



Perry County Commission Rules of Decorum

Rules of Decorum, Adopted by Commission March 11, 2024

A. Commission's Intent for Rules of Decorum. The County's business is conducted at County Commission meetings by the elected officials of the County. All Commission meetings are open to the public, but the public's participation is permitted only at formal Commission business meetings during the time and in the manner set forth in these rules. Public participation is generally not permitted during work sessions and other informal meetings, although the public is encouraged to express comments in writing or other communication prior to those meetings. In order for the Commission to conduct its business in a manner completely open to the public, rules of decorum are necessary. The intent of these rules are to:

1. Provide a safe and secure setting for the Commission and the public to attend to the County's business.
2. Enable the Commission to conduct its deliberative process without interruption in a manner that can be heard and viewed by all in attendance.
3. Ensure that the public has a full opportunity to be heard during public hearings and open comment periods of Commission meetings.
4. Facilitate transparency in the conduct of Commission meetings so that all persons can observe and hear all the Commission discussion and votes.
5. State specific rules so that all may know the rules in advance and be subject to the same rules.
6. Limit interruptions, unreasonable delays, or duplication of comments, presentations, or discussion.
7. Develop an atmosphere of civility that is respectful of diverse opinions and allows presentation of positions that vary from the position of others at the meeting without insults or intimidation.
8. Balance the need for the Commission to conduct effective meetings without the meetings extending late into the night or early morning with the need to give a full opportunity for the public to be heard.
9. Facilitate Commission meetings as business meetings, therefore public comments should relate to the business of the County and, as such, be addressed to the Commission as a whole, which conducts the business of the County.
10. Adopt these rules of decorum as the standard for conduct of meetings of the County Commission and staff of the County.



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B. Rules of Decorum for the Public. During all times a meeting of the County Commission is being conducted, the following rules shall apply:

1. Prior to addressing the Commission, a person shall sign in providing information for the Commission record. Sign-in will occur on notecards, to be handed to the person taking minutes for the meeting. The notecard will include the speaker's name, address, phone number, time at sign in referencing the clock in the commission chambers, and topic they wish to comment on. Items that may be discussed are in two main categories: Agenda items and Non-Agenda items. Those speaking on agenda items will be called upon in the order in which they signed in. Once the list of agenda item speakers has been exhausted, the commission will call on those wishing to speak on non-agenda items. Individuals are limited to 3 minutes for public comment. Speakers representing a group of individuals who are in attendance to address the commission regarding the same topic will be given 5 minutes for public comment.
2. Remarks to the Commission must be on the topic that was indicated on the request to speak form. Remarks should be addressed to the Presiding Officer at County Commission meetings. Speakers shall refrain from making personal attacks, or from making repetitive or irrelevant remarks. Speakers will address commissioners as "Commissioner (last name)", and Commission will in turn address the constituent by "Mr., Mrs., Ms. (Last Name)". Office holders and elected officials will be addressed by the Commission by their professional title.
3. For safety reasons, all persons in attendance of commission meetings must remain seated unless called on by commission. All remarks to the Commission shall be made from the podium located on the table near the front of the room, and only after the speaker is acknowledged by the Presiding Officer. Constituents will be called upon in the order in which they sign in.
4. Remarks are limited to 3 minutes.
5. While in attendance at a Commission meeting, no attendee shall disrupt, disturb, or otherwise impede the orderly conduct of any Commission meeting by any means in a manner that obstructs the business of the meeting. Disorderly conduct includes personal attacks, repetitive comments, irrelevant comments, failing to obey any lawful order of the Presiding Officer to be seated, leave the meeting room and/or refrain from addressing the Commission.
6. Remarks should not be repetitive of any prior speaker but should be new in nature. Multiple parties wishing to address the same issue are encouraged to appoint a spokesperson to advocate their position. If an earlier speaker has already spoken on a speaker's chosen topic, the latter speaker is encouraged to state that they join in the remarks of the earlier speaker, or to focus on aspects not previously presented by earlier speakers.



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7. No attendee shall make threats or other forms of intimidation against any person in the Commission chambers or meeting room, nor should they possess any weapon or firearm while in the Commission chambers or meeting room unless the attendee possesses a valid permit.
8. To maintain the fire code occupancy limits and allow for safe exit, unless addressing the Commission or entering or leaving the Commission chambers or meeting room, all persons in the audience shall remain seated in the seats provided. No person shall stand or sit in the aisles, nor shall the doorways be blocked.
9. All persons in the Commission chambers or other meeting room, including, without limitation, Commission members, staff, and attendees, shall silence all cell phones, pagers, and other electronic devices to prevent disruption at the meeting.
10. No person at any Commission meeting shall be in a state of intoxication caused by the person's use of alcohol or drugs.
11. No sign shall be displayed in Commission chambers in a manner that blocks the view of another person or in a manner that would violate subsection 5 above.
12. The Presiding Officer may interrupt any speaker who is violating these rules of decorum or disrupting a meeting.

C. Enforcement of Decorum. The Presiding Officer of the Commission, with the assistance of law enforcement in attendance, if any attending, shall be responsible for maintaining the order and decorum of meetings. The Presiding Officer may order removed from the Commission chambers, or other room in which a meeting of the Commission is occurring, any person who fails to observe these rules of decorum:

1. The Presiding Officer may interrupt any speaker who is violating these rules of decorum or disrupting a meeting.
2. The Presiding Officer shall attempt to provide a verbal warning to any attendee or speaker that may be violating these rules of decorum, but such verbal warning shall not be required as a condition of removing an offender from the Commission chambers or meeting room.
3. These enforcement provisions are in addition to the authority held by any peace officer in attendance, to maintain order pursuant to the officer's lawful authority.
4. Any person removed from the Commission chambers or meeting room shall be excluded from further attendance at the meeting from which the person has been removed, unless permission to attend is granted upon the motion adopted by a majority vote of the Commission members present.



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5. In addition to any other authority of the Presiding Officer, they may call a recess during which time the members of the Commission shall leave the meeting room.

6. If necessary for the safety of the Commission and public, the Presiding Officer may order the Commission chambers or meeting room cleared of all attendees until the business of the Commission resumes.

7. Any staff member may request that a law enforcement officer assess any person at a Commission meeting for intoxication. A law enforcement officer may also make such an assessment based on personal observation. If, in the officer's professional opinion, the officer has a reasonable suspicion that a person in attendance at a Commission meeting is intoxicated through the use of alcohol or drugs, the officer may exclude that person from further attendance at that meeting.