

ROBERT'S RULES OF ORDER DEFINITIONS

Meeting Rules Made Easy



“ROBERT’S RULES” DEFINITIONS

1. A Motion

A motion is a formal proposal that helps form and improve decision making processes. Usually this starts with the phrase “*I move*”. For example, “*I move, we invest in more technology tools.*” This then opens up the motion for debate and discussion.

2. To ‘Second’

To second a motion means that another member agrees with the motion and would also like for it to be considered. For example, they would say, “*I second that motion.*”

To second a motion does not mean that you agree with the motion. You simply agree that the motion is worthy of conversation, debate, and robust discussion. For example, you could second a motion and then theoretically, vote to defeat that motion.

3. Amendment

An amendment can be added to a motion before it can be voted. And there are a few ways that a motion can be amended.

You can amend a motion by removing words, adding words or swapping words, which is removing and adding a new word in its place. You could substitute a paragraph for another. However, it is not possible to amend a motion simply by rejecting it.

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4. A Quorum

A quorum is the minimum number of voting members who need to be present for any business to be conducted in the name of the group.

It is important to check your bylaws before your board meetings to determine what constitutes a quorum – how many voting members you need at that meeting.

The quorum is generally a majority of voting members, and it's not possible to take votes on business unless the quorum is there.

Point to note: The non-voting members count only in discussion, but not in voting. So if you have a number of non-voting members, but not enough voting members to constitute a quorum, then the meeting would not be properly constituted, and you would either have to reschedule or wait until you actually have a quorum.

5. Board Chair

The Chair is the senior elected officer who presides at board meetings, sometimes the Chair is also referred to as the president.

It is the Chair's responsibility to lead meetings, but they cannot debate or submit a motion.

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6. Bylaws

Bylaws are the foundational rules that help your organization run effectively. And the purpose of bylaws is to guide the board's actions and decisions in a meaningful and valuable way.

Bylaws are in place to protect the organization from potential issues by setting clear guidelines and rules about authority, rights, and expectation among the board and employees. For example, bylaws would include rules about size and function of the board, basic guidelines for voting, meeting and minute guidelines, how to elect and appoint directors and more.

7. Board Officer

Officers are members of the group that hold extra duties and responsibilities.

They're often sitting members of the group. This means they can make motions, discuss and vote. The only exception to this rule is when an officer turns into a President or a Chairperson.

8. Board Committee

A board committee is a group of people appointed or elected to make decisions for your organization. An ongoing committee is established by the board and reports to it, sometimes referred to as a board statutory.

It frequently deals with responsibilities outlined in the bylaws or enabling legislation of the organization.

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