

**Cleveland City Council**  
**PROPOSED PUBLIC COMMENT RULES AND PROCEDURES**  
Approved January 22, 2024

**All meetings of Cleveland City Council are open to the public.** Members of the public shall conduct themselves with reasonable decorum and are prohibited from engaging in any action or behavior that substantially interrupts, delays, or disturbs the due conduct of the proceedings of the Council; such conduct includes but is not limited to: handclapping, stomping of feet, whistling, making other loud noises, yelling or similar demonstrations. Any person who violates any of the above may be immediately removed from the Council Chamber.

**ALL SPEAKERS MUST PRE-REGISTER.** Any person wishing to participate in the Public Comment portion of a regular Council meeting shall register and provide the following information: name, ward/neighborhood or city of residency, phone number, email address, topic to be addressed, and whether the speaker is being paid to speak and/or is representing an organization. Registrations should be made using the form available on Council's website or at Council offices at City Hall.

**The registration form must be submitted by email, U.S. mail, personal delivery, or website.** Registrations to make public comment at any regular Council meeting must be submitted between Wednesday at 12:00 noon and Monday at 2:00 pm, before a regular 7:00 pm Council meeting. Registrations will only be accepted for making comments at the next regular meeting; registrations for any future meeting will not be accepted until the Wednesday before the meeting. Registrations with false or incomplete information will not be accepted.

**SPEAKING.** The presiding officer of the meeting will call on each speaker. Up to ten (10) speakers may speak at any meeting; each speaker shall speak for no longer than three (3) minutes. Speakers may not yield their time to other speakers.

- » Speakers shall only address the topic they registered to speak about.
- » Speakers comments shall not be frivolous or repetitive.
- » Speakers shall not use language that is obscene or likely to produce imminent unlawful action.
- » Speakers shall address all comments to the presiding officer.

**PRESIDING OFFICER WILL MAINTAIN ORDER.** The presiding officer of the meeting will maintain order and preside over the Public Comment period according to these Rules and Procedures for Public Comment.

The presiding officer is authorized to request assistance from law enforcement officers in the removal of a disorderly person when that person's conduct disrupts the due conduct of the meeting in violation of these Rules and Procedures. The presiding officer shall verbally warn a disorderly person before requesting that person's removal.

The presiding officer's enforcement of these Rules and Procedures shall be viewpoint neutral.

**SIGNS/FOOD PROHIBITED IN COUNCIL CHAMBER.** Signs, posters, banners, placards and similar items are strictly prohibited in the Council Chamber.

Food and/or drink is strictly prohibited in the Council Chamber.

**WRITTEN PUBLIC COMMENT AND PUBLIC COMMENT AT COMMITTEE.** These Rules and Procedures apply, as appropriate, to written public comments sent through the Council website and to public comment during Council committee hearings, which is permitted under Council Rule 2 which states in part: "Persons desiring to be heard by a committee of Council on a matter to be considered by that committee may request the committee Chair, in advance, for the opportunity to be heard. Approval of such request is at the discretion of the committee Chair."

**PERSONS NEEDING ASSISTANCE.** Any person seeking reasonable accommodations – such as for a disability or language assistance – must make the request at least three business days in advance. Council will make every effort to make reasonable accommodations.

**PUBLIC INFORMATION.** All registration information and all public comments at meetings of City Council and Council's Committees are considered public record.

At the Council meeting on January 22, 2024, Council Member McCormack made a motion to approve **File No. 86-2024, PUBLIC COMMENT RULES AND PROCEDURES**.

Cleveland City Council recognizes the importance of public participation in government and understands the value of public comment at Council Meetings so that members of the public can express themselves on matters of public interest.

The Council offers public comment according to Rules and Procedures which allow for the fair and orderly opportunity for the public to be heard.

The Council applies these Rules and Procedures to all speakers and does not discriminate based on the identity of the speaker, content of the speech, or viewpoint of the speaker.

At the same time, the Rules and Procedures take into account Council's significant interest in an orderly, efficient and productive meeting, and ensure that the important business of the Council is conducted and completed.

The motion was seconded by Council Member Bishop.

The motion was approved by roll call vote; Yeas 16, Nays 0.

Voting Yea: Council Members Bishop, Conwell, Gray, Griffin, Hairston, Harsh, Howse-Jones Jones, Kazy, Kelly, Maurer, McCormack, Polensek, Slife, Spencer, Starr.

Voting Nay: None.

Absent: Council Member Santana.