisfactory to the committee is produced that the petitioners have previously given notice, by  
1236 public advertisement or otherwise, equivalent to that required by Chapter 3 of the General Laws. [104.]  
1237 (13A.)

1238 **85A.** The House Business Manager, with the approval of House Counsel, shall provide that outside,  
1239 independent audits of House financial accounts be conducted for each fiscal year upon receipt of the fiscal

1240 year end appropriation activity with balance report from the comptroller of the Commonwealth. The  
1241 audit shall be conducted in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of  
1242 America and the standards applicable to financial audits contained in *Government Auditing Standards*,  
1243 issued by the Comptroller General of the United States. The House Business Manager shall provide the  
1244 independent auditor with requested documents for such audit. A copy of such audit shall be filed with the  
1245 Clerk of the House and copies shall be made available to the members and the general public.

1246 [Adopted Jan. 11, 1985, Amended Jan. 20, 2011.]

1247 **PARLIAMENTARY PRACTICE.**

1248 **86.** The rules of parliamentary practice shall govern the House in all cases to which they are  
1249 applicable, and in which they are not inconsistent with these rules or the joint rules of the two branches.  
1250 (62.)

1251 **PROCUREMENT.**

1252 **87.** (a) All procurement for goods or services shall be completed by the House Business Manager  
1253 with the approval of House Counsel.

1254 (b) All procurements for goods or services shall, to the extent practicable, be made from the statewide  
1255 procurement list established by the operational services division.

1256 (c) Upon certification by the House Business Manager that a necessary procurement cannot be made  
1257 using the statewide procurement list established by the operational services division, the House Business  
1258 Manager may procure the required goods or services pursuant to the following:

1259 (i) for a procurement of a supply or service in an amount of less than \$5,000, the House Business  
1260 Manager shall use sound business practices;

1261 (ii) for a procurement of a supply or service in an amount of \$5,000, but less than \$50,000, the House  
1262 Business Manager shall seek written or oral quotations from no fewer than 3 persons customarily  
1263 providing such supply or service. The House Business Manager shall record the names and addresses of  
1264 all persons from whom quotations were sought, the names of the persons submitting quotations and the  
1265 date and amount of each quotation. The House Business Manager shall award the contract to the  
1266 responsible person whose quotation offers the needed quality of supply or service and which represents  
1267 the best value for the Commonwealth;

1268 (iii) for a procurement of a supply or service in an amount exceeding \$50,000 the business manager  
1269 shall seek proposals through a competitive bid process established by the office of House Counsel;  
1270 provided, however, that the Office of House Counsel shall file the competitive bid process with the House  
1271 Clerk no later than March 31 of the first year of the session.

1272 (d) All procurements for legal and consulting services shall be handled exclusively by the Office of  
1273 House Counsel in compliance with the provisions of this rule. Prior to executing a contract for legal or  
1274 consulting services, said office shall certify, in writing, to the Clerk of the House of Representatives that  
1275 no employee of the House of Representatives possesses the required skills to complete the service which  
1276 is the subject of the contract.

1277 (e) The House Business Manager shall maintain a file on each contract not executed using the  
1278 statewide procurement list established by the operational services division and in excess of \$5,000 and  
1279 shall include in such file a copy of all documents related to the contract. Upon execution of the contract,  
1280 the House Business Manager shall transmit the file to the Office of House Counsel which shall make the  
1281 file available for inspection within said office by members of the House for at least 3 years from the date  
1282 of final payment under the contract; provided, however, that the Office of House Counsel shall redact  
1283 from said file any information it which (i) is legally privileged; (ii) is proprietary; or (iii) related to  
1284 individual members or House personnel.

1285 (f) Whenever the time required to comply with a requirement of this rule would endanger the health,  
1286 safety or convenience of the members, staff or visitors to the House of Representatives the House  
1287 Business Manager may make an emergency procurement without satisfying the requirement of this rules;  
1288 provided, however, that both the House Business Manager and the House Counsel certify in writing that:  
1289 (i) an emergency exists and explain the nature thereof; (ii) be limited to only supplies or services  
1290 necessary to meet the emergency; (iii) shall conform to the requirements of rule to the extent practicable  
1291 under the circumstances; (iv) each contractor's name, (v) the amount and the type of each contract; (vi)  
1292 the supplies or services provided under each contract; (vii) and basis for determining the need for an  
1293 emergency procurement. Such certification shall be filed with the Clerk of the House prior to an  
1294 emergency procurement.

1295 [Adopted Jan. 20, 2011.]

1296

1297 House of Representatives, January 20, 2011.

1298

1299 A D O P T E D

1300



1301 , Clerk

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