

## **SPECIAL RULES OF ORDER AND STANDING RULES for Electronic Meetings of the Presbytery of Tampa Bay**

*Approved by the Coordinating Team on July 9, 2020, for recommendation to the Presbytery of Tampa Bay*

For the purpose of any electronic meetings of the Presbytery of Tampa Bay conducted before a regular or special meeting may be convened in person to formally adopt rules for future electronic meetings, the Presbytery approves these special rules of order and suspends any standing rules that interfere with them:

1. All business of the meeting will be conducted using Zoom and features of that platform for simultaneous visual and aural communication, seeking recognition, and vote taking.
  - a. Dialing in by phone alone without using the Zoom client for laptop/desktop computers or the Zoom app for tablets or smartphones is not be permitted because of the limited tools available to interact meaningfully with the other participants in the meeting.
  - b. Additional technical guidance will be provided separately by the Coordinating Team, and the Stated Clerk will offer opportunities to practice using Zoom in advance of any online meeting of the Presbytery.
2. The presence of a quorum shall be established by sign-in to Zoom and joining the meeting. The continued presence of a quorum shall be determined by the online list of participating members.
3. While every effort will be made to provide stable access to the platform, participants are responsible for their own audio and internet connections; no action shall be invalidated on the grounds that the loss of, or poor quality of, a member's individual connection prevented participation in the meeting.
4. Greetings, reports, ceremonies, worship services, and other elements ordinarily included in meetings of the Presbytery but unrelated to items of business may be included, altered, or omitted at the discretion of the Coordinating Team.
5. To be enrolled as participants with voice and/or vote, minister members, commissioners, and corresponding members must use the free Zoom software appropriate for their device.
6. All voting participants are required to join the meeting on individual devices (one person, one device). This preserves the right of each voting member to vote individually. (If more than one device is being used in the same room, the microphone and speaker on all but one device must be muted to prevent feedback.)
7. Upon entering the meeting, all participants must ensure that the participant's name displayed by Zoom conforms to the following examples so that the moderator and stated clerk can verify the status of each participant with voice and vote or voice only:
  - Minister/Teaching Elder member: "Firstname Lastname /TE"
  - Ruling Elder Commissioner from congregations: "Firstname Lastname /REC/ Church Name"
  - Ruling Elder PTB Staff, Officer, Commission/Committee Chair: "Firstname Lastname /RE/PTB"

- Ruling Elder member of the Permanent Judicial Commission: “Firstname Lastname /RE/PJC”
- Ruling Elder former Moderator of PTB: “Firstname Lastname /RE/FmrMod”
- Ruling Elder Commissioner to 224th GA (2020): “Firstname Lastname /RE/GA224”
- Ruling Elder Certified Christian Educator: “Firstname Lastname /RE/CCE”
- Commissioned Pastor currently serving a church: “Firstname Lastname /CP/ Church Name”
- Non-Ruling Elder Certified Christian Educator in educational ministry: “ZCE-Firstname Lastname /CCE/ Church Name”
- Corresponding Member: “ZCM- Firstname Lastname /CM/Organization”
- Guests: “ZZG- Firstname Lastname /Guest/ Church or Organization”

Use of “Z” prefixes for those with voice but not vote will help to ensure the integrity of any votes taken if any inadvertent votes are cast by any participants not authorized to vote.

8. Participants will ensure their own microphones remain muted unless recognized by the moderator to speak.
9. The “raise hand” feature on the participant list in Zoom will be used both for seeking recognition from the moderator and for voting when directed by the moderator. Participants will be recognized only using the “raise hand” feature, not by waving at the computer or device camera.
10. Zoom’s “chat” feature in a meeting of the presbytery will be limited to communicating only with the Stated Clerk and electronic hosts of the Zoom meeting, like passing a note to the Stated Clerk during a meeting.
11. Any motion other than a procedural one should be entered in writing into the participant “chat” if possible before seeking recognition using the “raise hand” feature. When recognized by the moderator, participants should state that the text of the motion is in the chat, and then make the motion. No motion will be brought before the meeting from chat until after the speaker is recognized by the moderator. Submitting a motion in chat *does not* jump the line waiting to be recognized.
12. A vote taken by means of raising hands is a “division,” not a “counted vote” – meaning that the moderator will quickly scroll through the list of participants for a sense of how many have voted first in favor, and then against the motion, and then rule which side has prevailed.
  - a. When the moderator seeks unanimous consent, only those who object to unanimous consent will be asked to indicate that by a raised hand (👉) or a red “x” (☒) on the participants list; to avoid confusion, no one who consents should take any action to indicate consent.
  - b. If the moderator is uncertain, the moderator may order a counted vote—or a member may move that a counted vote be taken (a motion for a counted vote must be seconded, is not debatable, and requires a majority vote).
  - c. At the discretion of the moderator, votes may also be done by using the green “check” (☑) button for “yes” and the red “x” (☒) button for “no” on the participants screen or by using Zoom’s “poll” feature.