

RULE OF PROCEDURE
for
ALL DELIBERATIVE BODIES
of the
WORLD MEDICAL ASSOCIATION

as adopted by the
34th World Medical Assembly
September/October 1981

and amended by the
WMA General Assembly, Kigali 2023

1. The business of the meeting shall be considered in the order set forth in the agenda for the meeting, unless altered by majority vote of the members present.
2. As each item on the agenda (Minutes, Reports, Resolutions) is presented to the meeting, the person presenting the matter shall constitute the main substantive motion for that particular item.
3. Each proposal to be considered shall be clear and definite in its terms. Whenever possible, the proposal shall be in writing and distributed to the voting members prior to consideration of the matter.
4. After a proposal is introduced, all voting members shall have a reasonable opportunity for discussion of the said proposal.
5. Each proposal which is a main substantive motion shall be subject to the following subsidiary motions, which shall have precedence in the order in which they are listed. (i.e: a) has precedence over all other subsidiary motions and f) has precedence over no other subsidiary motion).
 - (a) **Motion to postpone temporarily** (sometimes referred to as a motion to lay on the table). This motion, if adopted, postpones consideration of the pending main substantive motion together with all pending subsidiary motions, until such time as the body adopts a motion to resume consideration of the matter.
 - (i) This motion must be seconded by a member other than the member making the motion.
 - (ii) This motion is not debatable or amendable. Once seconded, the body must vote on the motion.
 - (iii) This motion requires a majority vote for adoption.
 - (b) **Motion to terminate debate and vote immediately on the pending motion.** This motion is not in order until both sides of the pending issue have been debated. It applies only to the immediately pending motion under debate (i.e.: a subsidiary

- motion, if one is pending, otherwise the main substantive motion).
- (i) This motion must be seconded by a member other than the member making the motion.
 - (ii) This motion is not debatable or amendable. Once seconded, the body must vote on the motion.
 - (iii) This motion requires a 2/3 majority for adoption.
- (c) **Motion to postpone to a definite time.** This motion, if adopted, postpones further consideration of the pending main substantive motion together with all pending subsidiary motions until the time specified in the motion.
- (i) This motion must be seconded by a member other than the member making the motion.
 - (ii) This motion is debatable only on the question of postponement. Once seconded, the pending motion may not be debated further.
 - (iii) This motion is amendable only as to the time to which the pending motions are to be postponed.
 - (iv) This motion requires a majority vote for adoption.
- (d) **Motion to refer to another body.** This motion, if adopted, transfers the pending proposal to the designated body for a purpose specified in the motion (e.g: for further study).
- (i) This motion must be seconded by a member other than the member making the motion.
 - (ii) This motion is debatable only on the question of referral. Once seconded, the pending motion may not be debated further.
 - (iii) This motion is amendable as to any provision of the proposed referral.
 - (iv) This motion requires a majority vote for adoption.
- (e) **Motion to amend.** This motion is for the purpose of changing or modifying a main substantive motion. The amendment may be proposed as an addition to the pending main substantive motion, an elimination from the pending main substantive motion or a substitution for all or part of the pending main substantive motion. The amendments proposed must be germane to the pending main motion.
- (i) This motion must be seconded by a member other than the member making the motion.
 - (ii) This motion is debatable, but debate is limited to the proposed amendment. The pending main substantive motion may not be further debated.
 - (iii) This motion is amendable by a further motion to amend the amendment (sometimes referred to as a second degree amendment). But only one such amendment is in order at a time. The amendment to the amendment must be disposed of before further amendments can be considered.
 - (iv) This motion requires a majority vote for adoption.

- (f) **Motion to postpone indefinitely.** This motion suppresses further consideration of the pending main substantive motion, thereby preventing it from being voted upon. It is, therefore, equivalent to a negative vote.
- (i) This motion must be seconded by a member other than the member making the motion.
 - (ii) This motion is debatable and opens the main substantive motion to debate because, if adopted, it is a final disposition of the main substantive motion.
 - (iii) This motion is not amendable.
 - (iv) This motion requires a majority vote for adoption.
6. A subsidiary motion cannot be made while there is another subsidiary motion pending which has precedence. But a subsidiary motion having a higher precedence may be considered despite a pending subsidiary motion of a lesser precedence.
7. Pending subsidiary motions shall be voted upon in the order of their precedence (i.e: a, b, c, d, e and f).
8. After pending subsidiary motions, if any, are disposed of, the main substantive motion shall be voted upon. A majority vote shall be required for adoption.
9. A motion to reconsider a matter already voted upon may be made at any time during the meeting at which the matter was originally voted upon. This motion, if adopted, sets aside a vote already taken (either affirmative or negative) and opens the matter up again for consideration as if no vote had been taken.
- (i) This motion must be seconded by a member other than the member making the motion.
 - (ii) This motion is debatable and opens up the motion which it seeks to reconsider to debate.
 - (iii) This motion is not amendable.
 - (iv) This motion requires a majority vote for adoption.
10. When a main substantive motion has two or more independent parts, the Chair may rule that each part be voted on separately. In the absence of a ruling by the Chair, any voting member may move to divide the question and vote on each part separately. This motion does not require a second, is not debatable and is not voted upon. The Chair must rule immediately on this motion.
11. At any time during the meeting, any member may request information by directing an inquiry to the Chairman. (Sometimes called a "Parliamentary Inquiry" or a "Point of Information.") This motion does not require a second, is not debatable and is not voted upon. The Chair must respond immediately to the request for information.
12. If a voting member believes that a mistake, error or omission has been committed, he should immediately call it to the attention of the Chairman by raising a "Point of Order." This motion does not require a second, is not debatable and is not voted upon. The Chair must rule immediately on whether a mistake, error or omission has been committed.
13. If a voting member believes that a ruling by the Chair is in error, he may appeal from said ruling if he does so immediately after the ruling by the Chair.

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- (i) This motion must be seconded by a member other than the member making the motion.
 - (ii) This motion is debatable.
 - (iii) This motion requires a majority vote to override the decision of the Chair.
14. A member who has proposed a motion may request permission to withdraw the motion at any time prior to the final vote on the motion. If there is no objection to withdrawing the motion, the Chair may grant the request. If, however, there is objection thereto, the request to withdraw requires a second and a majority vote to grant the request over the objection of a member.
15. At any time during a meeting, a voting member may move to recess the meeting. If adopted, this motion suspends the meeting temporarily, for the period of time described in the motion.
- (i) This motion must be seconded by a member other than the member making the motion.
 - (ii) This motion is not debatable.
 - (iii) This motion is amendable only as to the time or duration of the recess.
 - (iv) This motion requires a majority vote for adoption.
16. At any time during a meeting, a voting member may move to adjourn the meeting. If adopted, this motion terminates the meeting.
- (i) This motion must be seconded by a member other than the member making the motion.
 - (ii) This motion is not debatable or amendable.
 - (iii) This motion requires a majority vote for adoption.