

Parliamentary Law

What is parliamentary procedure?

Parliamentary procedure, or parliamentary law, refers to *rules of democracy*—that is, the commonly accepted way a group of people come together, present and discuss possible courses of action, and make decisions.

Parliamentary procedure also defines what duties people typically have when they are elected the president, secretary, or treasurer of an organization.

Fundamentally, parliamentary procedure defines how groups of people, no matter how formal or informal, can most effectively meet and make decisions in a fair, consistent manner—and make good use of everyone’s time.

While parliamentary procedure cannot guarantee that every member of an organization is pleased with the outcome of a decision, it aims to ensure that every member is satisfied by the manner in which the decision was made, and that the organization makes decisions efficiently but with consideration for every member’s opinion.

What is a parliamentarian?

A parliamentarian, or parliamentary procedure consultant, is an expert in interpreting and applying the “Rules of Order” for meetings. These rules, such as *Robert’s Rules of Order Newly Revised*, enable groups to efficiently and fairly discuss and determine actions to be taken.

A parliamentarian’s main function is to give advice on parliamentary procedure to the president, officers, committees, and members or a group or organization. Parliamentarians also have knowledge of the nomination and election process, which can be of great assistance in close or difficult elections.

Some of the ways a parliamentarian can assist organizations include:

- Convention Parliamentarian
- Bylaws Consultant
- Bylaws Amendment or Revision Author
- Advisor to the Officers and Board of Directors
- Expert Witness
- Professional Presiding Officer
- Trainer in Parliamentary Procedure
- Presiding Officer Trainer
- Election Supervisor
- Planning Meeting Strategist
- Script Writer

What is Robert’s Rules of Order?

The 11th edition of *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised* is the current edition of the most widely used parliamentary authority and reference for meeting procedure and business rules in the English-speaking world. Members of the National Association of Parliamentarians and the Florida State Association of Parliamentarians maintain professional expertise in this parliamentary authority.

How can I find a parliamentarian to help me?

To contact a professional parliamentarian to help your organization conduct business more efficiently or solve a challenging problem, use the Find a Parliamentarian feature on the home page of this website.