



## LEGISLATIVE COVER MEMO

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**Meeting Date:** May 19, 2025

**Agenda Item:** **Resolution 2025-27**

ADOPTING A VIRTUAL MEETING POLICY

**Submitted by:** Khristi Dunn, Clerk of Council

**Scope/Description:** Ohio House Bill 257 went into effect on April 9, 2025. It allows certain public bodies to meet virtually in certain circumstances. Elected bodies (aka City Council) cannot meet virtually. But, non-compensated boards and commissions, like Planning Commission and the Board of Zoning Appeals, can. The City, in accordance with O.R.C. 121.221, must adopt a virtual meeting policy enabling its membership to attend and hold meetings virtually. The policy outlines the procedures and requirements for conducting virtual meetings for the City of Franklin. The Government Affairs Committee reviewed the proposed policy at their May 5, 2025, meeting and recommend Council approval. City Council also discussed the policy at their May 5, 2025 meeting were in favor of adopting a virtual meeting policy.

**Exhibit:** Virtual Meeting Policy

**Budget Impact:** None.

**Recommendation:** Approval

CITY OF FRANKLIN, OHIO  
RESOLUTION 2025-27

**ADOPTING A VIRTUAL MEETING POLICY**

WHEREAS, Under Ohio Revised Code Section ("O.R.C") 121.221, certain public bodies may adopt a virtual meeting policy enabling its membership to attend and hold meetings and hearings virtually; and

WHEREAS, the Council finds that it is in the best interest of the citizens to provide a method for conducting public business in an efficient, accessible, and transparent manner, and that the adoption of a Virtual Meeting Policy will support the continuity of government operations while enhancing public participation and administrative flexibility;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the City of Franklin, Ohio, a majority of the members present concurring, that:

Section 1. The Virtual Meeting Policy, as set forth in the attached Exhibit A, is hereby adopted. Said Policy shall be kept on file in the office of the Clerk of Council.

Section 2. It is found that all formal actions of this Council concerning and relating to the adoption of this Resolution were in an open meeting of this Council, and that all deliberations of this Council that resulted in this formal action were in meetings open to the public in compliance with all legal requirements, including Section 121.22 of the Ohio Revised Code and the Rules of Council.

Section 3. This Resolution shall become effective immediately upon its passage.

ADOPTED: May 19, 2025

ATTEST: \_\_\_\_\_  
Khristi Dunn, Clerk of Council

APPROVED: \_\_\_\_\_  
Brent Centers, Mayor

**CERTIFICATE**

I, the undersigned Clerk of Council for the Franklin City Council, do hereby certify that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of a resolution passed by that body on May 19, 2025.

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Khristi Dunn, Clerk of Council

# City of Franklin

## Virtual Meeting Policy

### INTRODUCTION

Under Ohio Revised Code Section (“O.R.C”) 121.221, certain public bodies may adopt a virtual meeting policy enabling its membership to attend and hold meetings [and hearings] virtually. The following is the City of Franklin’s virtual meeting policy as required by O.R.C 121.221(B)(3). In accordance with O.R.C. 121.221 [and 715.693], this policy outlines the procedures and requirements for conducting virtual meetings for the City of Franklin.

### DEFINITIONS

The following words and terms as used in this Section shall have the following meanings unless otherwise provided and unless the context or use indicates another or different meaning or intent:

**“Virtual Meeting”** shall mean a formal meeting of the City of Franklin, fully or partially conducted via video conference or any other similar electronic technology.

**“Nonroutine Expenditure”** shall mean any significant cost or expense that is not part of the regular, ongoing operational expenses of the City of Franklin. Significant costs or expenses include nonroutine costs or expenses not previously appropriated or budgeted by the City of Franklin.

**“Significant Hiring Decision”** shall mean any decisions by the City of Franklin concerning the appointment or termination of any City of Franklin personnel.

### POLICY

#### Section 1.     **Calling a Virtual Meeting**

To call a Virtual Meeting, any Board Member may contact the chairperson and City Manager with their intention to call a Virtual Meeting no less than ninety-six (96) hours before the meeting. Subsequently, all Board Members may inform the Chairperson and City Manager of their intention to attend the meeting virtually no later than forty-eight (48) hours before the meeting, except in the case of an emergency. An emergency shall include, but is not limited to, a medical emergency, family emergency, or natural disaster preventing a member from attending the meeting in person. The chairperson has the authority to determine whether other circumstances warrant an emergency under this provision.

If, upon notification of an upcoming meeting, and not later than forty-eight (48) hours before the meeting, at least two Board Members (or at least ten percent (10%) of Board Members if the total membership exceeds 20) notify the chairperson that an item on the agenda must be addressed during a meeting conducted fully in person, upon the chairperson’s acknowledgement of receipt of the notification, the Board shall take action on such item only at a meeting conducted fully in person.

#### **a. Exceptions**

- i. Virtual Meetings may not be attended or conducted if any of the following are being considered by the Board:
  1. Nonroutine Expenditure

2. Significant Hiring Decision
3. An Increase in Tax or Tax Issue

**b. Unanimous Consent for Public Hearings**

[A Public Hearing may not be conducted virtually without the consent of all required parties of the hearing.]

**Section 2. Notice of Virtual Meetings**

Any news media that desires advance notification of Virtual Meetings shall file with the Secretary or Clerk of Council a request therefor. Such requests may be modified or extended only by filing a new request with the Secretary or Clerk of Council. News media that have properly filed requests for notification and other required parties will receive such notification at least seventy-two (72) hours in advance of the meeting or hearing by reasonable methods, such as posting on the city's official website, or email notification. Such notification shall provide the time, location, agenda of the meeting, and the manner by which the meeting will be conducted. In the event of an emergency, notice shall be provided as soon as reasonably feasible.

**Section 3. Public Access to Virtual Meetings**

In the event that a Virtual Meeting is called for a meeting that is typically open to the public, the public shall have access to such meeting. The City of Franklin shall post a link on the City's official website that is accessible to the public for the public to attend or provide other similar means of public attendance. The public shall be able to observe and hear the discussion and deliberations of the Board Members regardless of whether the Member is participating in person or electronically.

**Section 4. Virtual Meeting Roll Call Vote**

All votes taken in the Virtual Meeting shall be taken by roll call vote unless there is a motion for unanimous consent, and the motion is not objected to by a Board Member. If a vote is taken unanimously, the Meeting Agenda will reflect how all Board Members voted, including any members who abstained from voting.

**Section 6. Application of Law**

Notwithstanding the existence of this policy, the City of Franklin hereby informs the public that it shall comply with the requirements of O.R.C. 121.221 and any amendments thereto, supersede and take precedence over this policy. The City of Franklin retains the right to amend this policy at any time in accordance with the Act.

**Section 7. Effective Date and Revisions**

Effective May 19, 2025