

**MEETING RULES OF PROCEDURE FOR  
THE FRESNO COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS**

**Approved February 26, 2026**

**1. Effect of Rules.**

- 1.1. These Rules of Procedure (Rules) shall govern the conduct of all Fresno Council of Governments (COG) Policy Board (Board) meetings. These Rules are intended to implement applicable laws and Robert's Rules of Order, as adopted by the COG Bylaws and the Joint Powers Agreement.
- 1.2. To the extent a matter is not covered by these Rules, the Chair, in consultation with the County Counsel, may make a ruling. Any such ruling is subject to a point of order and majority vote to proceed otherwise.
- 1.3. The ultimate authority to enforce these Rules lies with the Board majority. Any deviation from these Rules shall not invalidate the approval of any matter.

**2. Appointment of Chair and Vice Chair.**

- 2.1. The officers of the COG Board shall consist of the Chair and Vice Chair.
- 2.2. Whenever the office of Chair or Vice Chair is vacated, the Board shall select a new Chair or Vice Chair.

**3. Duties of Chair and Vice Chair.** The Chair shall preside at all meetings, and in the absence of the Chair, the Vice Chair shall preside. In the absence of both the Chair and Vice Chair, the Board shall select a Member to preside for that meeting until the Chair or Vice Chair returns.

3.1. It shall be the duty of the Chair:

- 3.1.1. To open all meetings of the Board at the appointed hour by taking the chair and calling the Board to order.
- 3.1.2. To maintain order and decorum.
- 3.1.3. To call for votes and to announce the results.
- 3.1.4. To decide all points of order and procedure; all rulings of the Chair are subject to a point of order and appeal of the Board, and may be overruled by majority vote.
- 3.1.5. To preside at all closed sessions of the Board.
- 3.1.6. To perform such other duties as may be required by law.

**4. Meetings.** Regular meetings of the Board will be held at specified last Thursdays of each month at 5:30 p.m. at the COG offices, 2035 Tulare Street Suite 201, Fresno, California. The time, date, or place of a regular meeting may be altered as published in the Board agenda.

**5. Order of Business.**

- 5.1. An information item may be placed on the Agenda from time to time in which no Board action is anticipated, during which public comment is generally not permitted, subject to the discretion of the Chair to open the matter to public comment. The Board may also invite one or more speakers to address the

item, however, if some are invited to speak, the floor should be opened to all to speak.

- 5.2. A Member may remove (“pull”) a specific Consent item for separate discussion. Members may also record a “no” vote or abstention as to one more Consent items in advance of the vote. The Board may then approve the balance of the Consent items by one motion.
- 5.3. Special meetings of the Board may be called at any time by the Chair or, in the Chair’s absence, by the Vice Chair. A minimum of twenty-four hours’ notice of any special meeting shall be given in accordance with the Brown Act.
- 5.4. Emergency meetings may be held upon a finding by a majority vote of the Board that an emergency situation exists due to work stoppage, a crippling disaster, or other activity that severely impairs public health or safety. Board may convene emergency meetings without complying with the twenty-four hour notice and posting requirement for special meetings provided the Board complies with all provisions of the Brown Act and other applicable laws.
- 5.5. The order of business for special and emergency meetings will be as follows, unless the Chair determines the order for a particular meeting or item should be modified:
  1. Roll Call.
  2. Public Comment on Agenda Items Only.
  3. Hear Agenda Items.
  4. Adjourn.

**6. Procedures for General Action Items.** For general action items (any item the Board may vote upon or give direction, as noted on the agenda):

1. Chair calls the item.
2. Anyone recusing should note on the record and leave the room.
3. Staff makes presentation.
4. Board may ask questions.
5. Chair calls for public speakers on the item.
6. Each speaker has up to 3 minutes.
7. If no more speakers, “Public comment is closed.”
8. Call on Members to speak.
9. Members may make a motion and second to approve the item or take other action.
10. Call for vote (“All in favor? Any against?” – or Roll Call), then the Chair announces “The motion passes.” or “The motion fails.”

**7. Procedures for information items.**

1. Clerk calls the item.
2. Anyone recusing should note on the record and leave the room.
3. Staff makes presentation.
4. Members may ask questions.
5. Calling for public speakers is optional.
6. Call on Members to speak.
7. Information items do not call for action, but a motion for general direction or to return with an agenda item may be made.

## **8. Voting Process.**

- 8.1. Every vote taken by the Board in open session shall be by open ballot. To register a vote on an item, a Member must be physically present while the vote is being taken or participating in the meeting by teleconference as permitted by the Brown Act.
- 8.2. There shall be three methods of counting the votes of the Board: (1) by a call of the roll of the Members and a record made by the Clerk of the vote of each Member; (2) by a voice vote; or (3) by unanimous consent (for example, "Any opposed?").
- 8.3. The Chair shall determine the method for voting unless requested otherwise by a Member or as may be required by law.
- 8.4. During a vote, silence of Members on the dais shall be recorded as an affirmative vote.
- 8.5. The Clerk shall record each vote and each abstention in the Minute Book and announce the result to the Board.
- 8.6. Whenever the yes and no votes are called, a Member shall not be permitted to explain a vote or an abstention without the unanimous consent of the Board. After the announcement of the result, a Member shall not be permitted to vote or to change a vote or an abstention, except via a motion to reconsider (below).
- 8.7. Unless any Member calls for separate votes in advance, any item on the Agenda with related sub-parts shall be treated as one agenda item and voted on in one motion. If the item and sub-parts receive sufficient votes for approval of some, but not all sub-parts (as some parts may require a supermajority), at the immediate request of any Member, the first vote shall be nullified and Board shall then immediately, without discussion, vote on each sub-part separately.

## **9. Quorum, Majority Votes, and Supermajority Votes.**

- 9.1. A majority (9 of 16) of the entire membership of the Board shall constitute a quorum. A quorum must be present to begin a Board meeting and for any vote to be taken.
- 9.2. Passage of an item requires a minimum of 9 votes, including representatives of no less than 40% of the total population of the member agencies in good standing.

## **10. Public Comment.** The public may provide oral testimony at every regular meeting to in accordance with the Brown Act, subject to the following:

- 10.1. Action Items. Each speaker shall limit remarks on any action item listed on the Agenda to three minutes (public comment period). A speaker's time may not be transferred, reserved, or combined with another speaker.
- 10.2. Consent Items. Consent items are considered routine, not controversial, and are treated as one agenda item. Public comment on Consent agenda shall be limited to three minutes per speaker, and comments shall be limited to discussion of those items on the Consent agenda.
- 10.3. Public Presentations. A member of the public may address the Board on any

item of interest within the subject matter jurisdiction of the Board. Public comment shall be limited to three minutes. Members may ask follow up questions of any speaker and make brief comments at that time.

- 10.4. Public comment is intended to allow the public to voice their opinions or share facts, but there is no expectation for the Board or staff to respond to the speaker's questions.
- 10.5. The public comment period may be extended by the Chair to wrap up, but allowances should be brief.
- 10.6. In situations in which more than 20 people wish to speak on an item, the Chair may place reasonable limits on the public comment period, including reducing the time allotted to each speaker to two minutes and/or a specific time limit for the total presentation. Such time limits shall allow for full discussion of the item by interested parties or their representative(s). The purpose of this limitation is to ensure the Board can address its agenda and avoid repetitious presentations.
- 10.7. Speakers shall confine their remarks to those which are relevant to the subject under consideration and are encouraged to present new evidence and points of view not previously considered, to avoid repetition of statements made by previous speakers.
- 10.8. Any speaker or member of the audience the Chair declares out of order may be given one warning, and then if the conduct continues, that person shall be removed from the Board chambers. Out of order may consist of, for example, continuing to speak after the time for speaking has expired, speaking on a topic not before the Board at that time, speaking out from the audience, using profanity, making physical threats, or causing any other disruption of the meeting.
- 10.9. Each person addressing the Board shall step up to the microphone, give his or her name and address.
- 10.10. Alternative methods of addressing the Board shall be allowed for persons who do not speak English or with disabilities. Requests for accommodation should be made with the Clerk at least three business days in advance of the meeting. To maintain clarity and accuracy of the public record, when a COG provided interpreter is present, public comments or discussion on the record shall be translated by the COG appointed interpreter. The translation may be summary of the speaker's comments, unless a Member or the speaker desires otherwise or the matter is a noticed public hearing.
- 10.11. A speaker addressing the Board through an interpreter shall be granted twice the allotted time for comment (generally, six minutes) to ensure non-English speakers the same opportunity to directly address the Board, unless simultaneous translation equipment is used.
- 10.12. To allow all the public to see and participate in meetings, the public may hold 8.5" x 11" or smaller signs on their laps, but shall not hold such signs aloft while someone is speaking. A member of the public with a sign larger than 8.5" x 11" shall sit in the last row or along the back wall of the Board Chambers so that they do not block the view of others. Speakers may hold their signs while

speaking at the podium.

- 10.13. At any special or emergency meeting of the Board, the public has a right to speak on any action item listed on the Agenda within the time limits specified in these Rules. The public shall not have the right to address the Board on matters not listed on a Special or Emergency Meeting Agenda.

## **11. Order and Decorum.**

- 11.1. While the Board is in session, the Board must preserve order and decorum. A Member shall neither by conversation or otherwise, delay or interrupt the proceedings or the peace of the Board nor disturb any Member while speaking or refuse to obey the orders of the Board or its Chair, except as otherwise herein provided.
- 11.2. No person shall be permitted to interrupt a speaker who has the floor, except for a Member to raise a point of order.
- 11.3. A Member or other person properly before the Board shall address the Chair, be recognized before proceeding, and confine remarks to the question under discussion.
- 11.4. If a Member or other person, in speaking or otherwise, transgresses these rules, the Chair or any Member may raise a point of order. The Chair shall then decide the point of order without debate. In addition, the Chair may call for the sense of the Board on any point of order.
- 11.5. Whenever any person is called to order while speaking, such person shall be in possession of the floor after the point of order is decided, and may proceed with the matter under the discussion within the ruling made on the point of order.
- 11.6. No person, except authorized COG officials and their representatives, may be permitted beyond the lectern in the Board Chambers unless invited by the Board.
- 11.7. Any person who willfully engages in conduct which is designed to or is likely to provoke others to violent or riotous behavior, disturbs the peace of the meeting by loud and unreasonable noise, engages in other disruptive conduct that substantially interferes with the orderly conduct of business before the Board, and who fails, upon request of the Chair to cease such activity, shall be forthwith barred from further attendance at such meeting, in person or electronically, unless permission to and/or address the Board is granted by a majority vote of the Board.

## **12. Disclosure of Conflicts.** A public official who holds an office specified in Government Code Section 87200, and who has a disqualifying financial interest in a decision, shall identify the conflict of interest or potential conflict of interest, and immediately prior to the consideration of the matter, do all of the following:

- 12.1. Publicly identify the financial interest that gives rise to the conflict of interest or potential conflict of interest in detail sufficient to be understood by the public.
- 12.2. Recuse himself or herself from discussing and voting on the matter, or otherwise acting in violation of Government Code Section 87100.

- 12.3. Leave the room until after the discussion, vote, and any other disposition of the matter is concluded, unless the matter has been placed on the portion of the agenda reserved for uncontested matters.
- 12.4. Public officials who must comply with this Rule include, but are not limited to, Members of the Board, the Executive Director, County Counsel, Clerk, and public officials who participate in the policy making process.
- 12.5. If the number of Members recusing on an item leaves an insufficient number of Members remaining to approve the item, then one or more Members shall be randomly chosen to remain and hear the item.

### 13. Motions.

- 13.1. Only Members, or duly appointed members of boards or committees sitting with the Board, may make Motions. Motions and amendments may be verbal, but shall be reduced to writing, if requested by the Chair. The Clerk shall record all motions and read them back when requested. Upon request, the County Counsel shall assist in the formation of motions.
- 13.2. Any motion that does not receive a second shall die, and then another motion may be made.
- 13.3. There are three motions that are most common and are usually subject to debate:
  - 13.3.1. **The main motion.** This motion puts forward a substantive decision for Board consideration. Only one main motion may be on the floor at one time.
  - 13.3.2. **Typical main motions:**
    - “Motion to approve.”
    - “Motion to approve staff’s recommendation.”
    - “Motion to approve with the following changes....”
    - “Motion to reject the item.”
  - 13.3.3. **The motion to amend.** This motion seeks to modify the main motion before the Board. A motion to substitute a motion with another motion shall be treated as a motion to amend. Only one motion to amend may be on the floor at one time, unless the Chair allows Members to state two or more motions to amend, which may be accumulated and then voted upon in series in the order made. All motions to amend shall be resolved prior to voting on the main motion.
  - 13.3.4. **The procedural motion.** This motion is to address a rule of procedure, postpone, or take some other action. Procedural motions take priority over main motions and motions to amend. Only one procedural motion may be on the floor at one time. A “point of order” may be raised at any time, interrupting a speaker when recognized by the Chair, to make a procedural motion.
- 13.4. The following common procedural motions shall be handled as follows:
  - 13.4.1. **Motion to adjourn.** This motion, if passed, requires the Board to

immediately adjourn to its next regularly scheduled meeting. It is not subject to debate and requires a majority vote. It is the highest priority motion.

- 13.4.2. **Motion to fix the time to adjourn.** This motion, if passed, requires the Board to adjourn the meeting at a specific time set in the motion. It is not subject to debate and requires a majority vote.
- 13.4.3. **Motion to table.** This motion, if passed, requires the discussion of the agenda item to be halted and the agenda item placed on hold. The motion can contain a specific time in which the item can come back to Board. If the motion does not contain a specific time for the return of the item, a motion to take the item off the table will have to be taken at a future meeting to bring it back to the Board. A motion to table or to bring it back to the Board requires a simple majority vote.
- 13.4.4. **Motion to continue.** This motion, if passed, requires the item to be withdrawn from the Agenda at that time and postponed either indefinitely or to a certain time and/or date, or to a time later in that meeting, as stated in the motion. A motion to continue is debatable and requires a simple majority vote.
- 13.4.5. **“Friendly Amendment.”** This is a “request,” rather than a formal motion. The speaker asks whether the maker of the main motion would agree to amend the motion, as suggested. If agreed, and if the Member providing the second also agrees, or another second is offered, then the main motion is replaced with the amended motion. If an offer for a “friendly amendment” is rejected, then a formal motion to amend may be made.

#### **14. Reconsideration.**

- 14.1. A motion to reconsider any action taken by the Board may be made only at the same meeting such action was taken. Such motion must be made by one of the prevailing side, but may be seconded by any Member, and may be made at any time and have precedence over all other motions or while a Member has the floor. It is debatable.
- 14.2. If a motion to reconsider is made and seconded, the Board shall first vote on whether to reconsider. If a majority approves reconsideration, then the item being reconsidered is again on the floor for discussion and action may be taken on that item.

#### **15. Closed Sessions.**

- 15.1. Closed sessions may be held at any regular or special meeting for any purpose authorized under the Brown Act. Public comments on any item to be heard in closed session shall be received prior to, but not necessarily immediately prior to, a closed session.
- 15.2. No discussions in closed session shall take place without a quorum present.
- 15.3. Announcements of Action Taken. When required by state law, actions taken in closed session shall be announced in open session promptly after the closed session.

**16. Points of Order.**

- 16.1. A point of order may be raised at any stage of the proceedings, except during a calling of the roll when the ayes and noes are called for. Such point of order shall be decided by the Chair, without debate, subject to an appeal to the Board. County Counsel may be consulted.
- 16.2. A ruling of the Chair shall not be subject to debate. However, the ruling may be appealed by one Member making the appeal and another seconding it. The question is then taken from the Chair and vested in the Board for final decision by majority vote of the entire membership of the Board. County Counsel may be consulted. A tie sustains the Chair.

**17. Remote Participation.**

- 17.1. (reserved)