



BASIC PRINCIPLES

1. Parliamentary procedure exists to facilitate the transaction of business and to promote cooperation and harmony.
2. All members have equal rights, privileges and obligations. Members have four basic rights:
 - Right to attend meetings (including rights to know when they are being held)
 - Right to make motions
 - Right to debate
 - Right to vote
3. The majority has the right to decide
4. The minority has rights which must be protected.
5. A quorum must be present for the group to act.
6. Only one question at a time can be considered at any given time. Members have the right to know at all times what the immediately pending question is, and to have it restated before a vote is taken.
6. No member can speak until recognized by the chair.
7. No one can speak a second time on the same question as long as another wants to speak a first time.
8. The chair should be strictly impartial.

TYPES OF MOTIONS

A **privileged motion** is which is granted precedence over ordinary business because it concerns matters of great importance or urgency. Such motions are not debatable, although in case of questions of privilege, the chair may feel the need to elicit relevant facts from members. Examples of privileged motions are:

- Motion to Adjourn
- Motion to Recess
- Call for the Orders of the Day (a motion to require a deliberative assembly to conform to its agenda or order of business)

A **subsidiary motion** deals directly with a main motion prior to (or instead of) voting on the main motion itself.

- Lay on the Table (*to table* means a proposal to *suspend* consideration of a pending motion)
- Postpose to a Certain Time (Definitely)
- Commit (refer to a committee)
- Amend
- Postpone indefinitely (a subsidiary motion used to kill a main motion without taking a direct vote on it.)

A **main motion** brings business before the assembly. Main motions are made while no other motion is pending. Any of the subsidiary and privileged motions may be made while the main motion is pending, and in many cases these motions, if passed, will affect the assembly's consideration of the main motion.

HANDLING A MOTION

Three steps by which a motion is brought before the group:

- ❖ A member makes a motion.
- ❖ Another members seconds the motion.
- ❖ The chair states the question on the motion.

Three steps in the consideration of a motion:

- ❖ The members debate the motion.
- ❖ **The chair puts the question to a vote.**
 - The Chair restates the question.
 - The chair takes the vote:
 - *"All in favor of the motion, say aye."
 - *"Those opposed, say no."
- ❖ **The chair announces the result of a vote. A complete announcement should include:**
 - Report on the voting itself, stating which side prevailed (and giving the count if a count occurred).
 - Declaration that the motion is adopted or lost.
 - Statement indicating the effect of the vote or ordering its execution.
 - Where applicable, announcement of the next item of business or stating the question of the next motion that consequently comes up for a vote.

VOTING

- **Voice vote:** A vote by voice is the regular method of voting on any question that does not require more than a majority vote for its adoption.
- **Rising vote:** Used principally when a voice vote has produced an inconclusive result and as the normal method of voting on motions requiring a two-thirds vote, members indicate their vote by standing.
- **Show of hands:** As an alternative to the voice vote or as a way to verify an inconclusive result, members show their vote by raising their hand. A vote by show of hands should be limited to very small meetings.
- **Majority vote:** The basic requirement for approval for action, except where a rule provides otherwise, is a majority vote. The term "majority" means "more than half," excluding blanks and abstentions, at a properly called meeting with a quorum.
- **Two-thirds vote:** Two-thirds vote means at least two-thirds of the votes cast, excluding blanks and abstentions, at a properly called meeting with a quorum