



COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA PUBLIC SCHOOL EMPLOYEES' RETIREMENT SYSTEM

Policy Name: Public Participation and Attendance in Open Meetings Policy
Policy Number:
Effective Date:
Reviewed Date:
Applies To: Public participants and attendees
Contact Person: PSERS Office of Chief Counsel

I. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide a reasonable opportunity for public participation and attendance at open meetings of the Board and Board committees in accordance with the Pennsylvania Sunshine Act. While recognizing the importance of public attendance and participation in open meetings, the Board also recognizes its responsibility for proper governance and the need to conduct its business in an orderly and efficient manner. This policy governs public participation and attendance in open meetings necessary for the Board to conduct its meetings and to maintain order. For purposes of this policy, "Board" and "Board member(s)" include designee(s) and "Presiding Officer" includes: (i) Board Chairperson and Vice Chairperson, and (ii) Committee Chairs and Vice Chairs, as the case may be.

II. Public Comment

To permit fair and orderly expression of public comment, the Board and Board committees shall provide an opportunity at each open meeting for the public to comment on matters of concern, official action, or deliberation that are or may be before the Board or committees. Notwithstanding the foregoing, this policy shall not apply to any proceeding governed by the Administrative Agency Act in relation to adjudications.

Public comments shall be governed by the following:

1. All individuals wishing to participate virtually in an open meeting shall register their intent with the Board Secretary by noon the day prior to the meeting and shall include the name and address of the participant, topic to be addressed, and group affiliation, if applicable. Only individuals who have registered their intent to provide public comment will be recognized by the Presiding Officer. [hyperlink embedded]
2. Individuals wishing to participate in-person in an open meeting are encouraged to register their intent with the Board Secretary by noon the day prior to the meeting to help the Board Secretary prepare future meeting minutes. Participants' registration shall include their name and address, topic to be addressed, and group affiliation, if applicable.

3. When making public comment, individuals shall state their name, topic to be addressed, and group affiliation, if any.
4. If multiple individuals are present on behalf of a group, it is preferred that one individual speaker register and make public comment on the group's behalf.
5. All public comments shall be directed to the Presiding Officer.
6. No public participant may address or question the Board or committee members individually and questions will not be entertained, and the Board is not required to respond to any public comment.
7. Each public comment shall be subject to a five (5) minute time limit unless such time limit is adjusted at the discretion of the Presiding Officer.
8. No public participant may speak more than once per meeting.
9. Public comments may include written supporting documentation which will be distributed to the Board.
10. The Presiding Officer may interrupt or terminate the public participant's statement when the statement is personally directed, abusive, obscene, outside the scope of the registered topic or irrelevant.
11. Speakers who are not able to attend the meeting may submit a written version of their comments to the Board Secretary. Such comments will be provided to the Board and receipt and distribution of such will be noted in the minutes.

III. Attendance

Those in attendance will be governed by the following:

1. Public attendees at the PSERS building, whether speaking or not, are required to sign-in and adhere to all building standards and safety protocols. All attendees will be escorted by an assigned PSERS staff member.
2. Requests for accommodations can be made to the Executive Board Liaison and/or with the front lobby attendant.
3. The Presiding Officer may:
 - a. Request any public attendee to leave the meeting when that person does not observe reasonable decorum.

- b. Request the assistance of law enforcement officers in the removal of a disorderly public attendee when that person's conduct interferes with the orderly progress of the meeting.
- c. Call a recess or adjournment when the lack of public decorum so interferes with the orderly conduct of the meeting as to warrant such action.

IV. Use of Recording Devices

1. The use of recording devices at open meetings of the Board and Board committees is permitted, so long as the use of devices does not disrupt the meeting or interfere with participation in or observation of the meeting by other attendees.
2. The use of video recording devices, including personal electronic devices such as cellphones, e-tablets or pads, and laptop computers, is limited to the area designated for video recording.

Document Properties

- a. **Document Owner:** Executive Office
- b. **Document Author:** PSERS Legal Office
- c. **Summary of Changes:**

Date	Version	Author	Summary
8/4/2022	1.0	Governance & Administration Committee	Click here to enter text.