



**TITLE:** Electronic Participation in Mary Ball Washington Regional Council Meetings

**EFFECTIVE DATE:** June 29, 2017

**AUTHORITY:** § 2.2-3708 - § 2.2-3708.1 of the Code of Virginia

**POLICY STATEMENT:** It is the policy of the Mary Ball Washington Regional Council that individual Council members may participate in meetings of the Council by electronic communication means as permitted by Virginia Code § 2.2-3708 and § 2.2-3708.1. This policy shall apply to the entire membership and without regard to the identity of the member requesting remote participation or the matters that will be considered or voted on at the meeting.

Whenever an individual member is to participate from a remote location that is open to the public, the following conditions must be present:

1. A quorum of the Council must be physically assembled at the primary or central meeting location.
2. Notice of the remote location must be given three working days in advance of the meeting.
3. There must be arrangements for the voice of the remote participant to be heard by all persons at the primary or central meeting location. All persons attending the meeting in the remote location shall be afforded the same opportunity to address the public body as persons attending the primary or central location. Any interruption in the telephonic or video broadcast of the meeting shall result in the suspension of action at the meeting until repairs are made and public access restored.
4. All materials that will be distributed to members of the public body shall be made available to all remote locations at the time of the meeting.
5. Any vote taken shall be recorded by name in roll-call fashion and included in the minutes.

In the event a Council member participates electronically from a remote location that is open to the public, the Council shall hold at least one meeting annually where members in attendance at the meeting are physically assembled at one location and where no members participate by electronic communication means.

Whenever an individual member is to participate from a remote location that is not open to the public, the following conditions must be present:

1. A quorum of the Council must be physically assembled at the primary or central meeting location.



2. There must be arrangements for the voice of the remote participant to be heard by all persons at the primary or central meeting location.
3. The individual participation must be in an event of emergency or personal matter, a temporary or permanent disability or other medical condition, or the Council member's principal residence is more than 60 miles from the meeting location.
4. The reason the member is unable to attend the meeting and the remote location from which the member participates must be recorded in the meeting minutes.

In the event a Council member participates electronically due to an emergency or personal matter, such electronic participation is limited by law to 25 percent of the meetings of the public body or two meetings if the Council meets more than 8 times per calendar year, whichever is fewer.

Automatic approval; vote required if challenged

Individual participation from a remote location shall be approved unless such participation would violate this policy or the provisions of the Virginia Freedom of Information Act. If a member's participation from a remote location is challenged, then the Council shall vote whether to allow such participation and the results of such vote shall be recorded in the minutes with specificity.

**APPROVAL AND REVIEW:** This Council policy was reviewed and approved on June 29, 2017.

**SUPERSESION:** This Council policy is new.