



# Democratic Rules of Order

*for the*

## Wisconsin Balance of State Continuum of Care

### The Rules

- The meeting will be run democratically. The final authority is the will of the meeting attendees.
- There will be a formal Chair. This will be the President of the WI Balance of State CoC. In their absence it will be the Vice-Chair. The Chair will facilitate discussion and may not participate in the discussion.
- The Chair will confirm a quorum.
- To address the group, the person must signal the Chair and wait to speak until they are acknowledged.
- To request a decision, someone must make a motion. The motion must be affirmative. You may not make a motion to *not* do something.
- A second to the motion, must be made or the motion fails. If nobody seconds the motion, the motion fails.
- Once seconded, the motion is open for discussion.
- Someone may amend the motion. The amendment needs to be seconded and must not negate the motion. If it is not seconded, the amendment fails. Discussion then turns back to the original motion.
- Someone may postpone or refer the motion.
- Voting will be by roll call vote of local coalitions. A motion passes with majority, which means that one more than half the votes cast are affirmative. A tie vote means the motion was defeated. If a different ratio is required, such as  $2/3$  or  $3/4$ , this must be stated in the motion.
- Good Order rules prevail
  - The mover will speak first.
  - One motion will be made at a time.
  - One person may not take up more than a fair share of time (no more than 3 minutes).
  - No interruptions will be permitted.
  - No side meetings during the motion and discussion; everyone should be quiet and paying attention.
  - Unless otherwise noted at the beginning of the meeting, no one may speak again on the same motion unless there is time available or unless that person is providing answers to questions.
  - Disrespectful comments toward someone will not be tolerated. Someone may disagree with an idea but must be respectful at all times.
- Point of Order

Approved by the WI Balance of State CoC Board of Directors, 9/25/18

Approved by the WI Balance of State CoC Membership, 11/09/18



- If someone believes that the meeting's good order is being breached, rise immediately and say 'Point of Order'. The Chair will allow the person to explain.
- The Chair will rule and if necessary call for a vote on the Point of Order.
- Suspend the Rules
  - If someone wishes to suspend the rule of allowing amendments to a motion, once the motion is made and seconded, during the discussion period, someone may make a motion to suspend the rule of allowing amendments to the motion. This motion must be seconded, be given a discussion period and then the suspension motion vote will be called. Once the suspension motion fails or passes, discussion continues on the original motion and the vote is called on for the original motion.

## Definitions and Other Components

- **Amendments** can delete, substitute, or add words to a motion on the floor but must not negate it or change its topic. An amendment cannot be amended.
- **Democratically:** A basic *democratic* process involves letting everyone vote on what they think is best for the whole group.
- **Fairness** and Good Order are the underlying principals
- The **final authority** is the majority of voting members, provided a quorum is present, subject always to any applicable higher law.
- In **formal meetings**, the Chair guides impartially without taking part in discussion. In informal meetings, the Chair participates as an equal participant.
- **Informal discussion:** A motion to informally discuss some topics, if passed, allows participants to consider an idea without the formality of a motion.
- **Majority:** A majority is the greater part, or more than half, of the total
- A **motion** should be worded affirmatively and must not conflict with any higher law. Each motion requires a seconder in order to progress.
- The **mover's privilege** allows the mover to reword or withdraw the motion provided there is a seconder and not more than one-person objects.
- **Postpone, Refer:** A motion can be postponed to an indefinite or a specific future occasion or referred to a committee for further study.
- **Quorum:** The minimum number of voting members that must be present at any of its meetings to make the proceedings of that meeting valid
- **Ratify a previous decision:** A decision exceeding the authority of a person, committee or meeting can be ratified at a later meeting.
- **Rescind, Reconsider:** A previous decision can be rescinded or reconsidered by the participants at any appropriate time.
- **Voting** will be conducted by voice roll call. For a motion to pass, a quorum must be present and more than half the votes cast must be affirmative.
- **Voting member** is the person designated from the local coalition to cast a vote on behalf of the local coalition

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