

Amendments to the Constitution and Canons

~~Strikethrough words~~ are sections to be omitted. Underlined words are sections to be added.

C-6 RESOLUTION to Amend Rules of Convention (Effective January 1, 2022)

Resolved by the 227th Annual Convention of the Diocese of Virginia that the Rules of Order for Conventions occurring after January 1, 2022 shall contain the following provisions, to be added at the appropriate places when rules for such conventions are posted:

1. **Open Meetings.** The meetings of Convention and the hearings by Committees of Convention shall be open to watch for members of the diocese, for the public, and for the press.
2. **Amendments to Constitution and Canons.** The Committee on Constitution and Canons shall conduct an open hearing not less than fourteen (14) days before the day votes are scheduled at Convention and shall make its report, including any text amending the Constitution or Canons, not less than seven (7) days before the day votes are scheduled at Convention. Notice of the open hearing shall be announced at least six weeks prior to the scheduled opening day of Convention.

Any delegate proposing a first-degree amendment to the Committee's proposed canonical or constitutional language 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 proposed votes on the Committee's recommended canonical or constitutional changes. 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 proposed votes shall be in order unless the subject matter of the amendment is germane to a timely filed first-degree amendment.

3. **Resolutions and Amendments to Them.** Committee on Resolutions shall conduct an open hearing at or not less than fourteen (14) days prior to the day votes are scheduled at Convention and shall make its report not less than seven (7) days before the day votes are scheduled at Convention. Notice of the open hearing shall be announced at least six weeks prior to the scheduled opening day of 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 proposed votes on the Committee's recommended resolution. 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 proposed votes 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.

4. **Budget Committee and Budget Amendments.** The Committee on Budget shall conduct a hearing not less than fourteen days prior to the day votes are scheduled at Convention. Notice of the open hearing shall be announced at least six weeks days prior to the Convention. Committee revisions to the proposed budget shall be posted seven days before the day votes are scheduled at Convention.

5. **Diocesan Journal Posting Date.** The Journal of Convention shall be posted electronically by September 30 in the year following Convention, or 60 days after Diocesan receipt of the audits of Diocesan accounts, whichever date is earlier.

6. **Posting of Election Results.** When Convention holds a contested election for office, the numerical results of each ballot shall be announced and posted for Convention before voting begins on the next ballot and shall be part of the public record of Convention.

Explanation: These amendments provide for:

- (1) **Open meetings.**
- (2) **More time for the Constitution and Canons, Resolutions, and Budget Committees** to consider the testimony provided at hearings and to make appropriate amendments
- (3) **Seven days** advance notice of proposed changes by the committees so that delegates have adequate time to consider the changes.
- (4) **Forty-eight hours advance posting of amendments** to the committee texts of canonical changes and resolutions, so that delegates will have adequate time to consider the merits of such changes.
- (5) **Diocesan Journal Posting by September 30 of the following year.**
- (6) **Posting of Election Results in contested elections.**

These amendments are offered to make our proceedings more transparent to our people. Thus, the amendments confirm that Convention proceedings are open, that the Journal of Convention must be published before the next convention meets, and that election results are posted in contested elections before the next ballot is taken. These changes also help assure accountability and compliance with the canons, such as the requirement that parishes submit audits of their accounts annually to the Diocese.

The Task Force learned from polling our diocesan convention delegates that there is a very strong preference for much more time to consider committee amendments to proposed canonical changes and resolutions. These poll results also show a strong preference for first-degree amendments to the committee's proposal to be posted at least 48 hours before votes, so that delegates can carefully read and consider these issues.

We assemble about 500 clergy and lay leaders for Convention, a big investment in time and money to assure we carefully address the important business of this Diocese. Accountability and transparency require us to provide our delegates (and people in our congregations) adequate notice of the precise terms of what delegates will consider and vote upon.

Respectfully submitted,

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Lay Delegate

Christ Church, Alexandria
Chair, Virtual Governance Task Force, on behalf of the Task Force