

CITY COUNCIL FOR THE CITY OF HARRISONBURG

POLICY ON REMOTE PARTICIPATION THROUGH ELECTRONIC MEANS

- 1) Qualifying Reasons: As provided below, a member of the Harrisonburg City Council may participate in a meeting through electronic communication means from a remote location that is not open to the public if:
 - a) On or before the day of the meeting, a member of the Council notifies the Mayor as the chair of the Council that:
 - i) The member has a temporary or permanent disability or other medical condition that prevents the member's physical attendance;
 - ii) A medical condition of a member of the member's family requires the member to provide care that prevents the member's physical attendance; or
 - iii) The member is unable to attend the meeting due to a personal matter and identifies with specificity the nature of the personal matter. However, the member may not use remote participation due to personal matters more than two meetings per calendar year or 25 percent of the meetings held per calendar year rounded up to the next whole number, whichever is greater.
 - b) If participation by a member through electronic communication means is approved pursuant to this subsection, the Council shall record in its minutes the remote location from which the member participated; however, the remote location need not be open to the public and may be identified in the minutes by a general description.
 - c) If participation is approved pursuant to subsection (1)(a)(i) or (1)(a)(ii), the Council shall also include in its minutes the fact that the member participated through electronic communication means due to a (i) temporary or permanent disability or other medical condition that prevented the member's physical attendance or (ii) family member's medical condition that required the member to provide care for such family member, thereby preventing the member's physical attendance.
 - d) If participation is approved pursuant to subsection (1)(a)(iii), the Council shall also include in its minutes the fact that the member participated through electronic communication means due to the distance between the member's principal residence and the meeting location.
 - e) If participation is approved pursuant to subsection (1)(a)(iv), the Council shall also include in its minutes the specific nature of the personal matter cited by the member.
- 2) Other Requirements:
 - a) Remote participation by a council member is only authorized if approved by a majority of a quorum of the Harrisonburg City Council physically assembled at the primary or central meeting location. A request for remote participation shall be recorded by and voted on as a resolution of the Council;
 - b) The City Council shall make arrangements for the voice of the remote council member to be heard by all persons in attendance at the primary or central meeting location;
 - c) If a member's participation from a remote location pursuant to this subsection is disapproved because such participation would violate this policy adopted pursuant to

Virginia Code § 2.2-3708.3(D), such disapproval shall be recorded in the minutes with specificity; and

- d) This policy shall be applied strictly and uniformly, without exception, to the entire membership of the Council 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.