

## **HOUSE RULES**



**CHAPTER 1****Administration**

**H10-10. House officers.** (1) House officers include a Speaker, a Speaker pro tempore, majority and minority floor leaders, and majority and minority whips (section 5-2-221, MCA).

(2) A majority of representatives voting elects the Speaker and Speaker pro tempore from the House membership. A majority of each caucus voting nominates House members to the remaining offices, and those nominees are considered to have been elected by a majority vote of the House.

**H10-20. Speaker's duties.** (1) The Speaker is the presiding officer of the House, with authority for administration, order, decorum, and the interpretation and enforcement of rules in all House deliberations.

(2) The Speaker shall see that all members conduct themselves in a civil manner in accordance with accepted standards of parliamentary conduct. The Speaker may, when necessary, order the Sergeant-at-Arms to clear the aisles and seat the members of the House so that business may be conducted in an orderly manner.

(3) Signs, placards, or other objects of a similar nature are not permitted in the rooms, lobby, gallery, or on the floor of the House. The Speaker may order the galleries, lobbies, or hallway cleared in case of disturbance or disorderly conduct.

(4) The Speaker shall appoint and may remove the members of all standing and select committees not otherwise specified by law or rule. Prior to making committee assignments, the Speaker shall take into consideration the recommendations of the minority leader for minority committee assignments and the appointment of the minority vice chairmen. For the Rules Committee, the Speaker shall determine the total number of members and the party division, but each party shall appoint its own members. The Speaker may appoint an additional at-large member to the Rules Committee from either party.

(5) The Speaker shall sign all necessary certifications by the House, including enrolled bills and resolutions, journals (section 5-11-201, MCA), subpoenas, and payrolls.

(6) The Speaker shall arrange the agendas for second and third readings each legislative day. Representatives may amend the agendas as provided in H40-130.

(7) The Speaker is the chief officer of the House, with authority for all House employees. The Speaker may seek the advice and counsel of the Legislative Administration Committee regarding employees.

(8) The Speaker may name any member to perform the duties of the chair. If the House is not in session and the Speaker pro tempore is not available, the Speaker shall name a member who shall call the House to order and preside during the Speaker's absence.

**H10-30. Speaker-elect.** During the transition period between the party organization caucuses and the election of House officers, the Speaker-elect has the responsibilities and authority appropriate to organize the House (section 5-2-202, MCA). Authority includes approving pre-session expenditures.

**H10-40. Speaker pro tempore duties.** The Speaker pro tempore shall, in the absence or inability of the Speaker, call the House to order and perform all other duties of the chair in presiding over the deliberations of the House and shall perform other duties and exercise other responsibilities as may be assigned by the Speaker.

**H10-50. Legislative Administration Committee duties.** (1) The Legislative Administration Committee shall consider matters relating to legislative administration, staffing patterns, budgets, equipment, operations, and expenditures.

(2) The committee shall have authority to act in the interim to prepare for future legislative sessions. It may delegate specific duties to a legislative agency.

(3) The committee shall approve contracts for purchase or lease of equipment and supplies for the House, subject to the approval of the Speaker.

(4) The committee shall comprise the House membership of the Joint Legislative Administration Committee.

**H10-60. Employees.** (1) The Speaker shall appoint a Chief Clerk, Sergeant-at-Arms, and Chaplain, subject to confirmation of the House (section 5-2-221, MCA).

(2) The Speaker shall recommend to the Legislative Administration Committee employment of necessary staff.

(3) The secretary for a standing or select committee is generally responsible to the committee chair but shall work under the direction of the Chief Clerk.

(4) The Speaker and majority and minority floor leaders may each appoint a private secretary.

**H10-70. Chief Clerk's duties.** The Chief Clerk, under the supervision of the Speaker, is the chief administrative officer of the House and is responsible to:

- (1) supervise all House employees;
- (2) have custody of all records and documents of the House;
- (3) supervise the handling of legislation in the House, the House journal, and other House publications; deliver to the Secretary of State at the close of each session the House journal, bill and resolution records, and all original House bills and joint resolutions; collect minutes and exhibits from all House committees and subcommittees and deliver them, unbound, to the Legislative Services Division librarian, who shall arrange to have them copied in an archival format. A copy will be provided to the Legislative Services Division and the State Law Library of Montana. The Legislative Fiscal Analyst will receive a copy of the minutes from the appropriation committee and subcommittees. After copying, the original minutes will be delivered to the Montana Historical Society.

**H10-80. Sergeant-at-Arms duties.** The Sergeant-at-Arms shall:

- (1) under the direction of the Speaker and the Chief Clerk, have charge of and maintain order in the House, its lobbies, galleries, and hallways and all other rooms in the Capitol assigned for the use of the House;
- (2) be present whenever the House is in session and at any other time as directed by the presiding officer;
- (3) execute the commands of the House and serve the writs and processes issued by the authority of the House and directed by the Speaker;
- (4) supervise assistants to the Sergeant-at-Arms, who shall aid in the performance of prescribed duties and who have the same authority, subject to the control of the Speaker;
- (5) clear the floor and ante room of the House of all persons not entitled to the privileges of the floor prior to the convening of each session of the House;
- (6) bring in absent members when so directed under a call of the House;
- (7) enforce the distribution of any printed matter in the House chambers and ante room in accordance with H20-80;

(8) enforce parking regulations applicable to areas of the Capitol complex under the control of the House;

(9) supervise the doorkeeper; and

(10) supervise the pages.

**H10-90. Legislative aides.** (1) A legislative aide is a person specifically designated by a representative to assist that representative in performing legislative duties. A representative may sponsor one legislative aide a session by written notification to the Sergeant-at-Arms.

(2) No representative may designate a second legislative aide in the same session without the approval of the House Rules Committee.

(3) A legislative aide must be of legal age unless otherwise approved by the House Rules Committee.

(4) The Sergeant-at-Arms shall issue distinctive identification tags to legislative aides. The cost must be paid by the sponsoring representative.

**H10-100. Legislative interns.** A legislative intern is a person designated under Title 5, chapter 6, MCA.

**H10-110. House journal.** (1) The House shall keep a journal, which is the official record of House actions (Montana Constitution, Art. V, Sec. 10). The journal must be prepared under the direction of the Speaker.

(2) Records of the following proceedings must be entered on the journal:

(a) the taking and subscription of the constitutional oath by representatives (Montana Constitution, Art. III, Sec. 3; 5-2-214);

(b) committee reports;

(c) messages from the Governor;

(d) messages from the Senate;

(e) every motion, the name of the representative presenting it, and its disposition;

(f) the introduction of legislation in the House;

(g) consideration of legislation subsequent to introduction;

(h) on final passage of legislation, the names of the representatives and their vote on the question (Montana Constitution, Art. V, Sec. 11);

- (i) roll call votes; and
  - (j) upon a request by two representatives before a vote is taken, the names of the representatives and their votes on the question.
- (3) The Chief Clerk shall provide to the Legislative Services Division such information as may be required for the publication of the daily journal.
- (4) Any representative may examine the daily journal and propose corrections. The Speaker may direct a correction to be made when suggested subject to objection by the House.
- (5) The Speaker shall authenticate the House journal after the close of the session (section 5-11-201, MCA).
- (6) The Legislative Services Division shall publish and distribute the House journal (sections 5-11-202 and 5-11-203, MCA). The title of each bill must be listed in the index of the published session journal.

**H10-120. Votes recorded and public.** Every vote of each representative on each substantive question in the House, in any committee, or in Committee of the Whole must be recorded and made public (Montana Constitution, Art. V, Sec. 11).

**H10-130. Duration of legislative day.** A legislative day ends either 24 hours after the House convenes for that day or at the time the House convenes for the following legislative day, whichever is earlier.

**CHAPTER 2****Decorum**

**H20-10. Addressing the House — recognition.** (1) When a member desires to speak to or address any matter to the House, the member should rise and respectfully address the Speaker or the presiding officer.

(2) The Speaker or presiding officer may ask, “For what purpose does the member rise?” or “For what purpose does the member seek recognition?” and may then decide if recognition is to be granted. There is no appeal from the Speaker’s or presiding officer’s decision.

**H20-20. Questions of order and privilege.** (1) The Speaker shall decide all questions of order and privilege, subject to an appeal by any representative seconded by two representatives. The question on appeal is, “Shall the decision of the chairman be sustained?”

(2) Responses to parliamentary inquiries and decisions of recognition may not be appealed.

(3) Questions of order and privilege, in order of precedence, are:

(a) those affecting the collective rights, safety, dignity, and integrity of the House; and

(b) those affecting the rights, reputation, and conduct of individual representatives.

(4) A member may not address the House on a question of privilege between the time:

(a) an undebatable motion is offered and the vote is taken on the motion;

(b) the previous question is ordered and the vote is taken on the proposition included under the previous question; or

(c) a motion to lay on the table is offered and the vote is taken on the motion.

**H20-30. Limits on lobbying.** Lobbying on the House floor and in the anteroom is prohibited during a daily session, 2 hours before the session, and 2 hours after the session.

**H20-40. Admittance to the House floor.** (1) The following persons may be admitted to the House floor during a daily session: present and former legislators; legislative employees necessary for the conduct of the session; accredited



news staff; and members' spouses and children. The Speaker may allow exceptions to this rule.

(2) Only a member may sit in a member's chair when the House is in session.

**H20-50. Dilatory motions or questions.** The House has a right to protect itself from dilatory motions or questions used for the purpose of delaying or obstructing business. The presiding officer shall decide if motions (except a call of the House) or questions are dilatory. This decision may be appealed to the House.

**H20-60. Opening and order of business.** The opening of each legislative day must include an invocation, the pledge of allegiance, and roll call. Following the opening, the order of business of the House is as follows:

- (1) communications and petitions;
- (2) reports of standing committees;
- (3) reports of select committees;
- (4) messages from the Senate;
- (5) messages from the Governor;
- (6) first reading and commitment of bills;
- (7) second reading of bills;
- (8) third reading of bills;
- (9) motions;
- (10) unfinished business;
- (11) special orders of the day; and
- (12) announcement of committee meetings.

**H20-70. Lobbying by employees.** (1) A legislative employee, intern, or aide of either house is prohibited from lobbying, although a legislative committee may request testimony from a person so restricted.

(2) The Speaker or the Legislative Administration Committee may discipline or discharge any House employee violating this prohibition. The Speaker or the committee may withdraw the privileges of any House aide or intern violating this prohibition.

**H20-80. Papers distributed on desks.** A paper concerning proposed legislation may not be placed on representatives' desks unless it is authorized by a member

and permission has been granted by the Speaker. The Sergeant-at-Arms shall direct its distribution.

**H20-90. Violation of rules.** (1) If a member, in speaking or otherwise, violates the rules of the House, the Speaker shall, or the majority or minority floor leader may, call the member to order, in which case the member called to order must be seated immediately.

(2) The member called to order may move for an appeal to the House and if the motion is seconded by two members, the matter must be submitted to the House for determination by majority vote. The motion is nondebatable.

(3) If the decision of the House is in favor of the member called to order, the member may proceed. If the decision is against the member, the member may not proceed.

(4) If a member is called to order, the matter may be referred to the Rules Committee by the minority or majority leader. The Committee may recommend to the House that the member be censured or be subject to other action. The House shall act upon the recommendation of the Committee.

**CHAPTER 3****Committees****H30-10. House standing committees — appointments.**

(1) The Speaker shall determine the total number of members and the party division and shall appoint the members to the following standing committees: Agriculture; Appropriations; Business and Labor; Education; Ethics; Federal Relations, Energy, and Telecommunications; Fish, Wildlife, and Parks; Transportation; Human Services; Judiciary; Legislative Administration; Local Government; Natural Resources; Rules; State Administration; and Taxation.

(2) The Speaker shall appoint the chairman, vice chairman, and minority vice chairman of each standing committee while retaining the authority to remove and replace any chairman, vice chairman, or minority vice chairman at any time. The appointment or removal of a minority vice chairman requires the consent of the minority leader. The Speaker shall give notice of each appointment to the Chief Clerk for publication.

(3) The Speaker may, in the Speaker's discretion or as authorized by the House, create and appoint select committees, designating the chairman and vice chairman of the select committee. Select committees may request or receive legislation in the same manner as a standing committee and are subject to the rules of standing committees.

**H30-20. Chairman's duties.** The principal duties of the chairman of standing or select committees are to:

(1) preside over meetings of the committee and to put all questions;

(2) maintain order and decide all questions of order subject to appeal to the committee;

(3) supervise and direct staff of the committee;

(4) have the committee secretary keep the official record of the minutes;

(5) sign reports of the committee and submit them promptly to the Chief Clerk;

(6) appoint subcommittees to perform on a formal or an informal basis; and

(7) inform the Speaker of committee activity.

**H30-30. Quorum — officers as members.** (1) A quorum of a committee is a majority of the members of the committee.

A quorum of a committee must be present at a meeting to act officially. A quorum of a committee may transact business, and a majority of the quorum, even though it is a minority of the committee, is sufficient for committee action.

(2) The Speaker, majority leader, and minority leader are ex officio, nonvoting members of all House committees. They may count toward establishing a quorum.

**H30-40. Meetings.** (1) All meetings of committees must be open to the public at all times, subject always to the power and authority of the chairman to maintain safety, order, and decorum. The date, time, and place of committee meetings must be posted.

(2) A committee or subcommittee may be assembled for:

(a) a public hearing at which testimony is to be heard and at which official action may be taken on bills, resolutions, or other matters;

(b) a formal meeting at which the committees may discuss and take official action on bills, resolutions, or other matters without testimony; or

(c) a work session at which the committee may discuss bills, resolutions, or other matters but take no formal action.

(3) All committees meet at the call of the chairman or upon the request of a majority of the members of the committee directed to and with the approval of the Speaker.

(4) All committees shall provide for and give public notice, reasonably calculated to give actual notice to interested persons, of the time, place, and subject matter of regular and special meetings. All committees are encouraged to provide at least 3 legislative days notice to members of committees and the general public. However, a meeting may be held upon notice appropriate to the circumstances.

(5) A committee may not meet during the time the House is in session without leave of the Speaker. Any member attending such a meeting must be considered excused to attend business of the House subject to a call of the House.

(6) All meetings of committees must be recorded and the minutes must be available to the public within a reasonable time after the meeting. The official record must contain at least the following information:

(a) the time and place of each meeting of the committee;

(b) committee members present, excused, or absent;

(c) the names and addresses of persons appearing before the committee, whom each represents, and whether the person is a proponent, opponent, or other witness;

(d) all motions and their disposition;

(e) the results of all votes;

(f) references to the recording log, sufficient to serve as an index to the original recording; and

(g) testimony and exhibits submitted in writing.

**H30-50. Procedures.** (1) The chairman shall notify the sponsor of any bill pending before the committee of the time and place it will be considered.

(2) A standing or select committee may not take up referred legislation unless the sponsor or one of the cosponsors is present or unless the sponsor has given written consent.

(3) The committee shall act on each bill in its possession:

(a) by reporting the bill out of the committee:

(i) with the recommendation that it be referred to another committee;

(ii) favorably as to passage; or

(iii) unfavorably; or

(b) by tabling the measure in committee.

(4) The committee may not report a bill to the House without recommendation.

(5) The committee may recommend that a bill on which it has made a favorable recommendation by unanimous vote be placed on the consent calendar.

(6) In reporting a measure out of committee, a committee shall include in its report:

(a) the measure in the form reported out;

(b) the recommendation of the committee;

(c) an identification of all substantive changes; and

(d) a fiscal note, if required.

(7) If a measure is withdrawn from a committee and brought to the House floor for debate on second reading on that day without a committee recommendation, the bill does not include amendments formally adopted by the committee.

(8) A second to any motion offered in a committee is not required in order for the motion to be considered by the committee.

(9) The vote of each member on all committee actions must be recorded. All motions may be adopted only on the affirmative vote of a majority of the members voting.

(10) A motion to take a bill from the table may be adopted by the affirmative vote of a majority of the members present at any meeting of the committee.

(11) An action formally taken by a committee may not be altered in the committee except by reconsideration and further formal action of the committee.

(12) A committee may reconsider any action as long as the matter remains in the possession of the committee. A committee member need not have voted with the prevailing side in order to move reconsideration.

(13) Any legislation requested by a committee requires three-fourths of all members of the committee to vote in favor of the question to allow the committee to request the drafting or introduction of legislation. Votes requesting drafting and introduction of committee legislation may be taken jointly or separately.

(14) The chairman shall decide points of order.

(15) The privileges of committee members include the following:

(a) to participate freely in committee discussions and debate;

(b) to offer motions;

(c) to assert points of order and privilege;

(d) to question witnesses upon recognition by the chairman;

(e) to offer any amendment to any bill; and

(f) to vote, either by being present or by proxy, using a standard form or through the vice chairman or minority vice chairman.

(16) Any meeting of a committee held through the use of telephone or other electronic communication must be conducted in accordance with Chapter 3 of the House Rules.

(17) A committee may consolidate into one bill any two or more related bills referred to it whenever legislation may be simplified by the consolidation.

(18) Committee procedure must be informal, but when any questions arise on committee procedure, the rules or practices of the House are applicable except as stated in the House Rules.

**H30-60. Public testimony.** (1) Testimony from proponents, opponents, and informational witnesses must be allowed on every bill or resolution before a standing or select committee. All persons, other than the sponsor, offering testimony shall complete a "Witness Form" and submit it to the committee secretary.

(2) Any person wishing to offer testimony to a committee hearing a bill or resolution must be given a reasonable opportunity to do so, orally or in writing. Written testimony may not be required of any witness, but all witnesses must be encouraged to submit a statement in writing for the committee's official record.

(3) The chairman may order the committee room cleared of visitors if there is disorderly conduct. During committee meetings, visitors may not speak unless called upon by the chairman. Restrictions on time available for testimony may be announced.

(4) The number of people in a committee room may not exceed the maximum posted by the State Fire Marshall. The chairman shall maintain that limit.

(5) In any committee meeting, the use of cameras, television, radio, or any form of telecommunication equipment is allowed, but the chairman may designate the areas of the hearing room from which the equipment must be operated.

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**CHAPTER 4****Legislation**

**H40-10. Introduction deadlines.** (1) Except as provided in subsection (2), if a representative accepts drafted legislation from the Legislative Services Division after the deadline for introduction, the representative may not introduce that legislation after 48 hours from the time the bill was accepted from the Legislative Services Division.

(2) No bill or resolution may be introduced any later than 5 p.m. 5 legislative days prior to the appropriate transmittal deadline.

**H40-20. House resolutions.** (1) A House resolution is used to adopt or amend House rules, make recommendations on the districting and apportionment plan (Montana Constitution, Art. V, Sec. 14), express the sentiment of the House, or assist House operations.

(2) As to drafting, introduction, and referral, a House resolution is treated as a bill. A House resolution may be requested and introduced at any time. Final passage of a House resolution is determined by the Committee of the Whole report. A House resolution does not progress to third reading.

(3) The Chief Clerk shall transmit a copy of each passed House resolution to the Senate and the Secretary of State.

**H40-30. Cosponsors.** (1) Prior to submitting legislation to the Chief Clerk for introduction, the chief sponsor may add representatives and senators as cosponsors by having them sign the legislation.

(2) After legislation is submitted for introduction but before the legislation returns from the first House committee, the chief sponsor may add or remove cosponsors by filing a cosponsor form with the Chief Clerk. This filing must be noted by the Chief Clerk for the record on Order of Business No. 11.

**H40-40. Introduction — receipt.** (1) During a session, proposed House legislation may be introduced in the House by submitting it, endorsed with the signature of a representative as chief sponsor, to the Chief Clerk for introduction. In each session of the Legislature, the proposed legislation must be numbered consecutively by type in the order of receipt. Submission and numbering of properly endorsed legislation constitutes introduction.



(2) Preintroduction of legislation prior to a session under provisions of the joint rules constitutes introduction in the House.

(3) Acknowledgment by the Chief Clerk of receipt of legislation or other matters transmitted from the Senate for consideration by the House constitutes introduction of the Senate legislation in the House or receipt by the House for purposes of applying time limits contained in the House rules. All legislation may be referred to a committee prior to being read across the rostrum as provided in H40-50.

(4) Acknowledgment by the Chief Clerk of receipt of messages from the Senate or other elected officials constitutes receipt by the House for purposes of any applicable time limit. Senate legislation or messages received from the Senate or elected officials are subject to all other rules.

**H40-50. First reading.** Legislation properly introduced or received in the House must be announced across the rostrum and public notice provided. This announcement constitutes first reading, and no debate or motion is in order except that a representative may question adherence to rules. Acknowledgment by the Chief Clerk of receipt of legislation transmitted from the Senate commences the time limit for consideration of the legislation. All legislation received by the House may be referred to a committee prior to being read across the rostrum.

**H40-60. One reading per day.** Except on the final legislative day, legislation may receive no more than one reading per legislative day. On the final legislative day, legislation may receive more than one reading.

**H40-70. Referral.** (1) The Speaker shall refer to a House committee all properly introduced House legislation and transmitted Senate legislation.

(2) Legislation may not receive final passage and approval unless it has been referred to a House committee.

**H40-80. Rereferral.** (1) Except as provided in subsection (2), legislation that is in the possession of the House and that has not been finally disposed of may be rereferred to a House committee by House motion approved by not less than three-fifths of the members present and voting.

(2) Legislation that is in the possession of the House and that has been reported from a committee with a do pass or be concurred in recommendation may be rereferred to a House committee by a majority vote.

**H40-90. Legislation withdrawn from committee.** Legislation may be withdrawn from a House committee by House motion approved by not less than three-fifths of the members present and voting.

**H40-100. Standing committee reports.** (1) A House standing committee recommendation of “do pass” or “be concurred in” must be announced across the rostrum and, if there is no objection to form, is considered adopted.

(2) A recommendation of “do not pass” or “be not concurred in” must be announced across the rostrum and, on the following legislative day, may be debated and adopted or rejected on Order of Business No. 2. A motion to reject an adverse committee report must be approved by not less than three-fifths of the members voting. Failure to adopt a motion to reject an adverse committee report constitutes adoption of the report.

(3) If the House rejects an adverse committee report, the bill progresses to second reading, as scheduled by the Speaker, with any amendments recommended by the committee.

**H40-110. Consent calendar procedure.** (1) Noncontroversial bills and simple and joint resolutions may be recommended for the consent calendar by a standing committee and processed according to the following provisions:

(a) To be eligible for the consent calendar, the legislation must receive a unanimous vote by the members of the standing committee in attendance (do pass, do pass as amended). In addition, a motion must be made and passed unanimously to place the legislation on the consent calendar and this action reflected in the committee report. Appropriation or revenue bills may not be recommended for the consent calendar.

(b) The legislation must then be sent to be processed and reproduced as a third reading version and specifically marked as a “consent calendar” item.

(2) Other legislation may be placed on the consent calendar by agreement between the Speaker and the minority leader following a positive recommendation by a standing committee. The legislation must be sent to be processed as a second reading version but must be specifically announced and posted as a “consent calendar” item.

(3) Legislation must be posted immediately (as soon as it is received appropriately printed) on the consent calendar and must remain there for 1 legislative day before consideration

under Order of Business No. 11, special orders of the day. At that time, the presiding officer shall announce consideration of the consent calendar and allow "reasonable time" for questions and answers upon request. No debate is allowed.

(4) If any one representative submits a written objection to the placement of legislation on the consent calendar, the legislation must be removed from the consent calendar and added to the regular second reading board.

(5) Consent calendar legislation will be considered on Order of Business No. 8, third reading of bills, following the regular third reading agenda, as separately noted on the agenda.

(6) Legislation on the consent calendar must be considered individually with the roll call vote spread on the journal as the final vote in the House.

(7) Legislation passed on the consent calendar must then be transmitted to the Senate. Legislation must be appropriately printed prior to transmittal.

**H40-120. Legislation requiring other than a majority vote.** Legislation that requires other than a majority vote for final passage needs only a majority vote for any action that is taken prior to third reading and that normally requires a majority vote.

**H40-130. Amending House second and third reading agendas.** (1) A majority of representatives present may rearrange or remove legislation from either the second or third reading agenda on that legislative day.

(2) Legislation may be added to the second or third reading agenda on that legislative day on a motion approved by not less than three-fifths of the members present and voting.

**H40-140. Second reading.** (1) Legislation returned from committee may be placed on second reading unless otherwise ordered by the House.

(2) The House shall form itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider business on second reading. The Committee of the Whole may debate legislation, attach amendments, and recommend approval or disapproval of legislation.

(3) Except on the final legislative day, at least 1 legislative day must elapse between the time legislation is reported from committee and the time it is considered on second reading.

(4) If a motion to recommend that a bill "do pass" or "be concurred in" fails in the Committee of the Whole, the obverse, i.e., a recommendation that the bill "do not pass" or "be not

concurring in", is considered to have passed. If a motion to recommend that a bill "do not pass" or "be not concurred in" fails in the Committee of the Whole, the obverse, i.e., a recommendation that the bill "do pass" or "be concurred in", is considered to have passed.

(5) An amendment attached to legislation by the Committee of the Whole remains unless removed by further legislative action.

(6) When the Committee of the Whole reports to the House, the House shall adopt or reject the Committee of the Whole report. If the House rejects the Committee of the Whole report, the legislation remains on second reading, as amended by the Committee of the Whole, unless the House orders otherwise.

(7) A representative may move to segregate legislation from the Committee of the Whole report before the report is adopted. Segregated legislation, as amended by the Committee of the Whole, must be placed on second reading unless the House orders otherwise. Amendments adopted by the Committee of the Whole on segregated legislation remain adopted unless reconsidered or unless the legislation is rereferred to a committee.

**H40-150. Amendments in the Committee of the Whole.**

(1) All Committee of the Whole amendments must be checked by the House amendments coordinator for format, style, clarity, consistency, and other factors, in accordance with the most recent Bill Drafting Manual published by the Legislative Services Division, before the amendment may be accepted at the rostrum. The amendment form must include the date and time the amendment is submitted for that check.

(2) An amendment submitted to the rostrum for consideration by the Committee of the Whole must be marked as checked by the amendments coordinator and signed by a representative. Unless the majority leader, the minority leader, and sponsor agree, amendments must be printed and placed on the members' desks prior to consideration.

(3) An amendment may not be proposed until the sponsor has opened on a bill.

(4) A copy of every amendment rejected by the Committee of the Whole must be kept as part of the official records.

(5) An amendment may not change the original purpose of the bill.

**H40-160. Motions in the Committee of the Whole.** (1) When the House resolves itself into a Committee of the Whole, the only motions in order are to:

- (a) amend;
- (b) recommend passage or nonpassage;
- (c) recommend concurrence or nonconcurrence;
- (d) reconsider;
- (e) pass consideration;
- (f) call for cloture;
- (g) rise, rise and report, or rise and report progress and beg leave to sit again; and
- (h) to change the order in which legislation is placed on the agenda.

(2) Subsections (1)(d) through (1)(g) are nondebatable but may be amended. Once a motion under subsection (1)(b) or (1)(c) is made, a contrary motion is not in order.

(3) If a quorum of representatives is not present during second reading, the Committee of the Whole may conduct no business on legislation and a motion for a call of the House without a quorum is in order.

**H40-170. Limits on debate in the Committee of the Whole.** (1) A representative may not speak more than once on the motion and may speak for no more than 5 minutes. The representative who makes the motion may speak a second time for 5 minutes in order to close.

(2) After at least two proponents and two opponents have spoken on a question and 30 minutes have elapsed, a motion to call for cloture is in order. Approval by not less than two-thirds of the members present and voting is required to sustain a motion for cloture. Notwithstanding the passage of a motion to end debate, the sponsor of the motion on which debate was ended may close.

(3) By previous agreement of the majority leader and the minority floor leader:

- (a) a lead proponent and a lead opponent may be granted additional time to speak on a bill;
- (b) a bill or resolution may be allocated a predetermined amount of time for debate and number of speakers.

**H40-180. Special provisions for debate on the general appropriations bill.** (1) The Appropriations Committee

chairman, in presenting the bill, is not subject to the 5-minute speaking limitation.

(2) Each appropriations subcommittee chairman shall fully present the chairman's portion of the bill. A subcommittee chairman is not subject to the 5-minute speaking limitation.

(3) After the presentation by the subcommittee chairman, the respective section of the bill is open for debate, questions, and amendments. A proposed amendment to the general appropriations act may not be divided.

(4) An amendment that affects more than one section of the bill must be offered when the first section affected is considered.

(5) Following completion of the debate on each section, that section is closed and may not be reopened except by majority vote.

(6) If a member moves to reopen a section for amendment, only the amendment of that member may be entertained. Another member wishing to amend the same section shall make a separate motion to reopen the section.

(7) Debate on the motion to reopen a section is limited to the question of reopening the section. The amendment itself may not be debated at that time. This limitation does not prohibit the member from explaining the amendment to be considered.

(8) A motion for cloture is not in order during debate on the general appropriations bill.

**H40-190. Engrossing.** (1) After legislation is passed on second reading, it must be engrossed within 48 hours under the direction of the Speaker. The Speaker may grant additional time for engrossing.

(2) When the legislation that has passed second reading, as amended, has been correctly engrossed, it may be placed on third reading on the following legislative day. If the bill is not amended, the bill must be sent to printing. On the final legislative day, the correctly engrossed legislation may be placed on third reading on the same legislative day. For the purposes of this rule, "engrossing" means placing amendments in a bill.

**H40-200. Third reading.** (1) All bills, joint resolutions, and Senate amendments to House bills and resolutions passing second reading must be placed on third reading the day following the receipt of the engrossing or other appropriate printing report.

(2) Legislation on third reading may not be amended or debated.

(3) The Speaker shall state the question on legislation on third reading. If a majority of the representatives voting does not approve the legislation, it fails to pass third reading.

**H40-210. Senate legislation in the House.** Senate legislation properly transmitted to the House must be treated as House legislation.

**H40-220. Senate amendments to House legislation.** (1) When the Senate has properly returned House legislation with Senate amendments, the House shall announce the amendments on Order of Business No. 4, and the Speaker shall place them on second reading for debate. The Speaker may rerefer House legislation with Senate amendments to a committee for a hearing if the Senate amendments constitute a significant change in the House legislation. The second reading vote is limited to consideration of the Senate amendments.

(2) If the House accepts Senate amendments, the House shall place the final form of the legislation on third reading to determine if the legislation, as amended, is passed or if the required vote is obtained.

(3) If the House rejects the Senate amendments, the House may request the Senate to recede from its amendments or may direct appointment of a conference committee and request the Senate to appoint a like committee.

**H40-230. Conference committee reports.** (1) When a House conference committee files a report, the report must be announced under Order of Business No. 3.

(2) The House may debate and adopt or reject the conference committee report on second reading on any legislative day. The House may reconsider its action in rejecting a conference committee report under rules for reconsideration, H50-160.

(3) If both the House and the Senate adopt the same conference committee report on legislation requiring more than a majority vote for final passage, the House, following approval of the conference committee report on third reading, shall place the final form of the legislation on third reading to determine if the required vote is obtained.

(4) If the House rejects a conference committee report, the committee continues to exist unless dissolved by the Speaker or by motion. The committee may file a subsequent report.

(5) A House conference committee may confer regarding matters assigned to it with any Senate conference committee with like jurisdiction and submit recommendations for consideration of the House.

**H40-240. Enrolling.** (1) When House legislation has passed both houses, it must be enrolled within 48 hours under the direction of the Speaker. The Speaker may grant additional time for enrolling.

(2) The chief sponsor of the legislation shall examine the enrolled legislation and, if it has no enrolling errors, shall, within 1 legislative day, certify the legislation as correctly enrolled.

(3) The correctly enrolled legislation must be delivered to the Speaker, who shall sign the legislation.

(4) After the legislation has been reported correctly enrolled but before it is signed, any representative may examine the legislation.

**H40-250. Governor's amendments.** (1) When the Governor returns a bill with recommended amendments, the House shall announce the amendments under Order of Business No. 5.

(2) The House may debate and adopt or reject the Governor's recommended amendments on second reading on any legislative day.

(3) If both the House and the Senate accept the Governor's recommended amendments on a bill that requires more than a majority vote for final passage, the House shall place the final form of the legislation on third reading to determine if the required vote is obtained.

**H40-260. Governor's veto.** (1) When the Governor returns a bill with a veto, the House shall announce the veto under Order of Business No. 5.

(2) On any legislative day, a representative may move to override the Governor's veto by a two-thirds vote under Order of Business No. 9.



**CHAPTER 5****Floor Actions**

**H50-10. Attendance.** (1) A representative, unless excused, is required to be present at every sitting of the House.

(2) A representative may request in writing to be excused for a specified cause by the representative's party leader. This excused absence is not a leave with cause from a call of the House.

**H50-20. Quorum.** (1) A quorum of the House is fifty-one representatives (Montana Constitution, Art. V, Sec. 10).

(2) Any representative may question the lack of a quorum at any time a vote is not being taken. The question is nondebatable, may not be amended, and is resolved by a roll call.

(3) The House may conduct no business without a quorum, except that representatives present may convene, compel the attendance of absent representatives, or adjourn.

**H50-30. Call of the House without a quorum.** (1) In the absence of a quorum, a majority of the representatives present may compel the attendance of absent representatives through a call of the House without a quorum. The motion for the call is nondebatable, may not be amended, and is in order at any time it has been established that a quorum is not present.

(2) During a call of the House, all business is suspended. No motion is in order except a motion to adjourn or to remove the call.

(3) When a quorum has been achieved under the call, the call is automatically lifted. The call may also be lifted by adjournment or by two-thirds of the representatives present and voting.

**H50-40. Call of the House with a quorum.** (1) If a quorum is present but at least one representative is excused or absent, one-third of the representatives present and voting may order a call of the House with a quorum.

(2) The motion for a call is nondebatable, may not be amended, and is in order at any time a vote is not being taken, except that a call of the House with a quorum is not allowed in the Committee of the Whole.

(3) During a call of the House, all business is suspended. No motion is in order except a motion to adjourn or to remove the call.

(4) When all representatives are present, except those on leave with cause, the call is automatically lifted. The call may also be lifted by adjournment or by two-thirds of the representatives present and voting.

**H50-50. Leave with cause.** (1) During a call of the House, a representative with an overriding medical or personal reason may request a leave with cause.

(2) If the representative is present at the time of the call, the Speaker may approve a request for a leave with cause.

(3) If the representative is not present at the time of the call, two-thirds of the representatives present and voting may approve a request for leave with cause.

(4) During a call of the House, a representative on leave with cause may not cast an absentee vote.

**H50-60. Motions.** (1) Any representative may propose a motion allowed by the rules for the order of business under which the motion is offered for the consideration of the House. Unless otherwise specified in rule or law, a majority of representatives voting is necessary and sufficient to decide a motion.

(2) Seconds to motions on the House floor are not required.

(3) Absentee votes are not allowed on votes that are specified as "representatives present and voting".

**H50-70. Limits on debate of debatable motions.** (1) Except for the representative who places a debatable motion before the body, no representative may speak more than once on the question unless a unanimous House consents. The representative who places the motion may close.

(2) No representative may speak for more than 10 minutes on the same question, except that a representative may have 5 minutes to close.

**H50-80. Nondebatable motions.** (1) A representative has the right to understand any question before the House and, usually under the administration of the presiding officer, may ask questions to exercise this right.

(2) The following motions are nondebatable:

- (a) to adjourn;
- (b) for a call of the House;
- (c) to recess or rise;
- (d) for parliamentary inquiry;

- (e) to table or take from the table;
- (f) to call for the previous question or cloture;
- (g) to amend a nondebatable motion;
- (h) to divide a question;
- (i) to postpone consideration to a day certain;
- (j) to suspend the rules;
- (k) all incidental motions, such as motions relating to voting or of a general procedural nature; and
- (l) to appeal a call to order.

**H50-90. Questions.** A representative may, through the presiding officer, ask questions of another representative during a floor session. There is no limit on questions and answers, except as provided in H20-50.

**H50-100. Amending motions — limitations.** (1) A representative may move to amend the specific provisions of a motion without changing its substance.

(2) No more than one motion to amend a motion is in order at any one time.

(3) A motion for a call of the House, for the previous question, to table, or to take from the table may not be amended.

**H50-110. Substitute motions.** (1) When a question is before the House, no substitute motion may be made except the following, which have precedence in the order listed:

- (a) to adjourn;
- (b) for a call of the House;
- (c) to recess or rise;
- (d) for a question of privilege;
- (e) to table;
- (f) to call for the previous question or cloture;
- (g) to postpone consideration to a day certain;
- (h) to refer to a committee; and
- (i) to propose amendments.

(2) Nothing in this section allows a motion that would not otherwise be allowed under a particular order of business.

(3) (a) Except as provided in subsection (3)(b), no more than one substitute motion is in order at any one time.

(b) A motion for cloture is in order on a substitute motion to amend.

**H50-120. Withdrawing motions.** A representative who proposes a motion may withdraw it before it is voted on or amended.

**H50-130. Dividing a question.** Except as provided in H40-180, a representative may request to divide a question as a matter of right if it includes two or more propositions so distinct that they can be separated and if at least one substantive question remains after one substantive question is removed.

**H50-140. Previous question.** (1) If a majority of representatives present and voting adopts a motion for the previous question, debate is closed on the question and it must be brought to a vote. The Speaker may not entertain a motion to end debate unless at least one proponent and one opponent have spoken on the question.

(2) Notwithstanding the passage of a motion to end debate, the sponsor of the motion on which debate was ended may close.

**H50-150. Questions requiring other than a majority vote.** The following questions require the vote specified for each condition:

100 House Members

(1) a motion to approve a bill to appropriate the principal of the tobacco settlement trust fund (two-thirds);

(2) a motion to approve a bill to appropriate the principal of the coal severance tax trust fund (three-fourths);

(3) a motion to approve a bill to appropriate highway revenue, as described in Article VIII, section 6, of the Montana Constitution, for purposes other than therein described (three-fifths);

(4) a motion to approve a bill to authorize creation of state debt (two-thirds);

(5) a motion to temporarily suspend a joint rule governing the procedure for handling bills (two-thirds).

Members Present and Voting

(1) a motion to override the Governor's veto (two-thirds);

- (2) a call of the House with a quorum (one-third);
- (3) a motion to lift a call of the House (two-thirds);
- (4) a motion to rerefer a bill from one committee to another pursuant to Rule 40-80(1) (three-fifths);
- (5) a motion to withdraw a bill from a committee (three-fifths);
- (6) a motion to add legislation to the second or third reading agenda (three-fifths);
- (7) a motion to remove legislation from its normal progress through the House as provided under these rules and reassign it unless otherwise specifically provided by these rules (three-fifths);
- (8) a motion to change a vote (unanimous);
- (9) a motion to call for cloture (two-thirds);
- (10) a motion to take from the table in Committee of the Whole (three-fifths).

#### Members Voting

- (1) a motion to amend or suspend rules (two-thirds);
- (2) a motion to overturn an adverse committee report (three-fifths);
- (3) a motion to record a vote (one representative);
- (4) a motion to spread a vote on the journal (two representatives);
- (5) an appeal of the ruling of the presiding officer (three representatives);
- (6) a motion to speak more than once on a debatable motion (unanimous vote);
- (7) a motion to appeal the presiding officer's interpretation of the rules to the House Rules Committee (15 representatives).

#### Entire Legislature

- (1) a motion to approve a bill proposing to amend the Montana Constitution (two-thirds of the entire Legislature).

**H50-160. Reconsideration.** (1) Any representative may, within 1 legislative day of a vote, move to reconsider the House vote on any matter still within the control of the House.

(2) A motion for reconsideration, unless tabled or replaced by a substitute motion, must be disposed of when made.

(3) When a motion for reconsideration fails, the question is finally settled. A motion for reconsideration may not be renewed or reconsidered.

(4) A motion to recall legislation from the Senate constitutes a motion to reconsider and is subject to the same rules.

(5) A motion for reconsideration is not in order on a vote to postpone to a day certain or to table legislation.

(6) There may be only one reconsideration vote on a specific issue on a legislative day.

**H50-170. Renewing procedural motions.** The House may renew a procedural motion if further House business has intervened.

**H50-180. Tabling.** (1) Under Order of Business No. 9, a representative may move to table any question, motion, or legislation before the House except the question of a quorum or a call of the House. The motion is nondebatable and may not be amended.

(2) When a matter has been tabled, a representative may move to take it from the table under Order of Business No. 9 on any legislative day.

**H50-190. Voting.** (1) The representatives shall vote to decide any motion or question properly before the House. Each representative has one vote.

(2) The House may, without objection, use a voice vote on procedural motions that are not required to be recorded in the journal. If a representative rises and objects, the House shall record the vote.

(3) The House shall record the vote on all substantive questions. If the voting system is inoperable, the Chief Clerk shall record the representatives' votes by other means.

(4) A member who is present shall vote unless the member has disclosed a conflict of interest to the House.

**H50-200. Changing a vote.** (1) A representative may move to change the representative's vote within 1 legislative day of the vote. The motion is nondebatable. The motion must be made on Order of Business No. 9, motions. All of the members present and voting are required to consent to the change in order for it to be effective.

(2) The representative making the motion shall first specify the bill number, the question, and the original vote tally. A vote may not be changed if it would affect the outcome of legislation.

(3) A vote change must be entered into the journal as a notation that the member's vote was changed. The original printed vote will not be reprinted to reflect the change.

(4) An error caused by a malfunction of the voting system may be corrected without a vote.

**H50-210. Absentee votes.** (1) An excused representative may file an absentee vote authorization form to vote during the excused absence on any vote for which absentee voting is allowed.

(2) An excused representative shall sign an absentee vote authorization form that specifies the motion and the desired vote.

(3) The absentee vote authorization form must be handed in at the rostrum by the party whip or designated representative before voting on the motion has commenced.

(4) The absentee vote authorization may be revoked before the vote by the member who signed the authorization.

(5) Absentee voting is not allowed on third reading.

**H50-220. Recess.** The House may stand at ease or recess under any order of business by order of the Speaker or a majority vote. The recess may be ended at the call of the chair or at a time specified.

**H50-230. Adjournment for a legislative day.** (1) A representative may move that the House adjourn for that legislative day. The motion is nondebatable and may be made under any order of business except Order of Business No. 7.

(2) A motion to adjourn for a legislative day must specify a date and time for the House to convene on the subsequent legislative day.

**H50-240. Adjournment sine die.** A representative may move that the House adjourn for the session. The motion is nondebatable and may be made under any order of business except Order of Business No. 7.

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**CHAPTER 6****Motions**

**H60-10. Proposal for consideration.** (1) Every question presented to the House or a committee must be submitted as a definite proposition.

(2) A representative has the right to understand any question before the House and, under the authority of the presiding officer, may ask questions to exercise this right.

**H60-20. Nondebatable motions.** The following motions, in addition to any other motion specifically designated, must be decided without debate:

- (1) to adjourn;
- (2) for a call of the House;
- (3) to recess or rise;
- (4) for parliamentary inquiry;
- (5) to table or to take from the table;
- (6) to call for the previous question or for cloture;
- (7) to amend a nondebatable motion;
- (8) to divide a question;
- (9) to postpone consideration to a day certain;
- (10) to suspend the rules; and
- (11) all incidental motions, such as motions relating to voting or of a general procedural nature.

**H60-30. Motions allowed during debate.** (1) When a question is under debate, only the following motions are in order. The motions have precedence in the following order:

- (a) to adjourn;
- (b) for a call of the House;
- (c) to recess or rise;
- (d) for a question of privilege;
- (e) to table or take from the table;
- (f) to call for the previous question or cloture;
- (g) to postpone consideration to a day certain;
- (h) to refer or rerefer; and



(i) to propose amendments.

(2) This section does not allow a motion that would not otherwise be allowed under a particular order of business.

(3) Only one substitute motion is in order at any time.

**H60-40. Motions to adjourn or recess.** (1) A motion to adjourn or recess is always in order, except:

(a) when the House is voting on another motion;

(b) when the previous question has been ordered and before the final vote;

(c) when a member entitled to the floor has not yielded for that purpose; or

(d) when business has not been transacted after the defeat of a motion to adjourn or recess.

(2) The vote by which a motion to adjourn or recess is carried or fails is not subject to a motion to reconsider.

**H60-50. Motion to table.** (1) A motion to table, if carried, has the effect of postponing action on the proposition to which it was applied until superseded by a motion to take from the table.

(2) The vote by which a motion to table is carried or fails cannot be reconsidered.

(3) A motion to table is not in order after the previous question has been ordered.

**H60-60. Motion to postpone.** A motion to postpone to a day certain may be amended and is debatable within narrow limits. The merits of the proposition that is the subject of the motion to postpone may not be debated.

**H60-70. Motion to refer.** When a motion is made to refer a subject to a standing committee or select committee, the question on the referral to a standing committee must be put first.

**H60-80. Terms of debate on motion to refer or rerefer.**

(1) A motion to refer or rerefer is debatable within narrow limits. The merits of the proposition that is the subject of the motion may not be debated.

(2) A motion to refer or rerefer with instructions is fully debatable.

**H60-100. Moving the previous question after a motion to table.** (1) If a motion to table is made directly to a main motion, a motion for the previous question is not in order.

(2) If an amendment to a main motion is pending and a motion to table is made, the previous question may be called on the main motion, the pending amendment, and the motion to table the amendment.

**H60-110. Standard motions.** The following are standard motions:

(1) moving House bills or resolutions on second reading, "Mister/Madam Chairman, I move that when this committee does rise and report after having under consideration House Bill \_\_\_, that it recommend the same (do pass)/(do pass as amended)/(do not pass)."

(2) moving Senate bills and Senate amendments to House bills, "Mister/Madam Chairman, I move that when this committee does rise and report after having under consideration Senate Bill \_\_\_/Senate amendments to House Bill \_\_\_, that it recommend the same (be concurred in)/(be not concurred in)."

(3) Committee of the Whole floor amendments, "Mister/Madam Chairman, I move that House Bill \_\_\_/Senate Bill \_\_\_ be amended and request that the amendment be posted and deemed read."

(4) introducing visitors, "Mister/Madam Speaker/Chairman, I request that we be off the record and out of the journal."

(5) changing a vote, "Mister Speaker, I would like my vote changed on House Bill \_\_\_/Senate Bill \_\_\_ from (yes/no) to (yes/no). The question on the bill was ( ) with a vote tally of \_\_\_ for and \_\_\_ against."

(6) question another representative, "Mister/Madam Speaker/Chairman, would Representative \_\_\_ yield to a question?"

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**CHAPTER 7****Rules**

**H70-10. House rules.** (1) The House may adopt, through a House resolution passed by a majority of its members, rules to govern its proceedings.

(2) After adoption of the House rules, two-thirds of the representatives voting must vote in favor of the question to amend the rules.

(3) The Speaker shall refer to the House Rules Committee all resolutions for House rules.

(4) The House Rules Committee shall report all resolutions for House rules within 1 legislative day of referral.

**H70-20. Tenure of rules.** Rules adopted by the House remain in effect until removed by House resolution or until a new House is elected and takes office.

**H70-30. Suspension of rules.** The House may suspend a House rule on a motion approved by not less than two-thirds of the members voting.

**H70-40. Supplementary rules.** Mason's Manual of Legislative Procedure (2000) governs House proceedings in all cases not covered by House rules.

**H70-50. Interpreting rules.** The Speaker shall interpret all questions on House rules, subject to appeal by any 15 representatives to the House Rules Committee. Unless the delay would cause legislation to fail to meet a scheduled deadline, the House Rules Committee may consider and report on the appeal on the next legislative day. The decision of the House Rules Committee may be appealed to the House by any representative.

**H70-60. Joint rules superseded.** A House rule, insofar as it relates to the internal proceedings of the House, supersedes a joint rule.

