

Legal Issues

Parliamentary Procedure



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.

Parliamentary Procedure

Is there an easy to use resource for helping our congregation understand parliamentary procedure?

Yes, there is a chart prepared by the Secretary of the ELCA which helps explain how motions work in a properly run congregation or synod meeting. For more detail, it is always important to refer to official rule books on Parliamentary Procedure. The [Model Constitution for Congregations](#) paragraph C10.07 states, "*Robert's Rules of Order*, latest edition, shall govern parliamentary procedure of all meetings of this congregation."

[Charts of Ranking and Nonranking Motions](#)

CHART OF RANKING MOTIONS

Name of Motion in Order of Rank	Section	Interrupt?	Second?	Debatable?	Amendable?	Vote	Reconsider?
<i>Privileged</i>							
Fix the time to which to adjourn	22	NO	YES	NO*	YES	M	YES
Adjourn	21	NO	YES	NO*	NO*	M	NO
Take a recess	20	NO	YES	NO	YES	M	NO
Raise a question of privilege	19	YES	NO	NO	NO	CHAIR*	NO
Call for the orders of the day	18	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO*	NO
<i>Subsidiary</i>							
Lay on the table	17	NO	YES	NO	NO	M	YES(-)
Previous question	16	NO	YES	NO	NO*	2/3	YES*
Limit or extend limits of debate	15	NO	YES	NO	YES	2/3	YES
Postpone to a certain time	14	NO	YES	YES	YES	M*	YES
Commit or refer	13	NO	YES	YES	YES	M	YES*
Amend	12	NO	YES	YES*	YES*(x1)	M	YES
Postpone indefinitely	11	NO	YES	YES	NO	M	YES(+)
<i>Main motion</i>							
Main motion	10	NO	YES	YES	YES	M	YES

CHART OF NONRANKING MOTIONS

Name of Motion	Section	Interrupt?	Second?	Debatable?	Amendable?	Vote	Reconsider?
<i>Incidental</i>							
Appeal	24	YES	YES	YES	NO	M	YES
Consider by paragraph/seriatim	28	NO	YES	NO	YES	M	NO
Division of the Assembly	29	YES	NO	NO	NO	DEMAND	NO
Division of a question	27	NO	YES	NO	YES	M	NO
Nominations and polls (reopen)	31	NO	YES	NO	YES	M	YES (-)
Nominations and polls (close)	31	NO	YES	NO	YES	2/3	NO
Objection to consideration of a question	26	YES	NO	NO	NO	2/3	YES (-)
Parliamentary inquiry	33	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO-CHAIR	NO
Point of information	33	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO-CHAIR	NO
Point of order	10	YES	NO	NO*	NO	NO-CHAIR	NO
Ratify/confirm	10	NO	YES	YES	YES	M	YES
Requests to withdraw a motion, read a paper, etc.	33	YES	NO*	NO	NO	M*	YES*
Suspend the rules	25	NO	YES	NO	NO	2/3*	NO
Voting	30	NO	YES	NO*	YES	M*	YES
<i>Bring Back Motions</i>							
Discharge a committee	36	NO	YES	YES	YES	2/3*	YES(-)
Reconsider	37	YES*	YES	YES	NO	M	NO
Rescind or amend something previously adopted	35	NO	YES	YES	YES	2/3*	YES(-)
Take from the table	34	NO	YES	NO	NO	M	NO