

Provincetown Town Hall
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Policy Statement

2012-01-09

Town Board Remote Participation Policy

The Board of Selectmen authorize remote participation for all appointed and elected Town Boards in accordance with the requirements of Massachusetts Open Meeting Law 940 CMR 29.00, section 29.10: Remote Participation, with the following additional criteria:

Criteria:

- Remote participation will be permissible to all appointed and elected Town Boards, with the exception of the Board of Selectmen.
- The method for remote participation by all non-regulatory Town Boards will be by telephone with speaker/conference call function on and clearly audible to all persons present in the meeting location.
- The method for remote participation by all regulatory Town Boards, namely the Conservation Commission, Board of Health, Historic District Commission, Licensing Board, Planning Board, and Zoning Board of Appeals, will be by video/web technology, with the remote participant clearly visible and audible to all persons present in the meeting location.

The Selectmen emphasize Section 29.10 (4) Minimum Requirements for Remote Participation, specifically, that a quorum of the body, including the chair or, in the chair's absence, the person authorized to chair the meeting, shall be physically present at the meeting location, as required by [M.G.L. c. 30A, sec 20\(d\)](#); and members of public bodies who participate remotely may vote and shall not be deemed absent for the purposes of [M.G.L. c. 39, sec. 23D](#).

Reasons for Remote Participation:

- Personal illness.
- Personal disability.
- Emergency.
- Military Service.
- Geographic distance.

Town Board Remote Participation Procedure:

Step 1: Any member of a public body who wishes to participate remotely shall, as soon as reasonably possible prior to a meeting, notify the chair or, in the chair's absence, the person chairing the meeting, of his or her desire to do so and the reason for and facts supporting his or her request.

- Step 2:** At the start of the meeting, the chair shall announce the name of any member who will be participating remotely and the reason under 940 CMR 29.10(5) for his or her remote participation. This information shall also be recorded in the meeting minutes.
- Step 3:** All votes taken during any meeting in which a member participates remotely shall be by roll call vote.
- Step 4:** A member participating remotely may participate in an executive session, but shall state at the start of any such session that no other person is present and/or able to hear the discussion at the remote location, unless presence of that person is approved by a simple majority vote of the public body.
- Step 5:** When feasible, the chair or, in the chair's absence, the person chairing the meeting, shall distribute to remote participants, in advance of the meeting, copies of any documents or exhibits that he or she reasonably anticipates will be used during the meeting. If used during the meeting, such documents shall be part of the official record of the meeting, and shall be listed in the meeting minutes and retained in accordance with [M.G.L. c. 30A, sec. 22](#).

The Board of Selectmen reserve the right to revoke Town Board remote participation at any time under 940 CMR 29.10 (3).

This Policy shall be reviewed after one year of implementation.

Adopted January 09, 2012

In favor: Anderson, Bedard, Knight, Santos, McChesney

Opposed: None.