

PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE

Description of Motions

Adapted from book of Parliamentary Procedure Oral Questions

The purpose of parliamentary instruction is to improve the ability of FFA members to conduct meetings according to correct procedure and to aid in the development of abilities needed to exercise and follow effective leadership in fulfilling occupational, social, and civic responsibilities. This activity will directly aid in developing abilities in human relations essential in agricultural occupations because parliamentary procedure is based on democratic principles.

The following 16 parliamentary skills are those needed to prepare persons to meet most situations with which they will be confronted. The purposes and most important pertinent facts are provided here for use of students, teachers, and judges who might be involved in this activity.

DISTRICT MOTIONS

I. To receive and dispose of a main motion of business

Purpose: To bring business before the assembly.

Pertinent Facts (Standard Descriptive Characteristics):

A second is required.

It is debatable and amendable.

A majority vote is necessary.

It may be reconsidered.

It takes precedence over nothing.

It can be applied to no other motion.

It is out of order when another member has the floor.

II. To call for a division of the assembly

Purpose: To take a standing vote either because the result appears close or because a member doubted that a representative number of the members present have voted.

Pertinent Facts (Standard Descriptive Characteristics):

A second is not required.

It is in order when another member has the floor and at any time after the question has been put, even after the vote has been announced.

It is undebatable and unamendable.

It cannot be reconsidered.

It does not require a vote, because a single member can demand a division.

It can be applied to any motion on which the assembly is called on to vote.

It takes precedence over all motions on which a vote is being taken.

III. To rise to a point of order

Purpose: to enforce the rules of the assembly.

Pertinent Facts (Standard Descriptive Characteristics):

It does not require a second.

It is unamendable.

It is undebatable. (But the chair may allow a member to explain his/her point)

Recognition is not necessary.

It is normally ruled upon by the chair. No vote is taken unless the chair is in doubt or his/her ruling is appealed.

It cannot be reconsidered.

It may interrupt a speaker.

IV. To receive a motion of objection to the consideration of a question

Purpose: to enable the assembly to avoid a particular original main motion.

Pertinent Facts (Standard Descriptive Characteristics):

It takes precedence over original Main Motions. Can be made only before there has been debate or a subsidiary motion has been stated by the chair.

It is applied to original Main Motions and to petitions and communications that are not from a superior body.

It is in order when another member has the floor unless consideration has begun.

It does not require a second.

It is undebatable and unamendable.
It requires a two-thirds vote *against consideration* to sustain the objection.
A negative vote can be reconsidered.

V. To receive a motion of business with or without an amendment and receive a motion to lay it on the table

Purpose: To interrupt the pending business so as to permit doing something else immediately **OR** to lay aside a pending question temporarily when something else of immediate urgency has arisen.

Pertinent Facts (Standard Descriptive Characteristics):

A second is required.
It is undebatable and unamendable.
A majority vote is necessary.
A vote adopting lay on the table cannot be reconsidered.

VI. To consider an item of business and receive a motion to refer it to a committee

Purpose: To send a pending motion to a committee so that it may be investigated and put in better condition for the assembly to consider at a later time.

Pertinent Facts (Standard Descriptive Characteristics):

A second is required.
It is debatable and amendable.
A majority vote is required.
It may be reconsidered before the committee takes up the question.

VII. To direct a request for information (point of information)

Purpose: To ask for information about the business being discussed, but not related to parliamentary procedure.

Pertinent Facts (Standard Descriptive Characteristics):

It does not require a second.
It is undebatable and unamendable.

No vote is taken, usually the chair responds or the request may be directed to another member through the chair.
It may not be reconsidered.
It may interrupt another speaker if it requires immediate attention.

VIII. To receive and dispose of a motion, its amendment, and an amendment to the amendment

Purpose: To modify the wording of a pending motion before the pending motion itself is acted upon.

Pertinent Facts (Standard Descriptive Characteristics):

A second is required.
It is debatable whenever the motion to which it is applied is debatable.
A primary amendment can be amended, but a secondary amendment cannot be amended further.
A primary amendment is an amendment to a main question. A secondary amendment is an amendment to an amendment. Only one amendment of each degree may be under consideration at a time.
A majority vote is required.
It may be reconsidered.

IX. To move the previous question

Purpose: To immediately close debate and the making of subsidiary motions except the motion to *Lay on the Table*.

Pertinent Facts (Standard Descriptive Characteristics):

It is out of order when another member has the floor.
A second is required.
It is undebatable and unamendable.
A two-thirds vote is required.
It may be reconsidered before the affirmative vote is taken.

X. To direct a question of parliamentary inquiry

Purpose: To obtain information about parliamentary law or the rules of the organization bearing on the business at hand.

Pertinent Facts (Standard Descriptive Characteristics):

A second is not required.
It is undebatable and unamendable.
A vote is not required.
It cannot be reconsidered.
Recognition is not necessary.
It may interrupt a speaker.

REGIONAL MOTIONS

XI. To receive a motion to reconsider

Purpose: To bring back a motion that has been voted on in order to permit the correction of hasty, ill-advised, or erroneous action. Also, to take into account added information or a changed situation that has developed since taking the vote.

Pertinent Facts (Standard Descriptive Characteristics):

The motion to reconsider can only be made on the same day the vote to be reconsidered was taken.

A second is required. Any member may second this motion.

It must be made by one who voted on the prevailing side.

A second is required.

It is debatable if the question to be reconsidered is debatable.

It is unamendable.

A majority vote is required.

It cannot be reconsidered.

XII. To receive a motion to take the original motion from the table, secure a vote and, if favorable, consider the original motion.

Purpose: To make pending again a motion or series of adhering motions that had previously been laid on the table.

Pertinent facts (Standard Descriptive Characteristics):

Can only be moved when no other question is pending.

A second is required.

It is undebatable and unamendable.

A majority vote is required.

It cannot be reconsidered.

XIII. To limit or extend limits of Debate

Purpose: To control debate on a pending question.

Pertinent Facts (Standard Descriptive Characteristics):

It may be applied to a series of debatable motions

A second is required.

It is undebatable.

Requires a 2/3 vote for adoption.

It is amendable.

It may be reconsidered.

XIV. To withdraw a motion

Purpose: To withdraw a motion before it is voted on.

Pertinent Facts (Standard Descriptive Characteristics):

It can be made at any time before voting on the pending question has begun.

A second is required if the motion is made by the person requesting permission to withdraw. No second is required if the motion is made by another member.

It is undebatable and unamendable.

A majority vote is required to adopt. It is frequently granted by unanimous consent.

STATE MOTIONS

XV. To receive a motion to rescind a previous action

Purpose: To change an action previously taken or ordered.

Pertinent Facts (Standard Descriptive Characteristics):

It may only be made when no other motion is pending.

A second is required.

It is debatable and amendable.

A majority vote is required if previous notice of the proposed action was given, otherwise, a two-thirds vote is required, or majority of the entire membership.

It cannot be applied to action that cannot be reversed.

Only the negative vote can be reconsidered

XVI. To direct an appeal from the decision of the chair

Purpose: To ask the assembly to decide on a ruling by the chairman.

Pertinent Facts (Standard Descriptive Characteristics):

A second is required.

It is debatable unless it relates to indecorum, the rules of debate, the priority of business, or if it is made while the immediately pending question was undebatable.

It is unamendable.

A majority vote or tie vote sustains the chair.

It can be reconsidered.

It can be made only at the time the ruling is made.

It is in order while another member has the floor.

An answer to a parliamentary inquiry is not a ruling and cannot be appealed.

XVII. To postpone indefinitely

Purpose: To drop a main motion without a direct vote on it. To kill a motion.

Pertinent Facts (Standard Descriptive Characteristics):

It is out of order when another member has the floor.

A second is required.

Debate can go into the merits of the main question.

Requires a Majority vote to be adopted.

It is unamendable.

Only an affirmative vote can be reconsidered.

It yields to all other subsidiary and privileged motions.

It can only be applied to a main motion.

XVIII. To postpone definitely

Purpose: To put off action on a pending motion to a definite time or after a specific event.

Pertinent Facts (Standard Descriptive Characteristics):

A second is required

It is debatable, however debate may not pertain to the main motion.

Requires a majority vote.

It is amendable as to the time to which the main question is to be postponed and making the postponed question a special order.

An affirmative vote can be reconsidered.

A motion cannot be postponed beyond the next regular meeting.

It may not be laid on the table alone.

NON-REQUIRED, UTILIZED MOTIONS

XVIV. To receive a motion to adjourn (Privileged)

Purpose: to close the meeting

Pertinent Facts (When unqualified):

A second is required.

It is undebatable and unamendable.

A majority vote is required.

It cannot be reconsidered.

An unqualified motion to Adjourn is privileged even when no question is pending and is subject to all the rules governing the privileged motion to Adjourn.

It is out of order when another member has the floor.

It cannot be applied to any motion and no motion can be applied to it.