



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION
OF PARLIAMENTARIANS®

Body of Knowledge

Beginner, Intermediate, and Advanced Levels

Approved by the NAP Board of Directors on January 27, 2026

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Beginner

Setting the Standards for Beginning Students of Parliamentary Procedure

Beginning education is directed at ordinary members of a voluntary society and should cover all aspects of parliamentary procedure needed to participate fully in meetings of an assembly or a committee.

I. Beginner Level — Foundational Parliamentary Knowledge

1. Understanding Meetings and Participation

- 1.1. Understand the purpose and structure of meetings.
- 1.2. Define quorum and its importance to conducting business.
- 1.3. Identify the actions that may and may not be taken without a quorum.
- 1.4. Identify the standard order of business.
- 1.5. Understand how an agenda is adopted and amended.
- 1.6. Recognize the roles of the presiding officer, secretary, and members.
- 1.7. Describe how to obtain recognition and make motions.
- 1.8. Understand basic decorum and rights in debate.
- 1.9. Describe how action may be taken by unanimous consent.

2. Making and Handling Motions

- 2.1. Define a motion and its purpose.
- 2.2. Identify main, subsidiary, privileged, and incidental motions.
- 2.3. Recognize the six steps in handling a motion.
- 2.4. Understand how to move and amend a main motion.
- 2.5. Understand precedence and the concept of yielding.
- 2.6. Describe when a motion is out of order or dilatory.
- 2.7. Recognize how to draft a primary amendment.
- 2.8. Recognize how to present a committee report with a recommendation.

3. Voting, Nominations, and Elections

- 3.1. Define types of votes—majority, two-thirds, plurality.
- 3.2. Know common voting methods—voice, show of hands, ballot.
- 3.3. Recognize procedures for nominations and elections.
- 3.4. Understand the purpose and function of tellers' reports.
- 3.5. Identify how results are announced and recorded in minutes.

4. Organizational Rules and Documents

- 4.1. Identify types of rules: bylaws, special rules, standing rules, and customs.
- 4.2. Understand the relationship between an organization's bylaws and its parliamentary authority.
- 4.3. Understand how bylaws may be amended and the importance of previous notice.

- 4.4. Recognize the basic structure of governing documents including the standard organization of bylaws.
- 4.5. Understand how to raise a parliamentary inquiry, point of order, and an appeal from the decision of the chair.
- 4.6. Identify the vote needed to adopt or amend bylaws, special rules of order, and standing rules.

5. Committees and Boards

- 5.1. Understand the purpose of committees and boards.
- 5.2. Identify standing versus special committees.
- 5.3. Describe how committees are appointed and how they report.
- 5.4. Recognize the responsibilities of committee chairs and secretaries.
- 5.5. Understand the rules of debate in committees and boards.

6. Professionalism and Ethical Conduct

- 6.1. Understand the role of a parliamentarian.
- 6.2. Identify the importance of neutrality and impartiality.
- 6.3. Recognize the Code of Professional Responsibility for Parliamentarians.

Intermediate

Setting the Standards for Intermediate Students of Parliamentary Procedure

Intermediate education is directed at Registered Parliamentarians and covers all aspects of parliamentary procedure needed to begin advising organizations and clients.

II. Intermediate Level — Applied Parliamentary Skills

1. Advanced Conduct of Meetings

- 1.1. Prepare complicated agendas.
- 1.2. Manage orders of the day and special orders.
- 1.3. Maintain order and fairness while presiding.
- 1.4. Apply rules for electronic and hybrid meetings and understand the limitations of such meetings.
- 1.5. Handle points of order and appeals.
- 1.6. Prepare, approve, and correct minutes accurately.
- 1.7. Understand how a minutes approval committee functions
- 1.8. Understand the different records an organization keeps.
- 1.9. Understand the rules of debate, how debate is conducted, and which common motions are debatable.
- 1.10. Maintain impartiality when presiding over a meeting.
- 1.11. Understand the differences among various types of meetings.

2. Proficient Use of Motions

- 2.1. Demonstrate understanding of precedence and ranking of motions.
- 2.2. Apply rules for Amend, Commit/Refer, Postpone Definitely, Limit/Extend Debate, and Previous Question.
- 2.3. Differentiate between primary and secondary amendments.
- 2.4. Handle the motions to Recess and Adjourn.
- 2.5. Advise on motions that bring a question again before the assembly—Reconsider, Rescind, and Amend Something Previously Adopted.
- 2.6. Explain germaneness and identify improper amendments.
- 2.7. Apply rules for Point of Order, Appeal, Suspend the Rules, Parliamentary Inquiry, and Request for Information.
- 2.8. Understand the concept of timeliness and precedential rulings.
- 2.9. Advise the chair on handling incidental motions during debate or voting.

3. Nominations, Voting, and Elections

- 3.1. Conduct nominations from the floor and by committee.
- 3.2. Apply the rules for motions relating to nominations
- 3.3. Prepare and oversee ballot voting procedures.

- 3.4. Apply the rules for motions relating to voting and the polls.
- 3.5. Assist in preparing teller's reports and resolving election challenges.
- 3.6. Advise on voting rights, abstentions, and recusal.
- 3.7. Implement electronic or absentee voting consistent with governing documents.
- 3.8. Understand rules regarding nominations and elections contained in bylaws.
- 3.9. Apply the rules for filling vacancies in officer and board of director positions.

4. Boards, Committees, and Governance

- 4.1. Advise on the differences among boards, executive committees, and assemblies.
- 4.2. Apply small board rules appropriately.
- 4.3. Recognize the authority and limitations of committees.
- 4.4. Prepare and deliver committee or board reports.
- 4.5. Advise ex officio members and manage vacancies.
- 4.6. Understand the duties, powers, and limitations of officers and board members.
- 4.7. Know the role of a parliamentarian in board and committee work.
- 4.8. Understand how to create goals for a board's or officer's term.

5. Bylaws and Governing Documents

- 5.1. Draft and amend bylaws using proper notice and format.
- 5.2. Understand the standard contents of bylaws and other governing documents.
- 5.3. Interpret and apply the principles of interpretation to ambiguous provisions.
- 5.4. Distinguish between procedural and substantive law in governance.
- 5.5. Ensure consistency across governing documents and higher authorities.
- 5.6. Advise on limitations on suspending the bylaws.
- 5.7. Understand the importance of consulting the bylaws and other governing documents when making decisions.

6. Professional Conduct and Teaching

- 6.1. Apply professional ethics in client work.
- 6.2. Write clear parliamentary scripts and minutes.
- 6.3. Draft a business plan and contracts for parliamentary services.
- 6.4. Teach basic workshops using adult learning principles.
- 6.5. Evaluate instructional effectiveness and participant engagement.

Advanced

Setting the Standards for Advanced Students of Parliamentary Procedure

Advanced education is directed at Professional Registered Parliamentarians and covers all aspects of parliamentary procedure needed to advise organizations and clients on complex issues of meeting management and parliamentary procedure.

III. Advanced Level — Expert Parliamentary Consulting

1. Advanced Meeting and Convention Procedures

- 1.1. Develop detailed meeting and convention scripts.
- 1.2. Advise presiding officers in large assemblies and conventions.
- 1.3. Handle credentials, standing rules, and program adoption at conventions.
- 1.4. Handle interrupting motions during all types of meetings.
- 1.5. Manage special sessions, mass meetings, and adjourned meetings.
- 1.6. Write advanced scripts for disciplinary trials and removal of officers.
- 1.7. Understand the relationship between meetings and sessions when it comes to multiday meetings.

2. Comprehensive Mastery of Motions

- 2.1. Understand the detailed rules relating to each motion contained in RONR.
- 2.2. Apply advanced distinctions between main, incidental main, and subsidiary motions.
- 2.3. Advise on less common motions including Postpone Indefinitely, Lay on the Table, Call for the Orders of the Day, Raise a Question of Privilege, Fix the time to Which to Adjourn, Object to Consideration of a Question, Division of a Question, Consider by Paragraph or Seriatim, Request to be Excused from a Duty, Take from the Table, and Discharge a Committee.
- 2.4. Handle complex amendments including substitutes and secondary amendments.
- 2.5. Apply the rules governing filing blanks.
- 2.6. Recognize and prevent dilatory or improper motions.
- 2.7. Interpret renewability and exhaustion of orders for debate or the Previous Question.

3. Governance, Legal Integration, and Discipline

- 3.1. Review and revise bylaws and standing rules for compliance and clarity.
- 3.2. Apply principles of interpretation to complex or conflicting rules.
- 3.3. Advise on the effect of higher authorities—statutory law, parent bodies, and incorporation status.
- 3.4. Guide clients through mergers, consolidations, and dissolutions.
- 3.5. Provide clients with scripts for complex situations including adopting bylaws, amending bylaws, bylaws revisions, and organizational mergers, consolidations, and dissolutions.
- 3.6. Advise boards and committees on continuing business and procedural integrity.

- 3.7. Apply the various rules and procedures relating to disciplinary procedures including censuring a member and removing an officer from their position.

4. Consulting and Professional Practice

- 4.1. Conduct comprehensive client consultations pre-meeting, during the meeting, and post-meeting.
- 4.2. Prepare formal written parliamentary opinions.
- 4.3. Draft and use complex parliamentary scripts for conventions and disciplinary actions.
- 4.4. Manage professional ethics and confidentiality in consulting.
- 4.5. Prepare contracts, proposals, and invoices consistent with ethical practice.

5. Teaching

- 5.1. Design and deliver advanced instructional workshops for all levels.
- 5.2. Construct performance-based assessments and learning activities for participants.
- 5.3. Evaluate instructional design and participant outcomes using adult learning theory.

6. Professionalism and Ethics

- 6.1. Apply the Code of Professional Responsibility for Parliamentarians to the practice of parliamentary procedure at all levels of complexity.