

Remote Meeting Participation Policy

Pursuant to 1 M.R.S. § 403-B, the Town Council, Boards or Committee adopts the following policy to govern the participation, via remote methods, of members of the Council or Committee and the public in the public proceedings or meetings of the Council, Board or Committee.

IN-PERSON MEETINGS REQUIRED: Members of the Town Council, Board or Committee are expected to be physically present and gathered for public proceedings except in the following circumstances:

1. For the Town Council, Board or Committee: The existence of an emergency or urgent issue that requires the Committee to meet by remote methods.
2. For one or more individual members of the Council, Board or Committee: Illness, other physical condition or temporary absence of a member that causes such member(s) to face significant difficulties traveling to or attending the meeting to be held in person.

“Remote methods” shall mean by telephonic or video technology allowing simultaneous reception of information and may include, upon request, other means when such means are necessary to provide a reasonable accommodation to a person(s) with a disability. Remote participation will not be by text-only means such as e-mail, text messages, or chat functions.

The Chair of the Council, Board or Committee, in consultation with other members if appropriate and possible, will make a determination that remote methods of participation are necessary in as timely a manner as possible under the circumstances. A member who is unable to attend a meeting in person will notify the Chair as far in advance as possible.

The public will be provided a meaningful opportunity to attend via remote methods when any member of the Council, Board or Committee participates via remote methods. If public input is allowed or required at the meeting, an effective means of communication between the Council, Board or Committee and the public will also be provided. The public will also be provided an opportunity to attend the meeting in person unless there is an emergency or urgent issue that requires the entire Council, Board or Committee to meet using remote methods.

Notice of all meetings will be provided in accordance with 1 M.R.S. § 406 and any applicable charter, ordinance, policy, or bylaw. When the public may attend via remote methods, notice will include the means by which the public may access the meeting remotely and may include, upon request, other means when such means are necessary to provide a reasonable accommodation to a person(s) with a disability. Notice will also identify a location where the public may attend the meeting in person. The Council, Board or Committee will not restrict public attendance to remote methods except in the case of an emergency or urgent issue that requires the Council, Board or Committee to meet using remote methods of attendance.

The Council, Board or Committee will make all documents and materials to be considered by the Council, Board or Committee available, electronically or otherwise, to the public who attend remotely to the same extent customarily available to the public who attend in person, provided no additional costs are incurred by the Council, Board or Committee.

All votes taken during a meeting using remote methods will be by roll call vote that can be seen and heard if using video technology, or heard if using audio technology only, by other members of the Council, Board or Committee and the public. A member of the Council, Board or Committee who participates remotely will be considered present for purposes of a quorum and voting.

This policy will remain in force indefinitely unless amended or rescinded.