

REPORT
OF THE
STANDING ORDERS
COMMITTEE

THE HONOURABLE
THE HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY
(Second Session 2018-2023)

(Approved)
House of Assembly
2020-12-01

REPORT OF THE STANDING ORDERS COMMITTEE

Standing Order 59 (2) of the Standing Orders of the Honourable the House of Assembly of Barbados provides that;

There shall be a Standing Orders Committee which shall consist of the Speaker as Chairman, and nine members who shall be nominated by the House at the commencement of every session. It shall be the duty of the Committee to consider from time to time and report on all matters relating to the Standing Orders of the House.

The following members were appointed:

His Honour the Speaker (Chairman)

Hon G. W. Payne, Q.C., M.P.

Hon R. StC. Toppin, M.P.

Hon K. D. Symmonds, M.P.

Hon. W. A. Abrahams, M.P.

Bishop J. J. Atherley, M.P. *on 5th June, 2018*, and

Hon Miss S. J. O. Bradshaw, M.P.

Lt. Col. The Hon. J. D. Bostic, M.P.

Mr R. A. Thorne, Q.C., M.P. *on 15th January, 2019*

His Honour N. G. H. Rowe, M.P. *on 17th November, 2020 respectively.*

The Committee was asked to consider and agree that the Proceedings of the Chamber can take place in a Hybrid format whereby Members would be enabled to participate in those proceedings either physically or virtually in the Chamber.

The Committee was also asked to agree that these amendments should be specific to the existence of the State of Emergency. Pursuant therefore to the Proclamation dated 26th October, 2020 and made known in the House on 27th October, 2020 allowing the House of Assembly to meet with some Members present in the Chamber and those participating virtually, the following amendments to Standing Orders 6, 7, 9, 13, 16, 28, 29, 32, 33, 38, 40 and 41 are being hereby proposed.

The Committee namely

His Honour the Speaker (Chairman)
Hon Miss S. J. O. Bradshaw, M.P. (Leader of the House)
His Honour N. G. H. Rowe, M.P.
Bishop J. J. Atherley, M.P (Leader of the Opposition)

met on Tuesday 1st December, 2020 to consider the Proposed Amendments at **Appendix I** dated October 26, 2020

The Committee examined the amendments before it and adopted amendments proposed by the Hon. W. A. Abrahams which are now incorporated as settled amendments at **Appendix II** dated November 27, 2020.

The Committee is therefore pleased to present these settled amendments as those worthy of commendation and supports adoption by the Honourable the House of Assembly.

Dated this 1st day of December, 2020

THE HONOURABLE THE
HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

AMENDMENTS TO THE STANDING
ORDERS OF THE HONOURABLE THE
HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

To Make Provisions for the Sitzings of the
House and Committee of the Whole
House to be held in Hybrid Format

October 26, 2020

Amendments to the Standing Orders of The Honourable The House of Assembly

The Standing Orders Committee of the House is asked to agree that Proceedings of the Chamber can take place in a Hybrid Format, whereby Members would be enabled to participate in those proceedings either physically or virtually in the Chamber.

Those Proceedings are those listed in the order of business;

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Announcements by His Honour the Speaker

Messages from Her Excellency the Governor General

Petitions

Papers

Government Notices

Private Members' Notices

Notices of Questions

Reports from Select Committees

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Statements by Ministers

Congratulatory and /or obituary speeches

Personal Explanations

Motions for leave of Absence

Oral Replies to Questions

Notices of Motions for the adjournment of the House on matters of urgent public importance.

Orders of the Day

Pursuant to the Proclamation dated 26th October, 2020 and made known in the House on the 27th October, 2020 allowing the House of Assembly to meet with some Members present in the Chamber and others participating virtually, the following amendments to Standing Orders 6., 7., 9., 13., 16., 28., 29., 32., 33., 38., 40., and 41. are being hereby proposed.

6. SITTINGS OF THE HOUSE

1. *(no change)*

2. After the first sitting, unless the House otherwise decides, the House shall meet in **Hybrid Proceedings** on every Tuesday at 12 o'clock noon, and, unless previously adjourned meet until 9.30 p.m.

3. At 2 00 p.m. Mr. Speaker shall suspend the sitting until 2.45 p.m. and at 7 p.m., he shall suspend the sitting until 8.00 p.m. provided that if, in his opinion, the business of the House could be concluded by a short postponement of the suspension, he may suspend the sitting at 2.10 pm or 7.10 p.m. respectively.

4. **Members may participate in Hybrid Proceedings virtually by electronic means approved by the Speaker or by attending in the Chamber.**

5. **The Speaker may limit the number of Members present in the Chamber at any one time having regard to the requirement for a quorum and the need to adhere to Public Health Protocols**

Consequential adjustment of current Standing Orders

7. DUTIES OF THE CLERK

2. The Minutes shall record the names of Members attending **in person and virtually.**

9. QUORUM

1. For the purpose of commencing a sitting, a quorum of the House and of a Committee of the whole House shall consist of nine Members including the Member presiding.

2. If at the time of sitting, a quorum is not present, the Speaker shall not take the chair of the House.

3. After the commencement of any sitting of the House and a Committee of the whole House, a quorum can be made up by a combination of Members attending physically and virtually so long as the number of Members present in the Chamber is not fewer than five.

4. If after a quarter of an hour, no quorum is present, or if at any time during a sitting, any member draws the attention of the Speaker in the House or of the Chairman in Committee of the whole House to the fact that a quorum is not present, a bell shall be rung by the Clerk at the direction of the officer presiding to summon Members to the Chamber **or an invitation sent by the Clerk by email for the Members to join the sitting.**

Consequential adjustment of current Standing Orders

13. PAPERS

1. Every paper shall be presented by a Minister either present in the Chamber or virtually and its presentation shall be entered upon the Minutes.

16. MANNER OF ASKING AND ANSWERING QUESTION.

For the purposes of these Standing Orders "rise in his place" shall mean;

[a] in relation to a Member in the Chamber physically rising in his place to which he has been assigned; and,

[b] in relation to a Member attending virtually when a member is acknowledged by the Speaker or presiding officer.

5. If a Member is not present in person or virtually to ask his question when his name is called, or if the question is not reached, the Minister to whom it is addressed, shall cause an answer to be laid upon the Table of the House, unless the Member asking the question has signified his desire before the end of question time to postpone the question to a later sitting or to withdraw it.

RULES OF DEBATE

28. TIME AND MANNER OF SPEAKING AND CONTENTS OF SPEECHES

1-12 *(no change)*

13. See earlier note at S.O.16.

14. If two or more Members rise, or raise their hands virtually at the same time, the Speaker or the Chairman shall call upon the Member who first catches his eye

15. No Member.....

Provided that any Member present virtually or physically may second a motion or amendment to a Bill by rising in his place or raising his hand and stating that it is his intention to second the motion or amendment, without prejudice to his right to speak at a later period of the debate.

16. *(no change)*

17. *(no change)*

18. *(no change)*

19. **No Member attending virtually will be recognized by the Presiding Officer unless he can be both seen and heard by the Presiding Officer.**

20. **A Member must dress and conduct himself with the same decorum as if he was in the Chamber.**

21. **A Member moving a motion or speaking in reply must be physically present in the Chamber.**

29. RIGHT OF REPLY

1. The mover of a motion may reply after all the other Members present **physically or virtually** have had an opportunity of addressing the House and before the question is put, and after such reply no other Member **either physically or virtually** may speak, except as provided in paragraph 2 of this Order.

2. *(no change)*

32. INTERRUPTIONS

1. No Member may interrupt another Member except-

(a) **by rising to a point of order or by showing one's hand** when the Member speaking shall resume his seat or give way and the Member interrupting shall simply direct attention to the point of order which he desires to bring to notice and submit it to the Speaker or Chairman for decision;

or

(b) *(no change)*

(c) *(no change)*

(d) *(no change)*

2. Any Member who wishes to speak on a question of order during a division, must rise in his place, and, when he is called upon by the Speaker or Chairman, make his point.

3. When a Member rises on a point of order or point of elucidation, and any statement then made by him is ruled not to be a point of order or a point of elucidation, it shall be in the discretion of the officer then presiding to require such statement and any comment or statement there on by any other Member to be expunged from the records of the House,

33. BEHAVIOUR OF MEMBERS NOT SPEAKING

A Member whilst present **virtually or physically** in the House during a debate—

- (1) *(no change)*
- (2) *(no change)*
- (3) *(no change)*
- (4) *(no change)*
- (5) *(no change)*
- (6) *(no change)*
- (7) *(no change)*

RULES OF ORDER

38. CHAIR TO BE HEARD IN SILENCE

When the Speaker or Chairman rises during a debate, any Member whether in Chamber **physically or virtually**, who is then speaking, or offering to speak, must resume his seat, and the House or Committee must be silent so that Speaker or Chairman may be heard without interruption

40. ORDER IN THE HOUSE AND IN COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE HOUSE

- 1. *(no change)*
- 2. (a) The Speaker or the Chairman shall order any Member whose conduct is grossly disorderly to withdraw immediately from the House **or the virtual aspect of the Sitting** during the remainder of that day's sitting.

- (b) *(no change)*
- (c) The Marshal **or IT Manager** shall act on such orders as he may receive from the Chair in pursuance of this Standing Order.
- 3. *(no change)*
- 4. *(no change)*
- 5. If a Member is suspended under the provisions of this Standing Order, he shall be directed by the Speaker to withdraw from the House **and virtual sitting of the House**. His suspension shall last for two weeks on the first occasion, for one month on the second occasion, and for three months on any subsequent occasion.
- 6. *(no change)*
- 7.

If the majority of Members then present **physically or virtually** vote in favour of the motion, the Member who committed the offence shall be expelled from membership of the House and the seat of such Member shall be declared vacant.

- 8. Members who are ordered to withdraw from the House **or virtual sitting** or who are suspended from the service of the House must forthwith withdraw from the precincts of the House and shall be excluded therefrom for the remainder of the sitting. Or for the period of their suspension as the case may be.
- 9. *(no change)*
- 10. *(no change)*

41. VOTING

- 1. *(no change)*
- 2. *(no change)*
- 3. *(no change)*
- 4. When a division has been claimed, the officer then presiding shall direct the Clerk to ring the bell **or otherwise alert those sitting virtually** for a division. The bell shall be rung **or alert sent out electronically** for not less than one minute after which the question shall

again be put by the Speaker or Chairman. All Members then present and seated in the House and **those meeting virtually** shall be entitled to vote.

5. In a division the Clerk shall call each Member's name separately in order of the sitting. Every Member present **physically or virtually**, unless he expressly says that he declines to vote, shall record his vote either for the Ayes or the Noes, but a Member shall not vote in a manner inconsistent with any opinion which he may have expressed when the voices were taken collectively.

6. *(no change)*

7. The Clerk shall enter on the Minutes of Proceedings the record of each Member's vote and of the names and numbers of those members present **both physically and virtually** who declined to vote, and the manner in which the Speaker or Chairman exercised his casting vote.

8. *(no change)*

APPENDIX II

THE HONOURABLE THE
HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

AMENDMENTS TO THE STANDING
ORDERS OF THE HONOURABLE THE
HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

To Make Provisions for the Sittings of the
House and Committee of the Whole
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November 27, 2020

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