



CITY OF CLEARLAKE

City Council

STAFF REPORT	
SUBJECT: Consideration of Amendments to the Council Norms and Procedures	MEETING DATE: November 21, 2024
SUBMITTED BY: Melissa Swanson, Administrative Services Director/City Clerk	
PURPOSE OF REPORT: <input type="checkbox"/> Information only <input type="checkbox"/> Discussion <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Action Item	

WHAT IS BEING ASKED OF THE CITY COUNCIL/BOARD:

The City Council is being asked to adopt the amended Council Norms and Procedures.

BACKGROUND/DISCUSSION:

The City Council Norms and Procedures ("Norms") is a governing document that outlines the protocols, procedures, and expectations for the City Council. The Norms promote efficient governance, communication, and public engagement. The most recent update to the Norms occurred on February 16, 2023. However, recent observations and analysis of the Norms have revealed that certain updates are necessary to ensure clarity, efficacy, and compliance with current best practices.

Proposed Amendments:

The proposed amendments to the Norms are as follows:

- **Section 3.1 Attendance:** The proposed amendment update the Norms to comply with [Government Code Section 36513](#) which outlines the absence limit for city councilmembers of a general law city.
- **Section 3.8 Use of City Email and Social Media Accounts:** The proposed amendment clarifies the policy on the use of City email and social media accounts. It emphasizes that public officials should use City email or City-controlled social media accounts for City business, except for emergencies. The amendment also clarifies the definition of "City-controlled social media account."
- **Section 3.6 Ethics, Sexual Harassment Prevention, and Anti-Bullying Training:** The proposed amendment adds the state required sexual harassment prevention and anti-

bullying training to the ethics training required by the Fair Political Practices Commission.

- **Section 3.8 Use of Email and Social Media Accounts:** Language in this section was added to address the use of City email and social media accounts. This section clarifies that, except for emergencies, public officials conducting City business should not create public records using non-City email or social media accounts. They are encouraged to use City email or City-controlled social media accounts instead. and updates the GC reference of the Public Records Act to the current [GC Section 7920.530\(a\)](#) and requires compliance with the City's policies.
- **Section 3.9 Use of City Electronic Devices:** Language was added to this section to clarify Council Members are also responsible for adherence to the City's computer and email use policy.
- **Section 5.8 Appointment Procedure for Board and Committee Members Appointed by the Full Council:** The proposed amendment adds language to address the removal of a board or committee member.
- **Section 6.3 Teleconferencing:** The proposed amendment updates the requirements for teleconferencing into City Council meetings to align with the latest update to the Brown Act and recommends Council Members discuss any plans to teleconference with the City Manager and City Attorney beforehand.
- **Section 8.1 Mayor's Responsibility:** The proposed amendment adds a rule for when both the Mayor and Vice Mayor are absent from a meeting.
- **Section 8.8 Agenda Request Policy:** The proposed amendment updates unnecessary language and clarifies how a Council Member may request an agenda item.
- **Section 8.9 Consent Agenda:** The proposed amendment adds the procedure for Consent Calendar items. Consent Calendar items are non-controversial and routine. Council Members may remove items from the Consent Calendar for separate discussion and action.
- **Section 10 Closed Sessions:** The proposed amendment adds language requiring closed session written materials provided to the Council be returned to the City Manager at the end of the closed session.
- **Section 11.5 Removal of Individuals or Groups Engaging in Disruptive Behavior:** The procedure for removing disruptive individuals or groups from meetings was updated. The update clarifies the definition of disruptive behavior and outlines the procedure for removing individuals or groups from meetings. It also includes a specific procedure for addressing disruptive verbal conduct based on identity, emphasizing that such behavior

may constitute or contribute to discrimination, pursuant to the [Brown Act](#), [Government Code Section 54957.95](#).

- **Section 12 Enforcement of Decorum:** This section, which dealt with violations of procedures, has been removed, as the information is now addressed in Section 11.5.

In addition to the amendments listed above, minor edits not affecting the intent of the document were made.

The proposed amendments to the City Council Norms and Procedures are intended to enhance clarity, efficiency, and compliance with current legal and best practices. These revisions address various aspects of Council operations, including attendance, use of technology, meeting procedures, and decorum. By adopting these amendments, the City Council can ensure that its governing document remains relevant and effective in facilitating productive governance and public engagement.

Staff recommends that the City Council adopt the amended Council Norms and Procedures.

OPTIONS:

1. Move to adopt the amended Council Norms and Procedures.
2. Other direction.

FISCAL IMPACT:

None \$ Budgeted Item? Yes No

Budget Adjustment Needed? Yes No If yes, amount of appropriation increase:
\$

Affected fund(s): General Fund Measure P Fund Measure V Fund Other:

Comments:

STRATEGIC PLAN IMPACT:

- Goal #1: Make Clearlake a Visibly Cleaner City
- Goal #2: Make Clearlake a Statistically Safer City
- Goal #3: Improve the Quality of Life in Clearlake with Improved Public Facilities
- Goal #4: Improve the Image of Clearlake
- Goal #5: Ensure Fiscal Sustainability of City
- Goal #6: Update Policies and Procedures to Current Government Standards
- Goal #7: Support Economic Development

SUGGESTED MOTIONS:

Move to adopt the amended Council Norms and Procedures.

Attachments: 1) Redlined City Council Norms and Procedures