



The Diocese of Virginia 231st Annual Convention – 2025

Rules of Order for the 231st Annual Convention (2025)

1. There shall be appropriate worship services at each regular meeting of the Convention. Each delegate registered and attending the Convention by the use of, or a means of, communication by which all members participating in the Convention may simultaneously hear each other shall be deemed to be present in person. The Presiding Officer or the Chair of the Committee on Credentials may make reasonable accommodations for members of Convention to attend and participate in Convention, but each member shall be responsible for his or her access to the meeting and no action shall be invalidated by the loss of or poor quality of a member's individual virtual connection. Attendance shall be limited to registered delegates and invited guests. The meetings of Convention and the hearings by Committees of Convention shall be observable by the public and the press, either in person at the Convention venue or by livestream, at the discretion of the Presiding Officer.
2. On the first day of Convention legislation the Presiding Officer, having taken the Chair, shall declare a quorum present, if such be the case, or the Presiding Officer may direct that the roll of the members of the clerical and lay order be called to determine a quorum.
3. On the first day of Convention legislation, a Program of Convention shall be adopted.
4. On the first day of Convention legislation, the Presiding Officer may appoint a Parliamentarian and Assistant Secretaries of the Convention.
5. Prior to each regular meeting of Convention, the Presiding Officer shall appoint the following Committees of Convention to serve until their successors have been appointed.

A. The Committee on Credentials

B. The Committee on Constitution and Canons, to which all proposed amendments to the Constitution and Canons and the Rules of Order shall be referred. Proposed amendments may be submitted only by a Member of Convention or a Constitutional or Canonical body. All proposed amendments shall be filed to the Secretary not less than eighteen (18) days before Convention convenes. The Committee on Constitution and Canons shall conduct an open hearing not less than fourteen (14) days before Convention convenes and shall make its report, including any text amending the Constitution or Canons, not less than seven (7) days before Convention convenes. Notice of the open hearing shall be announced at least six (6) weeks before Convention convenes.

Any delegate proposing a first-degree amendment to the Committee's proposed canonical or constitutional changes must submit the proposed amendment in writing in a form suitable for electronic posting (as specified by the Secretary of the Diocese) no later than 48 hours before Convention convenes. The Secretary shall promptly post such amendments for downloading and review by delegates. If more than one first-degree amendment is received, the Presiding Officer shall give the earliest submitted amendment priority in the order by which Convention debates such amendments.

No amendment first proposed less than 48 hours before Convention convenes shall be in order unless the subject matter of the amendment is germane to a timely filed first-degree amendment.

Proposed amendments shall identify the proposers of the amendment and provide contact information for at least one proposer to whom questions or comments about the amendment may be addressed

No additional amendments to the Constitution and Canons or Rules of Order shall be received and acted upon at the Convention without a two-thirds vote of the Convention, unless they shall be reported by a legislative Committee of Convention, the Standing Committee or the Executive Board. All such additional proposed amendments must be submitted in 600 copies ready for distribution.

C. The Committee on Resolutions, to which may be referred all written resolutions, except those referred to the Committee on Budget or the Committee on Constitution and Canons. Proposed resolutions may be submitted only by a Member of Convention or a Constitutional or Canonical body. All proposed resolutions shall be filed to the Secretary not less than eighteen (18) days before Convention convenes

All proposed resolutions, excluding courtesy resolutions, shall:

1. Not include "whereas" clauses, but may include a rationale or explanation which shall not be part of the resolution,
2. Include a statement that the proposed resolution does not conflict with the Constitution or Canons of The Episcopal Church or The Diocese,
3. Not include a link to a website, and
4. Include a statement of the financial impact of the resolution and, if appropriate, the funding source(s) to implement the proposed resolution.

The Committee on Resolutions shall conduct an open hearing not less than fourteen (14) days prior to the day Convention convenes and shall make its report not less than seven (7) days before Convention convenes. Notice of the open hearing shall be announced at least six (6) weeks prior Convention.

Any delegate proposing a first-degree amendment to the Committee's proposed resolution language must submit the proposed amendment in writing in a form suitable for electronic posting (as specified by the Secretary of the Diocese) no later than 48 hours before Convention convenes.

The Secretary shall promptly post such amendments for downloading and review by delegates. If more than one first-degree amendment is received, the Presiding Officer shall give the earliest submitted amendment priority in the order by which Convention debates such proposed amendments.

No amendment first proposed less than 48 hours before Convention convenes shall be in order unless the subject matter of the amendment is germane to a timely filed first-degree amendment to a timely filed resolution.

Resolutions shall identify the proposers of the resolution and provide contact information for at least one proposer to whom questions or comments about the resolution may be addressed.

Other than Courtesy Resolutions, no additional resolutions shall be received and acted upon at the Convention without a two-thirds vote of the Convention, unless they be reported by a legislative Committee of Convention, the Standing Committee or the Executive Board. All such additional resolutions must be submitted in 600 copies ready for distribution.

Courtesy Resolutions are those expressing thanks, congratulations, or condolences to individuals, families, or organizations, as may be appropriate for the occasions of retirement, departure, achievement, anniversary or death. Courtesy Resolutions may be introduced as late as the first day of Convention without bringing 600 copies

of the resolution and without the need for a two-thirds vote. A Courtesy Resolution expressing appreciation for or commending service at Convention may be introduced at any time.

D. The Committee on Budget, to which shall be referred (a) the Executive Board's recommended program and proposed funding, and (b) such resolutions related thereto as shall have been filed in writing with the Convention's Secretary.

The Committee on Budget shall conduct a hearing not less than fourteen (14) days before Convention convenes. Notice of the open hearing shall be announced at least six (6) weeks prior to Convention. Committee revisions to the proposed budget shall be posted seven (7) days before Convention convenes.

Proposed amendments to the budget or resolutions related to the budget shall be introduced in writing in such electronic or written editable format as specified by the Diocesan Office. Proposed amendments to the budget or resolutions related to the budget shall be introduced no later than noon on the third day before the open hearing of the Budget Committee. No additional amendments to the budget or resolutions related to the budget shall be received and acted upon at the Convention without a two-thirds vote of the Convention, unless they be reported by a legislative Committee of Convention, the Standing Committee or the Executive Board. All such additional amendments or resolutions related to the budget must be submitted in 600 copies ready for distribution.

Proposed amendments to the budget or resolutions related to the budget shall identify the proposers of the amendment and provide contact information for at least one proposer to whom questions or comments about the amendment may be addressed. No amendment to the proposed diocesan budget, as presented by the Committee on Budget, shall be received unless the amendment includes provision for offsetting changes in other expenditures or revenues.

The Committee shall report to Convention by presenting:

1. The Executive Board's budget, including such changes in the Executive Board's budget as the Committee shall recommend, said changes to be presented in the form of a resolution or resolutions.
2. The Committee's recommendation on all resolutions to Convention on or related to the budget.

E. The Committee on Church Status, to which shall be referred all petitions for church status prepared and presented as prescribed by Canon.

F. The Committee on Related Organizations, which shall study, review and report to Convention the relationship existing between the Diocese and any organization, institution, corporation, board or other group which by charter or custom or for any reason may be considered to have a relationship with the Diocese or a desire to have such a relationship. All requests to change or create such relationship shall be referred to this Committee. The Secretary and the Committee on Related Organizations may set appropriate deadlines, forms and procedures for nominations to the governing bodies of Related Organizations. The Secretary, in the sole discretion of the Secretary, may waive compliance with the deadline for submitting nominations. This Committee is charged with presenting to Convention, or to the Executive Board between meetings of Convention, nominations or elections for confirmation, of officers or board members of all related organizations whose articles of incorporation or bylaws require such action.

G. The Committee on the Journal of the Convention, composed of three persons of whom the Secretary of the Diocese shall be one, of either order, to whom shall be referred all matters to be printed in the Annual Journal of the Convention, which said Committee shall have power to act during recess of the Convention, and report to the Convention.

6. The Presiding Officer shall appoint such other committees of Convention as the Convention may direct or the Presiding Officer may determine and the Presiding Officer may designate the chairperson of any committee.

7. The size and composition of every committee of Convention shall be in the sole discretion of the Presiding Officer, except where otherwise provided by the Constitution and Canons.

8. Elections: Balloting may be conducted using a virtual or remote voting system approved by the Secretary of the Convention. With the approval of the Chief Judge of Elections, or a designee of the Chief Judge of Elections, appropriate provisions shall be made for assistance to delegates who do not have access to the voting system or require technical assistance in voting. Ballots cast using a virtual or remote voting system shall be deemed the equivalent of individual, paper ballots. Ballots shall be deemed to be anonymous if the identity of the voter is available only to the voting system administrator or the Head Teller. The numerical results of each ballot shall be announced and posted for Convention before voting begins on the next ballot and after a final election and shall be part of the public record of Convention.

Nominees for elections for Deputies to General Convention and the Provincial Synod and the Standing Committee, shall be filed with the Secretary not less than seven (7) days before Convention convenes.

In every election where more persons are nominated than are to be elected, the balloting shall be:

A. On each ballot, the nominee(s) receiving the highest number of votes, but not less than a majority of valid ballots cast, shall be declared elected. At a Convention to elect a bishop, an election shall be declared only when a nominee receives a majority of valid ballots cast in both the clergy and lay orders, but not less than a majority of valid ballots cast in each order, on the same ballot. A ballot on which there is indicated a clear preference by the voter, in the sole judgment of the Head Teller, to vote for at least one person and not more than the number of persons to be elected on the ballot shall be a valid ballot.

B. If any office remains to be filled after the first ballot, second and subsequent ballots shall be taken. On each later ballot, the number of nominees shall be reduced by one-half, but such reduction shall always provide for two more nominees than offices to be filled. In the event of a single vacancy, the number of nominees shall be reduced to two. Depending upon the distribution of votes, the presiding officer may, on the advice of the Chief Judge of Elections and with the approval of Convention, authorize the retention of three more names than offices to be filled.

C. In the event of an impasse, declared to be such by the Presiding Officer, the Convention may change or modify Sections A and B of this rule by a majority vote of members present, notwithstanding the requirement for a two-thirds vote to suspend a Rule of Order. Notwithstanding paragraph 9(B), where a special Convention is electing a bishop, a nominee may be removed from the ballot only at the nominee's request.

D. Whenever the Convention must fill a vacancy on the Standing Committee, the order of election shall be:

- (1) The member for a regular term;
- (2) The member or members for the longest vacancy to be filled;
- (3) The member or members for the remaining vacancy to be filled.

9. When a motion is made and seconded, it shall be stated by the Presiding Officer, and, if in writing, be read by the Secretary. After a motion is so stated or read, it shall be deemed in possession of the Convention, but may be withdrawn by the mover at any time before amendment or decision, with the consent of the second.

10. Every motion shall be reduced to writing if the Presiding Officer or any member requires it.

11. A. When a motion is pending, the following amendments shall be in order:

- (1) one amendment may be made to each independent or separable portion thereof; and
- (2) one motion to amend that amendment shall be in order,

and it shall be in order also:

- (3) to offer a further amendment by way of a substitute: and
- (4) one amendment thereto.

B. No proposition not germane to the subject under consideration shall be received under color of an amendment or a substitute. Neither the substitute nor its amendment shall be voted on (except to lay on the table) until the original matter is perfected. An amendment or a substitute may be withdrawn by the mover with the consent of his seconder before amendment thereof or before decision is had thereon.

C. The amendment or the substitute shall be debatable only when the main question is debatable.

D. The adoption of an amendment by way of substitute or otherwise shall not displace the main resolution, which, after being amended, shall be the question before the Convention.

E. The following questions cannot be amended:

- (1) the call for the Order of the Day,
- (2) an appeal from the decision of the Chair,
- (3) an objection to consideration of any question, or the motions
- (4) to adjourn,
- (5) to lay on the table,
- (6) to take from the table,
- (7) for leave to continue speaking,
- (8) to postpone indefinitely,
- (9) to reconsider,
- (10) to suspend the Rules,
- (11) to take up business out of order or
- (12) for leave to withdraw a motion.

F. The order of decision of a question before the Convention shall be:

- (1) amendment to the amendment of the main question;
- (2) amendment to the main question;
- (3) amendment to the substitute motion;
- (4) the substitute motion;
- (5) if the substitute fails, then the main question.

12. When a question is under debate no motion shall be received but to:

- (1) adjourn,
- (2) to lay on the table,
- (3) for the previous question,
- (4) to take at a certain time,
- (5) to commit or recommit,
- (6) to amend or substitute,

(7) to postpone to a certain day, or

(8) to postpone indefinitely,

which several motions shall have precedence in the order enumerated and be settled by a majority vote.

13. A motion for the previous question shall be put in this form: "Shall the previous question or questions before the Convention now be put?" If the previous question is voted, only the immediately pending questions before the Convention shall be put without debate. If at least three members have spoken consecutively in favor of or against the matter on the floor, and no member with a different position is seeking to speak, the Chair may declare the previous question called, terminate debate and proceed to voting on the matter.

14. The Presiding Officer, with the consent of the chair of the relevant legislative committee as to proposals referred to a legislative committee, may group one or more legislative actions, including, but not limited, to resolutions, Constitutional and Canonical amendments, budget resolutions, elections and ratifications of appointments, for action on a Consent Calendar. The Consent Calendar shall be voted on in one vote and approval of the Consent Calendar shall be deemed the equivalent of a two-thirds vote to approve each item on the Consent Calendar. A negative vote on the Consent Calendar rejects all the proposals on the Consent Calendar. Notice of the proposed Consent Calendar shall be given to all delegates not less than three (3) days before Convention convenes. Any item placed on the Consent Calendar may be removed from the Consent Calendar by (a) the Presiding Officer, (b) the chair of the relevant legislative committee as to proposals referred to that legislative committee, (c) the proposer(s) of the action, or (d) any three (3) delegates.

15. A motion to adjourn or lay on the table, shall always be in order and shall be decided without debate.

16. When two or more members of Convention rise at once, the Presiding Officer shall decide who is entitled to the floor.

17. Except by leave of the Convention, no member shall speak more than twice in the same debate, nor longer than two minutes at one time. No applause shall be permitted when a question is being debated.

18. The vote on all questions shall be taken by orders whenever as many as five (5) members request it.

19. Reports of all committees shall be in writing. Statistical and other reports of officers and committees which require no action by Convention may be read by title only, and any report may be read in part only when the Presiding Officer shall, without obligation, so direct, or when the Convention shall so require.

20. No member shall absent himself from the meetings of the Convention without leave, unless the member is sick, injured or otherwise unable to attend.

21. All persons elected as officials of the Diocese by the Convention or by the Executive Board of the Convention, Presidents of the Regions, and members of the Executive Board-elect who will take office at the conclusion of the regular meeting of Convention, shall by virtue of their respective offices, be entitled to a seat and voice, but no vote, at all meetings of the Convention.

22. These rules may be amended or special orders for the conduct of business adopted at any time by a two-thirds majority of the members present.

23. In all matters not specifically covered by these Rules of Order or by the Constitution and Canons of the Diocese, Robert's Rules of Order, Revised, shall govern the Convention in all cases to which they are applicable.

24. The Journal of Convention shall be posted electronically by September 30 in the year following Convention or sixty (60) days after the Diocese's receipt of the audits of the Diocesan accounts, whichever date is earlier.

25. Rules in force: At the meetings of the Convention, the rules and the orders of the previous meeting shall be in force until they are amended or repealed by the Convention.

7/31/24