

**MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** Members, Senate Law & Justice Committee

**FROM:** Senator Manka Dhingra, Chair

**RE:** Senate Law & Justice Committee Rules

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Welcome to the 2023 session! I look forward to working with all of you to ensure that the critical work of this committee gets done. As such, I would appreciate all of us abiding by the following rules:

**1. *Committee Meeting Format***

I expect all members to be present for committee meeting in person, however remote participation will be available. I hope that members do not have to use remote participation very often. In order to facilitate remote participation with minimal disruption to SCS staff workflow, every member will receive a zoom link prior to each committee meeting. Please do communicate with the chair if you need to participate remotely.

**2. *Punctuality***

I expect that our committee agendas will be very full. Out of respect for those testifying and your fellow members, please attend in person or log in to the Zoom meeting a few minutes before the stated meeting time. That will give staff a chance to answer any question or troubleshoot any connection problems. I intend to call each committee meeting to order at the time stated on the agenda.

**3. *Hearings***

Please let me know if you have bills that you would like scheduled for a hearing. I will try to give members as much notice as practicable of the committee's work schedule. Typically, the ranking minority member and I will set agendas for the following week each Monday and staff will distribute the agendas to the committee later that day. This includes all bills to be heard and to be considered for possible executive action. We may not vote on all listed bills, but we will not vote on bills that have not been listed.

If you have a question or would like to speak during a hearing, please do raise your hand or use the “raise hand” function in Zoom if participating remotely.

Unless you are experiencing connection issues, I ask that you keep your video on during the entire hearing and all executive action.

**4. *Electronic Bill Book (EBB)***

The committee will rely upon and use Electronic Bill Book. Committee staff will add all materials relating to hearings, work sessions, or executive sessions to EBB as early as possible or when the material has been made public. The EBB will include bills, bill analyses, bill reports, fiscal notes, and amendments.

**5. *Committee Hearing Sign-In***

The committee will use the Committee Hearing Sign-In application. The sign-in for each bill will become available when the agenda listing the bill has been published and will close one hour before the start of the public hearing. I have requested that the application be made available to all members so that everyone will be able to see who has signed in to testify on each bill. The ranking minority member and I will connect briefly before each public hearing to review the sign-ins. Please let one of us know if there are people from whom you would especially like to hear on a particular bill.

**6. *Amendments***

- a. All amendments (including substitutes) must be sponsored by a committee member.
- b. All amendments and effect statements must be drafted and/or reviewed by nonpartisan committee staff: Tim Ford, Ryan Giannini, Joe McKittrick, and Kevin Black. Nonpartisan staff have the final say on the content of any effect statement.
- c. Amendment sponsors should turn in requests for amendments to committee staff no later than *12 noon of the day preceding the scheduled executive session* on the bill. Please be considerate of staff and turn in amendment requests earlier if they are long or complex, keeping in mind the final deadline below.
- d. I will not ordinarily entertain oral amendments. I may consider very short and simple amendments after consultation with the ranking minority member.

To be eligible for consideration at an executive session, amendments must be released from confidentiality and posted to EBB for committee members by *4:00 p.m. the day*

*before the executive session* or the amendments will be considered out of order. I will consider waiving this deadline only in extraordinary circumstances.

**7. *Executive Sessions***

The committee generally will hold executive sessions on the same day each week (typically Thursdays) at the beginning of the meeting time. The committee will not take executive action on a bill on the same day as the public hearing on the bill.

We will revert to signature sheets so all votes on bills will be taken orally. While remote participation during executive session is discouraged, if you need to participate remotely, staff will hold the signature sheets for 24 hours for all members to sign the signature sheets. Staff must submit the signature sheets to the workroom at the end of the 24 hour period if there is a majority of signatures on the majority report.

**8. *Confidentiality***

Committee staff are impartial and serve members of both parties. Your request for confidentiality on a specific assignment will be honored by the staff.

**9. *General***

I may waive these rules (except, of course, for Rule 8) at my discretion. I will consult with the ranking minority member before granting any waivers.

Thank you for your cooperation, and please feel free to contact me if you have any questions about these rules or other matters relating to the committee. I look forward to working with you this session.