RULES AND ORDERS

of the

House of Representatives

State of Vermont

As amended January 7, 2026
Prepared by the Clerk of the House

RULES AND ORDERS OF
THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

I
ORGANIZATION

1. Representatives' credentials, in the form of their certificates of election, are presented to the Secretary of State in accordance with law before ten o'clock in the forenoon of the first Wednesday next after the first Monday of January following their election.

2. (a) The Secretary of State shall make a roll by districts of the members whose credentials shall have been received and shall, at ten o'clock on that day, as presiding officer, call the House to order and call the names of the members on the roll. When a quorum of the House appears, the Secretary of State shall direct the House to a choice of Speaker by ballot. The Speaker so elected shall take the chair and the duties of the Secretary of State in the organization of the House shall cease.

(b) The House shall then elect a Clerk, who shall be sworn to the faithful discharge of the duties of the office.

3. (a) The Representatives who are present shall each take and subscribe the following oath, which shall be administered to them by the Clerk:

"I, ..., do solemnly swear (or affirm) that as a member of this Assembly, I will not propose, or assent to, any bill, vote or resolution, which shall appear to me injurious to the people, nor do nor consent to any act or thing whatever, that shall have a tendency to lessen or abridge their rights and privileges, as declared by the Constitution of this State; but will, in all things, conduct myself as a faithful, honest Representative and guardian of the people, according to the best of my judgment and ability. (If an oath) So help me God. (If an affirmation) Under the pains and penalties of perjury.

"I do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will be true and faithful to the State of Vermont, and that I will not, directly or indirectly, do any act or thing injurious to the Constitution or Government thereof. (If an oath) So help me God. (If an affirmation) Under the pains and penalties of perjury.

"I do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I did not at the time of my election to this body, and that I do not now, hold any office of profit or trust under the authority of Congress. (If an oath) So help me God. (If an affirmation) Under the pains and penalties of perjury.

"I do further solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will support the Constitution

of the United States. (If an oath) So help me God. (If an affirmation) Under the pains and penalties of perjury."

(b) Representatives who are not present to take this oath shall, when they are present, take and subscribe the oath, which shall be administered to them by the Clerk in the State House.

4. On the first day of the session, the Speaker shall appoint the members on the part of the House of the Joint Canvassing Committee, as prescribed in the Joint Rules of the Senate and House of Representatives.

5. Immediately upon calling the House to order for the meeting next after the elections of Speaker and Clerk, the Speaker shall direct the Sergeant at Arms to cause all seats to be vacated and all members of the House to retire from the Representatives' Hall. A member who was also a member of the preceding session shall have the right to retain the seat occupied during that session or to select any seat not retained or previously selected. Thereafter, a member who was a member of a session other than the preceding session shall have the right to select any seat not retained or previously selected. The Clerk shall then place in a box prepared for that purpose, ballots designating by name the remaining representatives of the several districts in the State, and shall proceed to draw therefrom, impartially, one ballot at a time, until all are drawn. As each ballot is drawn, the member designated by the ballot shall be called into the Hall by the doorkeeper and shall personally, if present, or may by proxy, if absent, select a seat, and shall occupy it during the drawing, either personally or by proxy. When a member's name is called and that member is not present in person or by proxy, the member whose name is next drawn shall have preference.

6. As soon as possible after the beginning of the session, the Speaker shall appoint the members on the part of the House of the joint standing Committee on Joint Rules and the standing committees of the House, but any appointment so made may, on a motion of a member, be overruled by the House, in which case the House shall, on nomination of a member, immediately fill the vacancy.

II
OF SESSIONS OF THE HOUSE

7. The House shall meet every day (Sundays excepted) at nine o'clock and thirty minutes in the morning, unless otherwise ordered.

8. As used in these rules, "day" refers to a day on which the House meets, unless the context clearly indicates otherwise.

9. If a quorum is not present within fifteen minutes after the time to which the House was adjourned or whenever a roll call or a division of the House discloses no quorum present and voting, the presiding officer or those present

may send the Sergeant at Arms or other officer after the absentees to compel their attendance, or may adjourn.

III
OF MEMBERS

10. A member shall not be absent without leave of the House from meetings of the House unless sick or otherwise necessarily detained. A member shall not be absent, without leave of the Chair, from committee meetings unless sick or otherwise necessarily detained.

11. A member shall not speak audibly to another, or otherwise interrupt the business of the House, while the public papers are being read, or while a member is speaking in debate. A member shall not speak in debate unless standing at the member's place or at the public address system. However, if unable to stand, a member shall not be required to do so in order to speak.

11a. A member shall wear business professional attire in the House Chamber while the House is in session.

12. A member being called to order shall yield the floor. Every question of order shall be decided by the Speaker without debate, subject to an appeal by the House.

13. If a member calls another member to order for words spoken, the member shall immediately present to the Speaker in writing the words objected to.

14. Subject to the provisions of Rules 73, 74, and 75, it shall be the duty of a member to vote upon all questions decided by a roll call vote, voice vote, division of the House, or ballot.

IV
OF OFFICERS

15. The Speaker among other duties shall preserve order and in case of disorder may clear the galleries. The Speaker shall decide all questions of order and decisions shall be final unless a member immediately appeals and the appeal is sustained by a vote of the members present.

16. If the Speaker is absent when the House assembles for a meeting, or if the Speaker is presiding during a session and finds it necessary to retire from the chair, a member designated by the Speaker shall assume the chair and may perform all of the duties of the Speaker for not more than six days. If the member designated by the Speaker is absent, or if there has been no designation, the ranking member of the Committee on Rules shall perform the duties of the Speaker. In the event the Speaker is unable to resume the duties of the chair within six days, due to temporary disability, the House, after the expiration of

six days from the date the Speaker first left the chair, shall proceed to elect a speaker *pro tempore*, who shall then perform all of the duties of the Speaker, until the Speaker is once again able to resume the duties of the office. In the event of the death or resignation of the Speaker, the House shall proceed forthwith to elect a new Speaker.

17. Unless otherwise provided by the Constitution or by statute, the Speaker shall appoint all members of any committee of the House or members on the part of the House of any joint committee. Whenever the House orders the appointment of a committee, the Speaker shall be entitled to one recess of the House in which to make the appointment.

18. The Clerk shall be the reading clerk of the House. The Clerk may administer all oaths necessary for the proper functioning of the House or any of its committees.

19. The Clerk shall prepare the Journal and cause it to be printed. The Journal shall record the proceedings of the House, except when the House is acting in Committee of the Whole, including the titles of bills, proposed amendments, the names of the members and the votes that they give on every question decided by roll call, and such other matters as may be pertinent, except that devotional exercises and members' comments during debate shall not be recorded in the Journal. The Journal shall not be read except at the direction of the House.

20. The Clerk shall transmit to the Senate all messages, which shall be in writing, and which shall be either delivered to the Secretary of the Senate or read by the Clerk in the presence of the Senate in session.

21. From time to time, or as the Speaker may direct, the Clerk shall prepare and cause to be printed a statement showing the status of each bill and the work of the session and an up-to-date alphabetical index by abbreviated titles of all House bills with the number assigned to each. The Clerk shall assign an abbreviated title to Joint House resolutions and cause them to be printed in an alphabetical list with their numbers and date of introduction.

22. The Clerk shall serve until a successor is elected and has qualified.

23. The Assistant Clerks shall be sworn to the faithful discharge of their duties and either of them may, under the direction of the Clerk or in the absence of the Clerk, perform any of the duties of the Clerk.

24. A member elected by a caucus of the majority party shall be majority leader and a member elected by a caucus of the minority party shall be minority leader. For purposes of this rule and of Rule 25, the majority party shall be the party having the greatest number of members in the House and the minority

party shall be the party having the next highest number. Members elected to the House who are members of a third party may form a caucus as a party and elect a member of that caucus as caucus leader. The caucuses may elect such assistant leaders as they deem necessary.

V
OF COMMITTEES

25. At the beginning of each regular session, standing committees shall be appointed having the following names, number of members, and duties:

Committee	Members	To Consider Matters Relating to
Agriculture, Food Resiliency, and Forestry	8	Agriculture, food resiliency, climate change mitigation and adaptation, forestry and forest products, State parks and lands, and other similar policies.
Appropriations	11	Appropriating money from the State Treasury.
Commerce and Economic Development	11	Workforce development and training programs, business development and formations, financial institutions, property and casualty, life, and captive insurance, securities, unemployment and workers' compensation insurance, consumer protection, and other similar policies.
Corrections and Institutions	11	Vermont's State bonding as it relates to the financing of State-owned properties, State preservation initiatives, climate change mitigation, and water quality; the Department of Corrections' role in the criminal justice system; and other similar policies.
Education	11	Education, libraries, literary and scientific subjects, and other similar policies.
Energy and Digital Infrastructure	9	Energy, utilities, telecommunications, broadband, information technology, cybersecurity, and other similar policies.

Environment	11	Conservation and development; climate change mitigation; land resources, air, water, fish, and wildlife; solid waste management; and other similar policies.
General and Housing	11	Housing, labor, equity and inclusion, and all matters relating to subjects for which there is no other appropriate committee.
Government Operations and Military Affairs	11	The structure, organization, and oversight of State, local, county, and regional government, and municipal corporations; the administration of public safety; compensation and retirement benefits for public officials and employees; elections and reapportionment; liquor and lottery; military affairs; public records and open meetings; and other similar policies.
Health Care	11	Health care, defined as an integrated, holistic system of care that includes policy development with and oversight of the Vermont Departments of Health Access, of Mental Health, and of Health, and health equity, health insurance, health care delivery improvement, and other similar policies.
Human Services	11	Improving the well-being of individuals and families, including children, individuals with disabilities, and older Vermonters; oversight of programs and services provided by the Vermont Departments for Children and Families, of Disabilities, Aging, and Independent Living, and of Health; and other similar policies.
Judiciary	11	Civil rights and civil liberties, the criminal and civil justice systems, violence prevention and public safety, and other similar policies.

Rules (Consisting of the Speaker, who shall be chair ex officio; three members of the majority party, the leader, the assistant leader, and one member at large elected by the majority party; and three members from the minority party, the leader, assistant leader, and one member at large elected by the minority party. The Speaker shall designate a Vice Chair, who shall be ranking member.)	7	The rules of the House and to expediting the business of the House, including the final adjournment thereof.
Transportation	11	All air and surface transportation, the registration, regulation, and licensing of transportation operations and users, the construction and maintenance of thoroughfares, the impact of the transportation sector on air pollution and climate change, and other similar policies.

Ways and Means	11	The revenue of the State, and which shall report the amount of taxes necessary to be raised for the support of the government and inquire what measures, if any, ought to be adopted, the better to equalize the public burdens, and otherwise improve the financial concerns of the State, including all matters relating to taxation, local or otherwise, and all matters relating to the grand list, and other similar policies.

26. The member first named on each committee shall be Chair thereof, and the member secondly named shall be Vice Chair. If either dies or resigns, the member next in rank in the order named shall become Chair, or Vice Chair, until the Speaker appoints a new Chair or Vice Chair, or both. Each committee, at its first meeting, shall choose a clerk from its members.

27. Committees shall meet upon call of the Chair. However, no committee may meet while the House is sitting without leave of the House.

28. The introducer of a bill, and all other persons who so request of the Chair or Clerk of the Committee, shall be given an opportunity to be heard upon a measure referred to a committee.

29. The Clerk of each committee shall keep a record of reference of each bill considered, of the persons requesting to be heard, of the notice, if any, that is given, of the dates when the bill is considered, and the vote of each member of the committee thereon. It shall be the general practice of committees to keep recorded and written records of committee proceedings. Lapses in the record of a committee proceeding shall not have the effect of either undermining or establishing committee intent on a bill. The record shall be open to the inspection of the public, and at the close of the session shall be delivered to the Secretary of State.

30. Upon the request of any House member, the Committee on Rules may require a committee to report out a bill at a time certain.

31. One member of a committee shall be designated by the Chair to report a bill or a resolution for the committee. When so designated, that member shall deliver the report to the Clerk of the House, sign the report, and be responsible for its accuracy, the propriety of its language, and its explanation when it is considered by the House.

VI
OF THE CALENDAR

32. (a) The Clerk shall prepare a daily calendar of business and cause it to be printed. It shall contain:

(1) The "Orders of the Day" or Action Calendar, which shall include the numbers and titles of all bills and resolutions that, on the preceding day, had been called up, ordered to a third reading, placed on the Calendar for notice, or for action under Rule 52;

(2) "Bills for Notice" or Notice Calendar, which shall include the numbers and titles of all bills and resolutions reported by committees, with any proposed amendments, with the vote of the committee indicated, and with reference to the pages of the House and Senate Journals where the record of prior action on each bill or resolution may be found, all of which shall appear for notice for one day before the bills or resolutions shall be read the second time;

(3) Other matters in order for consideration;

(4) Matters ordered to lie;

(5) Pertinent memoranda, announcements, or committee schedules, as the Committee on Rules may authorize or prescribe.

(b) In each division of the Calendar, bills and resolutions shall be arranged numerically. Whenever possible, the Calendar shall print proposed amendments to existing law so as to show new matter proposed, old matter retained, and old matter to be omitted.

33. No bill may be read the second time until it has been on the Calendar by number and title for notice with proposed amendments, if any, for one day, nor may action be taken on Senate proposals of amendment or reports of committees of conference until they have appeared on the Calendar for notice and in the Orders of the Day; nor may a bill be read the second or third time or passed or rejected, unless appearing in the Orders of the Day; nor may any rule be suspended for more than one sitting or be amended unless appearing in the Orders of the Day.

34. If a committee by a two-thirds vote of its members reports that a House bill or a House resolution treated as a bill ought not to pass, the action of the committee shall be noted on the Calendar on three successive days, but the bill or resolution shall not be read the second time unless a petition requesting that it be read a second time, signed by thirty members, is filed in the Office of the Clerk of the House within seven legislative days from the first day so noted, in which case the bill or resolution shall be placed on the Calendar for notice.

35. (a) When a bill or resolution treated as a bill carrying an appropriation or a bill or resolution treated as a bill affecting the revenue of the State or materially affecting the revenues of one or more municipalities is reported by a committee other than the Committee on Appropriations or the Committee on Ways and Means, respectively, the Speaker shall refer it, before second reading, to the Committee on Appropriations or the Committee on Ways and Means, as the case may be, if the bill or resolution had not previously been referred, committed, or recommitted to said committee, except in the case of a House bill or House resolution treated as a bill when the first committee by a two-thirds vote reports that the bill ought not to pass or the resolution ought not to be adopted. In that case, if the House votes that the bill or resolution be read the third time, the bill or resolution shall be referred before third reading to the Committee on Appropriations or the Committee on Ways and Means, as the case may be, which shall consider the bill or resolution and make such report as it considers advisable, at which time the bill or resolution shall proceed in the regular course as other bills or resolutions.

(b) When reports of two committees on the same bill or resolution are placed on the Calendar for action at the same time, the question shall be on the report of the committee that first considered the bill or resolution. But amendments recommended by the committees shall be disposed of first, those recommended by the committee that first considered the bill being acted on first.

36. The first hour of each day may be devoted to the reception and disposal of petitions, memorials and remonstrances, motions, resolutions, and reports of special committees; after which bills may be introduced, bills from the Senate referred, and bills referred under Rule 35.

37. The Orders of the Day shall be taken up, first disposing of the unfinished orders of the preceding day. It shall not be in order to interrupt the Orders of the Day with any other business, except a motion to adjourn, or a motion that when the House adjourns it be to a time certain, or to recess, or to receive messages from the Governor or from the Senate.

38. After entering upon the consideration of the Orders of the Day, the House may, by order or at the discretion of the Speaker, proceed with them in regular course as follows: Matters not giving rise to a motion or debate shall first be disposed of in the order in which they stand on the Calendar; after which the matters that were passed over shall be considered in like order and disposed of by the House.

39. Whenever a bill or resolution is laid on the table by order of the House, it may at any time, except during the Orders of the Day, be called up by a member and it shall be placed in the Orders of the Day of the succeeding day.

VII
OF BILLS, PROPOSALS OF CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT, AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

40. (a) During the first year of the biennium:

(1) Except with the prior consent of the Committee on Rules, no member may introduce a bill drafted in standard form unless the member submits the request to Office of Legislative Counsel on or before the last legislative day of January and approves the bill for public release on or before the fourth legislative day before the end of February.

(2) A member may submit a request to the Office of Legislative Counsel for a bill to be drafted in standard form relating to the adoption or amendment of a municipal charter or to the approval of a municipal merger at any time and may introduce such bill at any time.

(3) A member may submit a request to the Office of Legislative Counsel for a bill to be drafted in short form at any time and may introduce such a bill at any time.

(b) During the second year of the biennium:

(1) Except with the prior consent of the Committee on Rules, no member may introduce a bill drafted in standard form unless the member:

(A) submits the request to the Office of Legislative Counsel on or before December 5th;

(B) does not request any changes to the bill contents after January 15th; and

(C) approves the bill for public release with any cosponsors on or before January 31st.

(2) A member may submit a request to the Office of Legislative Counsel for a bill to be drafted in standard form relating to the adoption or amendment of a municipal charter or to the approval of a municipal merger at any time and may introduce such a bill at any time.

(3) Except with the prior consent of the Committee on Rules, no member may introduce a bill drafted in short form unless the member submits the request to the Office of Legislative Counsel on or before February 15th and approves the bill for public release on or before the second Friday after the annual Town Meeting Day.

(c) (1) During the first year of the biennium, a Committee may submit a request to the Office of Legislative Counsel for a bill to be drafted in

standard form at any time and may introduce such a bill at any time.

(2) During the second year of the biennium, except with the prior consent of the Committee on Rules, no committee may introduce a bill drafted in standard form unless it approves the bill for public release on or before the last legislative day of March, except for the Committees on Appropriations and on Ways and Means, which may submit a request to the Office of Legislative Counsel at any time and may approve the bill for public release at any time.

(d) For the purposes of this rule, a request to the Office of Legislative Counsel shall contain specific instructions as to the content of the bill sufficient to permit its drafting in accordance with Rules 41 and 42.

41. Bills drafted in standard form amending existing law, whenever practicable, shall be so prepared as to show the new matter proposed, old matter retained, and old matter to be omitted, and shall have the title of the bill and the name of the introducer printed at the beginning. The subject matter of a bill shall be briefly indicated in the title. If the House, in the course of considering a bill, amends the bill so that the title no longer accurately reflects the contents of the bill, the Clerk shall revise the title, after passage and before messaging the bill, so that the title reflects the action taken by the House.

42. (a) Each request for a bill drafted in standard form intended for introduction by any member of the House shall be first presented to the Office of Legislative Counsel, which shall draft the bill to achieve the introducer's intent in the correct form and expression required by these rules. In addition to the regular title, the Office of Legislative Counsel shall assign to each bill an abbreviated title, covering the subject matter of the bill to be printed in bold face type, and a statement of purpose. It shall also prepare an abbreviated subject of the text of each section of the bill to follow immediately the section number. After the Office of Legislative Counsel certifies the draft, it shall present the bill to the Clerk.

(b) Each request for a bill drafted in short form shall consist only of the name of the introducer, the subject, the title, and a general statement of purpose. All short form bills shall be presented to the Clerk for introduction in the manner of bills drafted in standard form. If any member elects to introduce a bill by request of any other person or organization, and directs that the request be designated on the bill, the bill shall be drafted in short form.

43. The Clerk shall prescribe the form of bills, specifying suitable margins and spaces, and requiring the lines of each page be numbered, and shall cause to be printed one original and a sufficient number of copies of each bill.

44. (a) The Clerk shall submit the original bill to the Speaker for examination, after which it shall be read the first time and by the Speaker

referred to the appropriate committee.

(b) Short form bills shall be drafted in standard form by the Office of Legislative Counsel only if requested by a majority vote of the committee to which the bill has been referred. A request by a committee to have a short form bill drafted in standard form may be for any reason it deems appropriate, and shall not, in itself, indicate an approval of the bill or an intention to act favorably on it.

(c) When a short form bill that was changed to standard form is reported by a committee, it shall appear on the Calendar for notice for two legislative days before being placed in the Orders of the Day.

45. No bill shall be passed unless it shall have had three readings, which shall be by title only. However, upon order of the House or at the direction of the Speaker, the second or third reading shall be in full or for such portion of the bill as specified.

46. Subject to Rules 34 and 35, if the bill is reported favorably, without recommendation, or adversely and is placed on the Calendar for notice, the question shall be: "Shall the bill be read the third time?" Pending that question, amendments from the floor shall be in order.

47. Subject to Rules 35 and 45, if the bill is reported favorably with recommendation of amendment, it shall be read the second time, and with recommended amendments incorporated therein if second reading is in full, and thereupon, the question shall be first upon the amendments recommended by the committee, after which the procedure shall be the same as in case of bills reported favorably without recommendation of amendment.

48. Except as provided in Rule 35, bills originating in and reported by committees shall be read for the first time and placed on the Calendar for notice on the succeeding day; the second succeeding day they shall be placed on the Calendar for second reading, after which they shall proceed in regular course as other bills.

49. A motion to amend after a third reading is not in order except by vote of the House. The request for leave to offer an amendment shall be accompanied by a statement of the proposed amendment, but the question upon the request shall be decided without debate.

50. A bill may be recommitted at any stage and when so recommitted it shall be, in substance, as last acted upon by the House. However, when reported by the committee, it shall proceed in the regular course as other bills.

51. A member may move that a committee be relieved of further consideration of a bill or resolution and, if the motion is decided in the

affirmative, the bill or resolution shall be placed on the Calendar for notice on the next legislative day. The motion may be that a committee be relieved of further consideration of a bill or resolution and that the bill or resolution be committed to another committee.

51a. During each biennium in which the House of Representatives is considering a proposal of amendment to the Vermont Constitution, the committee of jurisdiction shall conduct a public hearing prior to voting on the proposal and entering it on the Calendar, and the House shall not consider the proposal until the fifth day that it has appeared on the Calendar.

52. Joint resolutions shall be treated in the same manner as bills, except that joint resolutions expressing the sentiments of the General Assembly; relating to adjournment, other than final adjournment; relating to salaries or mileage of the officers or members of the General Assembly; and relating to joint assemblies may be adopted upon first reading. However, in the discretion of the Speaker, any joint resolution may be treated as a bill. Joint resolutions shall be printed in the Journal and they may in the discretion of the Speaker, and shall, upon vote of the House, be placed on the Calendar for action on the next day after being offered. To the extent applicable, a House resolution shall be so treated.

53. Joint resolutions of the two Houses shall not be used for the purpose of general legislation, but shall be in order for the purpose of expressing the sentiments of the Legislature, for authorizing the expenditure of funds appropriated to the General Assembly, for agreeing upon adjournments, and for other incidental purposes.

VIII
OF MOTIONS

54. Every motion shall be reduced to writing by the mover if the Speaker or a member so requests.

55. When a question is pending, no motion may be received except:

To adjourn,
To adjourn to a day certain,
To take a recess,
To lay on the table,
To postpone indefinitely,
To postpone to a day certain,
To commit,
To recommit,
To amend,
To reconsider,

which motions shall have precedence in the above order.

56. No motion is in order when the House is engaged in voting.

IX
OF AMENDMENTS

57. Amendments are in order from the floor at the second reading after the amendments, if any, recommended by the committees are disposed of by the House.

58. It is not in order to amend a Senate bill or resolution, but the motion shall be that the House propose to the Senate to amend.

59. Every amendment or proposal to the Senate to amend shall be submitted in writing.

60. The rejection of a motion to strike out and insert one proposition shall not preclude a motion to strike out and insert a different proposition, or a motion to simply strike out; nor shall the rejection of a motion simply to strike out prevent a subsequent motion to strike out and insert.

61. Subject to Rule 77, an amendment previously adopted may be amended, but not so as to substantially negate the amendment already adopted, except that when a committee report recommends amendment, that amendment shall be in order even though it negates one previously adopted.

62. If the Senate proposes to the House to amend, the question shall be: "Will the House concur in the Senate proposal of amendment?" But it shall be in order to move that the House concur in the Senate proposal of amendment with an amendment, or that the House refuse to concur and ask for a Committee of Conference.

63. If the Senate disagrees to a House proposal of amendment, the following motions shall be in order and shall be privileged in the following order: First, That the House recede; Second, That the House insist and ask for a Committee of Conference; Third, That the House adhere.

X
OF DEBATE

64. No member may speak more than twice on the same question without leave of the House, and members who have once spoken shall not again be entitled to the floor (except for the purpose of explanation) to the exclusion of another who has not spoken.

65. A motion to adjourn, to take a recess, to lay on the table, to recommit, to suspend the rules, to withdraw a motion, and to close debate shall be decided without debate.

66. In all cases, the member first arising (subject to the restriction in Rule 64) shall be entitled to the floor, and when two or more arise at the same time, the Speaker shall name the one who is to speak. However, if unable to stand, a member shall not be required to do so in order to be recognized or to address the Speaker.

67. If the question in debate contains more than one point, it shall be divided on demand of a member except that a motion to strike out and insert shall not be divided.

68. At any time in the course of debate a member may move: "That debate upon the pending question do now close," and the Speaker shall put the question to the House. If the motion is decided in the affirmative by a vote of three-fourths of the members present, debate shall be closed on the question. Or a member may move: "That debate on the whole question do now close," and if the motion be decided in the affirmative by three-fourths vote, debate shall be closed on the whole question, and no motion except privileged or incidental motions shall be in order until the main question is put and decided.

XI
OF VOTING

69. The alphabetical roll call shall be called upon any question if demanded by one member and sustained by at least four other members.

70. Explanations of votes will be allowed only after the roll call is complete and immediately before the result thereof is announced. Explanations shall be submitted immediately to the Clerk in writing. It is generally recommended that vote explanations should be infrequent and brief.

71. A division of the House shall be had upon order of the Speaker or upon demand of one member. If the vote be taken by division, a voting member who is unable to stand need not rise to express the member's vote but shall indicate the vote in some other manner.

72. No member or other person may remain by the Clerk's desk when the roll is being called.

73. When a vote is taken, every member present shall vote unless excused by the House; but no member may be compelled to vote who was absent when the question was stated from the Chair.

74. At the conclusion of the call of the roll, the alphabetical roll of the absentees will be called and, subject to Rule 73, members who were absent when their names were first called and who are now present shall then vote. Members not present when their names were called the second time shall not be permitted to vote, except by leave of the House. Members shall not be permitted to change

their votes after the results of a vote have been announced, except by leave of the House.

75. Members shall not be permitted to vote upon any question in which they are immediately or directly interested.

76. The Speaker shall not be permitted to vote except in cases of elections by ballot, or when the House is equally divided, or when the Speaker's vote, if given to the minority, will make the division equal. In case of an equal division, the question shall be lost.

XII
OF RECONSIDERATION

77. When the House takes a final vote upon any question, that question shall not again be in order during the same session in any form whatever except by way of reconsideration.

78. A motion for reconsideration shall not be in order until the next day. A motion to reconsider shall not be in order if made after the day following that on which the vote was taken. If the motion to reconsider is decided in the affirmative, further action on the bill or resolution shall be postponed until the end of the Orders of the Day of that day.

79. A motion to reconsider may be made only by a member who voted on the prevailing side of the question.

80. When the decision of a question has been reconsidered, the matter shall not be reconsidered again. Nor when a motion to reconsider has been rejected may that question be reconsidered, or a like motion be in order again.

XIII
MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS

81. When the reading of a paper is called for and it is objected to by a member, the question shall be determined by a vote of the House.

82. All petitions shall be referred to a committee without reading, unless the reading be ordered by the House.

83. On motion of a member, the House may resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole House on any pending question.

84. No person may be admitted within the well of the House except the Governor, Lieutenant Governor, State Treasurer, Secretary of State, Auditor of Accounts, Attorney General, members of the Senate, Justices of the Supreme Court, Superior Judges, and Senators and Representatives in Congress; former Governors, Lieutenant Governors, Justices of the Supreme Court, Superior

Judges, District Judges, and members of the General Assembly; District Judges and Attorneys of the United States, members of other state legislatures, the Secretary and Assistant Secretary of the Senate, Secretary of Civil and Military Affairs, and Executive Clerk; and other persons as the Speaker may allow.

85. Upon request of an introducer thereof, a bill or resolution may be withdrawn at any stage with the consent of the House, provided it has not been read the second time. No action on a motion to withdraw a bill or resolution may be taken until the next day, and the bill or resolution shall be placed in the Orders of the Day of the succeeding day.

86. The taking of pictures on the floor of the House and the machine recording of the proceedings during a session thereof are prohibited except by previous permission of the presiding officer. When permission is given, all equipment to be used must be placed where it will be used before the opening of the sitting involved. Making audio or video calls or allowing electronic devices to ring or send audible notifications in the House Chamber during a session thereof, is prohibited.

87. Use of the Hall of Representatives for other than statutory purposes may be authorized by the Committee on Rules, if the request for such use is made while the General Assembly is in session. If the request is made while the General Assembly is in adjournment for more than seven days, the Sergeant at Arms may authorize such use, with the permission of the Speaker.

88. A question of parliamentary procedure not covered by these House Rules shall be decided according to Mason's Manual of Legislative Procedure.

89. There shall be no smoking in the Hall of Representatives at any time.

90. It is the policy of the House to provide a professional work environment. All members and officers of the House are responsible for ensuring that each legislative employee and colleague enjoys a workplace free from discrimination and sexual harassment and that members conduct themselves in a manner that promotes public confidence through ethical behavior in accordance with the Vermont Constitution and the House Rules.

(a) Discrimination.

(1) The House of Representatives is opposed to and prohibits discrimination without qualification. This policy covers the conduct of Representatives and persons that either the Speaker's or the House Clerk's office employs.

(2) This policy protects Representatives, employees, and members of the public, including lobbyists, advocates, and members of the press,

from discrimination attributable to a Representative or an employee of these offices.

(3) The Rules Committee shall, at the beginning of the biennium, appoint a Discrimination Prevention Panel composed of five members of the House who shall serve until successors are appointed.

(4) The Panel shall elect a chair, adopt procedures to conduct its business to implement this rule, and shall provide copies of this rule and the adopted procedures to all members of the House and employees of the Speaker's Office and the House Clerk's Office.

(5) The Panel shall receive and investigate complaints of alleged discrimination made against members of the House or an employee of the Speaker's Office or House Clerk's Office. The Panel may meet remotely during adjournment to consider complaints as set forth in the Panel's adopted procedures. However, if the Panel conducts a hearing at which arguments are presented, evidence is presented, or witnesses are questioned, at least a quorum of the members of the Panel shall be physically present at the hearing. The Panel, at the discretion of the Panel Chair, may allow members, witnesses, or other necessary participants to participate using contemporaneous video or audio conference transmission from one or more different remote locations.

(6) The Panel shall advise individual members and provide training to all House members, employees, and interns on the scope of conduct constituting prohibited discrimination.

(7) The Panel, if it deems it necessary, may recommend to the House any disciplinary action against a member for a discrimination violation.

(8) These Rules prohibit retaliation against a person who complains, reports, or cooperates in an investigation of discrimination.

(9) Annually, on or before December 31, the Discrimination Prevention Panel shall report to the House the number of complaints filed, the disposition of those complaints, and the number of member requests for advice on discrimination inquiries.

(b) Ethics.

(1) Standards of ethical conduct. The House of Representatives, without qualification, is opposed to and prohibits violations of the Vermont Constitution and House Rules standards of ethical conduct. This policy covers the conduct of Representatives and persons employed in the Speaker's Office and House Clerk's Office.

(A) A member shall respect and comply with the law, these Rules, and any other standard of conduct applicable to the member in the performance of the member's duties in a manner that promotes public confidence in the integrity of the House.

(B) A member shall comply with 17 V.S.A. § 2414 (legislative candidate disclosure form).

(C) On or before the 10th day of the beginning of the biennium, each member shall submit to the Clerk a disclosure form prepared by the Clerk. The form shall be signed by the member, be publicly available on the official webpages of the House of Representatives and of the Clerk of the House, and may be updated. The form shall set forth, to the best of the member's ability, the following information applicable as of the date of submission:

(i) any boards, commissions, or similar entities that are regulated by law or that receive funding from the State on which the member serves; the member's position on the board, commission, or similar entity; and, except in the case of legislative appointments, whether the member receives any form of remuneration for that position; and

(ii) the member's employer.

(2) House Ethics Panel. The House Rules Committee shall, at the beginning of the biennium, appoint an Ethics Panel composed of five members of the House who shall serve until successors are appointed.

(A)(i) The Panel shall elect a chair, adopt procedures to conduct its business to implement the provisions of this ethics rule, and provide copies of the adopted procedures to all members of the House and persons employed in the Speaker's Office and House Clerk's Office.

(ii) The Panel may meet remotely during adjournment to consider complaints as set forth in the Procedure of the Panel. However, if the Panel conducts a hearing at which arguments are presented, evidence is presented, or witnesses are questioned, at least a quorum of the members of the Panel shall be physically present at the hearing. The Panel, at the discretion of the Panel Chair, may allow members, witnesses, or other necessary participants to participate using contemporaneous video

or audio conference transmission from one or more different remote locations.

(B) The Panel shall advise individual members and provide training to all members on House member standards of ethical conduct, including compliance with House Rule 75.

(C) The Panel shall receive and investigate complaints of alleged violations of House member standards of ethical conduct made against members of the House, and may investigate such alleged violations on its own initiative.

(i) The Panel, by a vote of at least four of its members, may subpoena the attendance and testimony of witnesses and the production of documents and other items as it deems necessary to conduct an investigation.

(ii) In the case of a Panel member's recusal or other absence during the Panel's review of a complaint, the House Rules Committee may appoint an ad hoc member to the Panel for that matter, upon request of the Chair of the Panel.

(D) If a complaint before the Panel or the pendency of an investigation by the Panel is generally known to the public, through independent sources, and the subject matter of the complaint is of broad public interest or speculation, and public confidence in the Panel's administration of these Rules or the Procedure of the Panel may be threatened because of lack of information concerning the status of the investigation, the Panel may issue a brief statement as it may deem appropriate to confirm the existence of the investigation, to clarify the procedural aspects of the investigation, and to explain that the respondent is entitled to due process.

(E) The Panel may recommend to the House any disciplinary action against a member for an ethical violation.

(F) The Panel shall issue a closure report regarding the final disposition of each complaint submitted to the Panel. The closure report shall not identify the complainant, respondent, or any other person by name, but shall contain a summary of the complaint allegations, the final disposition of the complaint, and the basis therefor. The Panel shall maintain its closure reports in a registry on its webpage.

(G) Except as provided in these Rules and in the Procedure of the Panel:

(i) Members of the Panel and Panel staff shall keep confidential any information received and any records produced or acquired in accordance with these Rules or the Procedure of the Panel, provided that the Panel may disclose information and records received under these Rules and the Procedure of the Panel as follows:

(I) to a court of competent jurisdiction pursuant to a court order;

(II) to a State or federal law enforcement agency in the course of the agency's investigation, provided that the agency agrees to maintain the confidentiality of the information or records provided;

(III) to the members or staff of the Discrimination Prevention Panel or the members or staff of the Sexual Harassment Prevention Panel to inform an investigation under these Rules by either Panel, provided that the members agree to maintain the confidentiality of the information or records provided.

(ii) All records produced or acquired in accordance with these Rules and the Procedure of the Panel are not subject to the Public Records Act.

(H) Annually, on or before December 31, the Panel shall report to the House the number of complaints filed, a general description of the topic of each complaint, the disposition of those complaints, and the number of member requests for ethical advice.

(3) Retaliation prohibited. These Rules prohibit retaliation against a person who complains, reports, or cooperates in an investigation of an ethics violation.

(c) Sexual Harassment.

(1) The House of Representatives is opposed to and prohibits sexual harassment without qualification. This rule covers the conduct of Representatives and persons that either the Speaker's Office or the Office of the Clerk of the House employs.

(2) This policy protects Representatives, employees, and members of the public, including lobbyists, advocates, and members of the press, from sexual harassment attributable to a Representative or an employee of these offices.

(3) The Rules Committee shall, at the beginning of the biennium, appoint a Sexual Harassment Prevention Panel composed of five members of the House who shall serve until successors are appointed.

(4) The Panel shall elect a chair, adopt procedures to conduct its business, adopt a policy against sexual harassment in compliance with 21 V.S.A.§ 495h and as necessary to implement this rule, and shall provide copies of this rule and the adopted procedures and policy against sexual harassment to all members of the House and employees of the Speaker's Office and the Office of the Clerk of the House.

(5) The Panel shall receive and investigate complaints of alleged sexual harassment made against members of the House or an employee of the Speaker's Office or the Office of the Clerk of the House. The Panel may meet remotely during adjournment to consider complaints as set forth in the Panel's adopted procedures. However, if the Panel conducts a hearing at which arguments are presented, evidence is presented, or witnesses are questioned, at least a quorum of the Panel members shall be physically present at the hearing. The Panel, at the discretion of the Panel Chair, may allow members, witnesses, or other necessary participants to participate using contemporaneous video or audio conference transmission from one or more different remote locations.

(6) The Panel shall advise individual members and provide training to all House members, employees, and interns on the scope of conduct constituting prohibited sexual harassment.

(7) The Panel, if it deems it necessary, may recommend to the House any disciplinary action against a member for a sexual harassment violation.

(8) These Rules prohibit retaliation against a person who complains, reports, or cooperates in an investigation of sexual harassment.

(9) Annually, on or before December 31, the Sexual Harassment Prevention Panel shall report to the House the number of complaints filed, the disposition of those complaints, and the number of member requests for advice on sexual harassment inquiries.

90a. Any State House intern, aide, employee, or assistant of a member, whether paid or unpaid, shall complete and file with the Sergeant at Arms a form prepared by the Clerk disclosing the person's name, contact information, and

other pertinent information. Each member shall ensure that his or her intern, aide, employee, or assistant complies with this rule.

90b. The House of Representatives shall apply the requirements of the federal Americans with Disabilities Act in regulating its procedure.

XIV

SUSPENSION OF THE RULES

91. No rule of the House may be suspended except by vote of three-fourths of the members present and voting.

XV
AMENDMENT OF RULES

92. Any amendment to the House rules shall require a vote of a majority of the members present.

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