

SENATE No. 6

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts



In the Year Two Thousand Eleven

1 *Ordered*, That the joint rules of the Senate and House of Representatives for the years
2 2011-2012 be adopted, as follows:

3 Committees.

4 1. Joint standing committees shall be appointed at the beginning of the biennial session as
5 follows:-

6 A committee on Children, Families and Persons With Disabilities;

7 A committee on Community Development and Small Businesses;

8 A committee on Consumer Protection and Professional Licensure;

9 A committee on Economic Development and Emerging Technologies;

10 A committee on Education;

- 11 A committee on Elder Affairs;
- 12 A committee on Election Laws;
- 13 A committee on Environment, Natural Resources and Agriculture;
- 14 A committee on Financial Services;
- 15 A committee on Health Care Financing;
- 16 A committee on Higher Education;
- 17 A committee on Housing;
- 18 A committee on the Judiciary;
- 19 A committee on Labor and Workforce Development;
- 20 A committee on Mental Health and Substance Abuse;
- 21 A committee on Municipalities and Regional Government;
- 22 A committee on Public Health;
- 23 A committee on Public Safety and Homeland Security;
- 24 A committee on Public Service;
- 25 A committee on Revenue;
- 26 A committee on State Administration and Regulatory Oversight;
- 27 A committee on Telecommunications, Utilities and Energy;

28 A committee on Tourism, Arts and Cultural Development;

29 A committee on Transportation;

30 A committee on Veterans and Federal Affairs

31

32 Each to consist of 6 members of the Senate, and 11 on the part of the House except the
33 committees on Economic Development and Emerging Technologies, Health Care Financing and
34 Transportation which shall consist of 7 members of the Senate and 13 of the House.

35 Within 4 weeks of the appointment of joint standing committees in the first annual session of the
36 General Court, each joint standing committee shall adopt rules of procedure regarding the
37 conduct of said committee. Said rules of procedure, together with any amendments, shall be filed
38 with the Clerk of the Senate and the Clerk of the House and shall be available to the public and
39 members of the General Court on the official website for the General Court.

40 Except as provided by Joint Rule 1E, each matter shall be referred only to 1 joint committee for
41 consideration and all reports of matters by joint committees shall be made to the House or the
42 Senate, under Joint Rule 4, not to another joint committee. The committee to which a matter is
43 initially referred may discharge the matter to another committee with jurisdiction over the matter.

44 Matters referred by either the Senate or the House to its committee on Ways and Means shall be
45 considered by the respective committees of the two branches, acting as a joint committee, when,
46 in the judgment of the chairmen of the respective committees of the 2 branches, the interests of
47 legislation or the expedition of business will be better served by such joint consideration. Matters

48 may also be referred to the committees on Ways and Means, of the two branches, as a joint
49 committee.

50 The committees on Rules, together with the presiding officers of the two branches, acting
51 concurrently, may consider and suggest such measures as shall, in their judgment, tend to
52 facilitate the business of the session and a majority vote of the 2 branches shall be required to
53 approve such recommendations.

54 In order to assist the House and the Senate in their: (1) consideration and enactment of new
55 legislation and modifications of existing laws, when either are deemed to be appropriate; (2)
56 evaluation of the effectiveness and administration of laws and programs previously enacted; and
57 (3) appraisal of the conditions and circumstances which may indicate the desirability of enacting
58 new legislation, the various joint committees shall have the following oversight responsibilities:

59 (i) each joint committee shall review and study, on a continuing basis, the implementation,
60 administration, execution and effectiveness of those laws, or parts of law, the subject matter of
61 which is within the jurisdiction of that committee, the administrative regulations adopted to
62 implement those laws, and those state agencies or entities having responsibilities for the
63 administration and execution of such laws;

64 (ii) in carrying out these review and study activities, each committee shall determine whether
65 such laws, administrative regulations and programs under those laws are being implemented in
66 accordance with the intent of the General Court and whether such laws, administrative
67 regulations and programs should be continued, curtailed or eliminated;

68 (iii) each committee shall also review and study any conditions and circumstances which may
69 indicate the necessity or desirability of enacting new legislation within the jurisdiction of that

70 committee, regardless of whether any matter has been introduced on that subject, and shall, on a
71 continuing basis, undertake research on matters within the jurisdiction of that committee.

72 Committees shall coordinate oversight activities, under the direction of the presiding officers of
73 both branches, to achieve the maximum objectives of clauses (i), (ii) and (iii).

74 Each committee may, upon completion of its oversight hearings, report to the General Court the
75 results of its findings and recommendations together with accompanying corrective legislation, if
76 any, by filing the same with the Clerk of the House of Representatives or the Clerk of the Senate.

77 Copies of such reports shall be, whenever practicable, made available to all members
78 electronically and to the public via the Internet. The disposition of said reports shall be
79 determined by the Clerks with the approval of the Speaker and the President.

80 The Senate and House chairmen of a joint committee may appoint subcommittees to investigate
81 and study any matter referred to said subcommittee. Any subcommittee so established shall be
82 co-chaired by a majority member of the Senate and a majority member of the House who are
83 members of the joint standing committee appointing the subcommittee. The composition of the
84 subcommittee shall be proportional to the composition of the appointing joint committee;
85 provided, however, that not less than 10 per cent of the subcommittee's members shall be from
86 the minority party. Chairmen of subcommittees shall not be considered chairmen under section 2
87 of chapter 3 of the acts of 2005. A subcommittee may, upon completion of an investigation and
88 study, report the results of the investigation and study together with legislation, if any, by filing
89 the same with the Senate and House chairmen of the appointing joint committee.

90 Temporary employees of the general court assigned to a joint committee who are students at an
91 accredited education institution or employees or grantees of other non-profit organizations under

92 section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code may receive compensation from such
93 organization, according to that organization's regular program of providing such compensation
94 for temporary governmental or public service employment. A temporary employee's Senate or
95 House supervisor shall establish the employee's total compensation, shall verify that the sum of
96 the employee's state compensation, if any, and that any outside compensation the employee is to
97 receive under this rule would not exceed this total compensation, and shall file the written terms
98 of the employee's compensation with the Senate Personnel Office or House Human Resources
99 Office, where it shall be available for public inspection. The temporary employee shall sign a
100 confidentiality and ethics agreement provided by the Senate Personnel Office or House Human
101 Resources Office. [Amended Jan. 6, 18 82; Jan. 5, 18 83; Jan. 7, 18 84; Jan. 8 and 26, 1885; Jan.
102 8, 18 86; Jan. 12, 18 87; Jan. 9, 18 88; Jan. 28, 18 89; Jan. 8, 18 90; Feb. 2, 18 91; Jan. 11 and
103 Feb. 10, 18 92; Feb. 7, 18 93; Jan. 8. 1894; Jan. 7, 18 95; Jan. 7, 18 96; Jan. 11, 18 97; Jan. 10,
104 18 98; Jan. 9, 18 99; Jan. 22 and 29, 1901; Jan. 6, 19 02; Jan. 9, 19 03; Jan. 8, 19 04; Jan. 6, 19
105 05; Jan. 4, 19 07; Jan. 5, 19 10; Jan. 4, 19 11; Jan. 1, 19 13; Jan. 12, 19 14; Jan. 2, 19 18; Jan. 1
106 and 8 and Feb. 21, 1919; Jan. 7, 19 20; Jan. 5, 19 21; April 17 and 30, 1925; Jan. 5, 19 27; Jan. 7,
107 19 31; Jan. 6, 19 37; Jan. 4, 19 39; Jan. 1, 19 41; Jan. 3, 19 45; Jan. 2, 19 46; Jan. 6, 19 47; Feb.
108 1, 19 49; Jan. 7, 19 53; Jan. 7, 19 59; Jan. 30, 19 61; Jan. 7, 19 63; Jan. 12, 19 65; Feb. 24, 19 65;
109 Mar. 10, 19 66; Jan. 30, 19 67; Jan. 7, 1971 ; July 23, 1974 ; Sept. 30 and Oct. 12, 1976 ; Nov. 3,
110 1981 ; Dec. 21, 1981 ; Mar. 15, 1982 ; Oct. 3, 1983 ; June 3, 1985 ; Jan. 25 and Mar. 14, 1988 ;
111 Mar. 27, 1995 , June 12, 1995 ; July 17, 2003 ; Jan. 26, 2005; July 21 and September 20, 2005;
112 Feb. 20, 2007; Feb 12, 2009.]

113 1A. All meetings of joint committees acting concurrently, Senate and House standing
114 committees, special committees of the Senate and House of Representa?tives, and joint special

115 committees and committees of conference on the disagreeing votes of the 2 branches shall be
116 open to the public, unless a majority shall vote otherwise. [Adopted July 17, 1973 . Amended
117 July 18, 1974; Feb. 12, 2009.]

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119 1B. A joint standing committee shall hold a public hearing on each matter referred to it in each
120 legislative session. [Adopted June 3, 1985; Amended Feb. 12, 2009 .]

121

122 1C. All joint standing committees shall schedule committee hearings and executive sessions so
123 as not to conflict, to the extent feasible, with the schedules of other committees and, to the extent
124 feasible, the day of the week and times during that day set aside for formal sessions by the
125 respective branches from the first Wednesday in January through the fourth Wednesday of April
126 in the first annual session. [Adopted June 3, 1985; Amended June 12, 1995 .]

127 1D. All meetings of joint standing committees, and special joint committees of the Senate and
128 House of Representatives, shall be open to the public, and any person shall be permitted to attend
129 any such meeting unless such committee convenes in executive session, as provided herein. All
130 joint standing committees shall determine a schedule for committee hearings to be held from the
131 beginning of the first annual session through the fourth Wednesday in June in said session. These
132 committee schedules shall be submitted to the Clerk of the House who shall cause them to be
133 published on the official website for the General Court. Establishment of such schedules shall
134 not preclude joint standing committees from scheduling additional hearings or meetings as
135 needed. No executive session shall be held except upon extraordinary circumstances and only
136 after the committee has first convened in an open session for which notice has been given, the

137 presiding officer has stated the purpose of the executive session, a majority of the committee
138 members present has voted to go into executive session, the vote of each member has been
139 recorded on a roll call vote, and the presiding officer has stated before the executive session if
140 the committee will reconvene after the executive session. The records of all such roll calls shall
141 be kept in the offices of the committee for the duration of the General Court during which said
142 vote was recorded, and shall be available for public inspection upon reasonable notice and during
143 regular office hours.

144 All joint standing committees, and special joint committees of the Senate and House of
145 Representatives, shall notify the Sergeant-at-Arms of the time, place and agenda of all public
146 hearings and executive sessions not less than 48 hours prior to the time of such meetings. The
147 Sergeant-at-Arms shall notify the clerk, who shall inform all members electronically and publish
148 such information on the official website of the General Court whenever practicable.

149 Nothing contained in this rule shall prohibit a joint standing committee or special joint
150 committee of the Senate and the House of Representatives from taking appropriate action
151 including, but not limited to, the exclusion of a person from a committee meeting in order to
152 prevent the disruption of or interference with committee proceedings.

153 The 48 hour requirement shall be suspended in an emergency only after all reasonable efforts
154 have been made to contact all committee members and upon a recorded vote of at least a
155 majority of the members of each branch appointed to the committee, but not less than two-thirds
156 of the members of each branch voting.

157 A meeting of a committee may be recorded by a person in attendance by means of a recorder or
158 any other means of audio/visual reproduction except when a meeting is held in executive session;

159 provided, that a person seeking to record a meeting of a committee notifies the Chairs of the
160 committee prior to commencing such recording; and provided further that during such recording
161 there is no interference with the conduct of the meeting. [Adopted June 3, 1985 . Amended June
162 12, 1995; Feb. 20, 2007 .]

163 1E. The joint standing committee on Health Care Financing shall review all legislation relating
164 to health care to evaluate the appropriateness and fiscal effect of such legislation. A matter
165 within the jurisdiction of said committee may, if appropriate, initially be referred to another joint
166 standing committee sharing jurisdiction of the subject-matter. Any matter reported favorably by
167 such joint standing committee shall be referred to the joint committee on Health Care Financing;
168 provided, however, that notwithstanding any rule to the contrary, any such matter so reported
169 shall not be read a first time in the branch in which the report was received. The next favorable
170 report on any such matter, if made by a joint committee, may be made to either branch. Such
171 next favorable report shall be considered the first reading. The branch of origin for any such bill
172 so reported shall be the branch receiving such favorable report.

173 For all matters initially referred to the joint committee on Health Care Financing and not
174 previously referred to another joint committee, the joint committee on Health Care Financing
175 may make favorable reports to either branch, at the discretion of the committee, except that
176 reports on money bills shall be made to the House.

177

178 In compliance with section 38A of chapter 3 of the General Laws, the joint committee on Health
179 Care Financing when reporting on bills shall include a fiscal note prepared under section 3A of
180 chapter 29 of the General Laws, showing the estimated cost or the fiscal effect of the proposed

181 legislation, if, in the opinion of said committee, such cost or fiscal effect exceeds the sum of
182 \$100,000; provided, however, that any matter reported by the committee on Health Care
183 Financing with a fiscal effect of less than \$100,000 shall not be referred, under the rules, to the
184 committee on Ways and Means.[Adopted Jan. 26, 2005; Amended May 19, 2005; Feb. 20, 2007;
185 Feb. 12, 2009.]

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187 1F. [Omitted February 12, 2009].

188 1G. The President of the Senate, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, Minority Leader
189 of the Senate, Minority Leader of the House of Representatives, the Senate and House chairmen
190 and the Senate and House ranking minority members of the joint committee on Public Safety and
191 Homeland Security may receive security clearance from federal and state homeland security
192 officials in order to be granted access to confidential homeland security briefings, information
193 and materials. The President of the Senate, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, the
194 Senate and House committee chairmen and the Senate and House ranking minority members
195 may designate 1 or more members of their staff who may receive such security clearance.

196 Any person who receives security clearance under this rule shall sign all confidentiality
197 agreements required by homeland security officials. The breach of any such confidentiality
198 agreement shall constitute a violation of the Joint Rules of the Senate and House of
199 Representatives. Any alleged violation of a confidentiality agreement shall be referred for
200 investigation to the Senate committee on Ethics and Rules or the House committee on Ethics,
201 respectively, and, if appropriate, to law enforcement authorities for potential criminal
202 prosecution. [Adopted Jan. 26, 2005; Amended Feb. 12, 2009 .]

203 2. No member of either branch shall act as counsel for any party before any committee of the
204 Legislature.

205 2A. No member of either branch shall purchase, directly or indirectly, the stock or other
206 securities of any corporation or association knowing that there is pending before the General
207 Court any measure specially granting to such corporation or association any immunity,
208 exemption, privilege or benefit or any measure providing for the creation of, or directly affecting
209 any, contractual relations between such corporation or association and the Commonwealth. This
210 rule shall not apply to the purchase of securities issued by the Commonwealth or any political
211 subdivision of the Commonwealth. [See G.L. chapter 268, section 10.] [Adopted Jan. 16, 1922 .]

212 3. When the General Court is in session, authorization for any committee of the Senate or House
213 of Representatives to travel during the session of the General Court shall be approved by a vote
214 of two thirds of the members of its branch present and voting. When the General Court is in
215 session, authorization for any committee of the Senate or House of Representatives to sit and
216 travel during the recess of the General Court shall be approved by a vote of two-thirds of the
217 members of each branch present and voting. During the recess of the General Court, the
218 President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives may, by written consent,
219 allow standing committees of their respective branches or appoint special committees to sit,
220 travel and incur expenses not exceeding sums authorized in writing by said presiding officers and
221 appropriated for such purposes. When the General Court is in session, authorization for any joint
222 committee to travel during the session, or to sit or travel during the recess, of the General Court
223 shall be approved by a vote of two-thirds of the members of each branch present and voting.
224 During the recess of the General Court, the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House
225 of Representatives, acting jointly, may, by written consent, allow joint committees or appoint

226 joint special committees to sit, travel and incur expenses not exceeding sums authorized in
227 writing by said presiding officers and appropriated for such purposes. The Clerks of the Senate
228 and House of Representatives shall be notified of any appointments made and authorizations
229 granted during the recess for said committees to sit, travel and incur expenses during the recess
230 and the Clerks shall enter such information in the journals for the next year, as soon as may be
231 practicable. Committees authorized by the presiding officers to sit during the recess in the odd
232 numbered year shall report not later than the fourth Wednesday of January during the following
233 year and committees authorized by the presiding officers to sit during the recess in the even
234 numbered year shall report not later than the fourth Wednesday of December during the same
235 year.

236 No committee shall travel except at the expense of the Commonwealth. In any case when a
237 committee is authorized to travel, the Sergeant-at-Arms shall provide transportation only for
238 members of the committee and the officer accompanying them, and the reasonable traveling
239 expenses of such members and officers only shall be charged to or paid by the Commonwealth.
240 Neither the Sergeant-at-Arms nor the officer detailed by the Sergeant-at-Arms shall permit any
241 person to accompany such committee while in the discharge of its official duties unless invited
242 by vote of the committee.

243 All bills for the traveling expenses of committees shall be submitted by the Sergeant-at-Arms to
244 the committee by whom they have been incurred and shall be approved by a majority of said
245 committee before being presented to the Comptroller for payment. [Adopted Feb. 7, 1890;
246 Amended Feb. 2, 1891 ; Jan. 20, 1904 ; April 17, 1925 ; March 2, 1943 ; July 27, 1950 ; Oct. 18,
247 1971 ; March 28, 1972 ; Jan. 15, 1973; Feb. 12, 2009.]

248 3A. A joint standing committee may, upon the written and signed report of two-thirds of the
249 members of the Senate and two thirds of the members of the House appointed to said
250 committee, report a bill or other form of legislation without said legislation being founded upon
251 petition; provided, however, that matters so reported shall be germane to the subject matters
252 regularly referred to the committee. The committee shall hold a public hearing on such bill or
253 other form of legislation before it is reported. A bill or other form of legislation so reported shall
254 be placed in the Orders of the Day by the Clerk of the respective branch to which it is reported or
255 referred to a standing committee of said branch under the rules. All reports of committees not
256 founded upon petition shall bear the designation "committee bill, resolve, order or resolution", as
257 the case may be, in the Orders of the Day. Committees to which messages from the Governor,
258 reports of state officers, boards, committees, commissions and others authorized to report to the
259 General Court, may report by bill or otherwise such legislation as may be germane to the subject
260 matter referred to them. [Adopted June 3, 1985 .]

261 4. Favorable reports, and adverse reports on subjects of legislation other than petitions, by joint
262 committees may be made to either branch, at the discretion of the committee, having reference to
263 an equal distribution of business between the 2 branches, except that reports on money bills shall
264 be made to the House and if adverse reports on matters other than petitions which are
265 accompanied by money bills are accepted by the House, this shall constitute final rejection.
266 Adverse reports by joint committees on petitions shall be made to the branch in which the
267 petition was originally introduced, except that such adverse reports on petitions accompanied by
268 proposed money bills shall be made to the House; and, if accepted by the branch in which they
269 are made, shall be considered as a final rejection. When a report is made from any committee to
270 either branch, and the subject-matter of the report is subsequently referred to a joint committee,

271 such committee, except for the committee on Health Care Financing, shall report its action to the
272 branch in which the reference originated. [See also Joint Rule 5.]

273 A vote of a joint standing committee to give legislation a favorable or adverse report shall be
274 conducted by a roll call upon request of 2 committee members present at the committee meeting.

275 Such votes shall be recorded on appropriate forms that show all votes for and against the
276 particular committee action. The records of all such roll calls shall be kept in the offices of the
277 committee for the duration of the General Court during which said vote was recorded, and shall
278 be available for public inspection upon reasonable notice and during regular office hours.

279 All committee members shall have an opportunity to sign a form accompanying a report of the
280 committee signifying approval of, dissent or abstention from a report of a joint standing
281 committee before the report is final or filed. No signature shall be valid unless the report to
282 which the signature is affixed includes the substantially complete text of the legislation being
283 reported. [Amended Jan. 3, 1952; April 8, 1959 ; June 7, 1965 ; Jan. 7, 1971 ; March 11, 1974 ;
284 June 3, 1985; Feb. 20, 2007.]

285

286 4A. In compliance with section 38A of chapter 3 of the General Laws, all joint committees of the
287 General Court when reporting on bills referred to them shall include a fiscal note prepared under
288 section 3A of chapter 29 of the General Laws, showing the estimated cost or the fiscal effect of
289 the proposed legislation, if, in the opinion of said committee, such cost exceeds \$100,000. Such
290 fiscal note shall be filed electronically in the office of the clerk to which the report is being
291 made, and shall be promptly made available on the official website of the General Court.

292 [Adopted Jan. 15, 1973 .]

293 5. Matters reported adversely by joint committees and the committees on Rules of the 2
294 branches, acting concurrently, may be recommitted to the same committees at the pleasure of the
295 branch acting on the report, and bills or resolves may be recommitted in either branch. If a bill or
296 resolve is laid aside in either branch for the reason that it is declared to be broader in its scope
297 than the subject-matter upon which it is based, the subject-matter shall be recommitted to the
298 committee. A concurrent vote shall, however, be necessary for recommitment, with instructions.
299 After recommitment, report shall, in all cases, be made to the branch originating the
300 recommitment. [Amended Feb. 2, 1891 ; April 11, 1935 ; Jan. 6, 1947 ; May 7, 19 53 ; March
301 26, 1963 ; Jan. 30, 1967 ; Jan. 7, 1971 ; March 11, 1974 .]

302 6. Bills and resolves reported by joint committees shall be presented with spaces between the
303 several sections and shall be made available to all members electronically and to the public via
304 the Internet. [Amended Jan. 28, 1889 ; Jan. 9, 1941 ; Feb. 8, 1949; Feb. 12, 2009.]

305 Joint Petitions.

306 6A. A member of the Senate and a member of the House of Representatives may file a joint
307 petition in either branch and shall endorse their name on the petition and a brief statement of the
308 nature and object of the instrument and the reading of the instrument shall be dispensed with,
309 unless specially ordered. The petition shall be filed in the office of the clerk of either the Senate
310 or House of Representatives, depending on whether it is a "Joint Senate/House Petition" or a
311 "Joint House/Senate Petition" but the Journal records in the Senate and House of Representatives
312 shall carry both members' names as presenters of the petition. [Adopted Jan. 15, 1973 .]

313 7. Whenever, upon any application for an act of incorporation or other legislation, the purpose
314 for which such legislation is sought can be secured without detriment to the public interests by a

315 general law or under existing laws, the committee to which the matter is referred shall report
316 such general law, or "ought not to pass". [Amended Feb. 2, 18 91 ; Feb. 7, 18 93 ; Jan. 7, 1971.]

317

318 7A. A petition for legislation to authorize a county to reinstate in its service a person formerly
319 employed by it, or to retire or pension or grant an annuity to any person, or to increase any
320 retirement allowance, pension or annuity, or to pay any sum of money in the nature of a pension
321 or retire?ment allowance, or to pay any salary which would have accrued to a deceased official
322 or employee but for his death, or to pay any claim for damages or otherwise, or to alter the
323 benefits or change the restrictions of any county retirement or pension law, shall, subsequently to
324 the procedure required by Senate Rule No. 20 and by House Rule No. 24, be reported adversely,
325 unless, when filed it be the petition of, or be approved by, a majority of the county
326 commissioners. [Adopted April 29, 1915 . Amended Jan. 13, Feb. 19 and Dec. 22, 1920 ; May
327 24, 1926; April 11, 1935 ; April 22, 1937 ; Jan. 12, 1939 ; Jan. 15, 1945 ; Feb. 20, 1951 ; Jan. 30,
328 1967 ; Jan. 7, 1971 ; Jan. 15, 1973 .]

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330 7B. A petition, the operation of which is restricted to a particular city or town (and which does
331 not affect the powers, duties, etc., of state departments, boards, commis?sions, etc., or which
332 does not affect generally the laws of the Commonwealth) and which is not filed in conformity
333 with Section 8 of Article LXXXIX of the Amendments to the Constitution shall, subsequent to
334 the procedure required by Senate Rule 20 and House Rule 24, be reported adversely, unless it be
335 on petition filed or approved by the voters of a city or town, or the mayor and city council, or
336 other legislative body, of a city, or the town meeting of a town. A joint committee to which is

337 inadvertently referred a petition or other subject of legislation the operation of which is restricted
338 to a particular city or town and which is not in conformity with Section 8 of Article LXXXIX of
339 the Amendments to the Constitution shall report a general law which applies alike to all cities, or
340 to all towns, or to all cities and towns, or to a class of not fewer than 2; or shall report "ought not
341 to pass", with the further endorsement that it "would be unconstitutional to enact such special
342 law".

343 [Adopted Jan. 13, 1920 . Amended Feb. 19 and Dec. 22, 1920; May 24, 1926; April 11, 1935;
344 April 22, 1937; Jan. 12, 1939; Jan. 9, 1941; Jan. 15, 1945; Feb. 20, 1951; Jan. 30, 1967; Jan. 7
345 and Mar. 22, 1971 ; Jan. 15, 1973 .]

346 Notice to Parties Interested.

347 8. No legislation affecting the rights of individuals or the rights of a private or municipal
348 corporation, otherwise than as it affects generally the people of the Commonwealth or the
349 people of the city or town to which it specifically applies, shall be proposed or introduced except
350 by a petition, nor shall any bill or resolve embodying such legislation be reported by a committee
351 except upon a petition duly referred, nor shall such a bill or resolve be reported by a committee,
352 whether on an original reference or on a recommittal with instructions to hear the parties, until it
353 is made to appear to the satisfaction of the committee that proper notice of the proposed
354 legislation has been given by public advertisement or otherwise to all parties interested, without
355 expense to the Commonwealth, or until evidence satisfactory to the committee is produced that
356 all parties interested have in writing waived notice. A committee reporting adversely due to lack
357 proper notice or of a waiver of proper notice shall so state in its report and no bill or resolve shall
358 be in order as a substitute for, or amendment of, such report. Objection to the violation of this

359 rule may be taken at any stage prior to that of the third reading. [Adopted Feb. 7, 18 90 .
360 Amended Dec. 22, 1920 ; Jan. 12, 1939 ; Jan. 15, 1945; Jan. 7, 1971 .]

361 9. A petition for the incorporation of a city or town, for the annexation of 1 municipality to
362 another, for the consolidation of 2 or more municipalities or for the division of an existing
363 municipality, or for the incorporation or revival of a railroad, street railway, elevated railroad,
364 canal, telephone, telegraph, water, gas, electric light, power or other public service corporation,
365 for the amendment, alteration or extension of the charter or corporate powers or privileges, or for
366 the change of name, of any such company, whether specially incorporated or organized under the
367 General Laws, or for authority to take water for a water supply, or relative to building structures
368 in or over navigable or tide waters, shall be placed on file, and not referred to a committee,
369 unless the petitioner has given the notice and followed the procedure required by section 5 of
370 chapter 3 of the General Laws. But if, no objection being raised, any such petition is referred to a
371 committee without such required notice or procedure, the committee shall forthwith report
372 adversely, setting forth as the reason for such report failure to comply with the law, unless
373 evidence satisfactory to the committee is produced that all parties interested have in writing
374 waived notice. In case a bill or resolve is reported upon such a petition, after proof of such
375 waiver of notice, this fact shall be set forth in the report of the committee. When an adverse
376 report is made by a committee, on account of failure to give the required notice, no bill or resolve
377 shall be substituted for such report, nor shall such report be recommitted or referred to another
378 committee.

379

380 A petition for the establishment or revival, or for the amendment, alteration or extension of the
381 charter or corporate powers or privileges, or for the change of name, of any corporation, except a
382 petition subject to the preceding paragraph, shall be transmitted by the Clerk of the branch in
383 which it is filed to the office of the State Secretary. If such a petition is returned by said
384 Secretary with a statement that the petitioner has failed to comply with the requirements of
385 section 7 of chapter 3 of the General Laws, said petition shall be placed on file, and shall not be
386 referred to a committee.

387 Any petition placed on file for want of proper notice or procedure under this rule shall not affect
388 action upon any other measure involving the same subject matter. [Adopted Feb. 7, 1890 .
389 Amended Feb. 2, 1891; Feb. 3, 1898; Jan. 16, 1903; Feb. 19 and Dec. 22, 1920; May 24, 1926;
390 Feb. 27, 1929; April 11, 1935; Jan. 6, 1938; Jan. 12, 1939; Jan. 9, 1941; Jan. 15, 1945; April 8,
391 1959; Jan. 7, 1963; Jan. 7, 1971 ; Jan. 15, 1973 , June 12, 1995; Feb. 12, 2009.]

392 Limit of Time allowed for Reports of Committees.

393 10. All joint committees and the committees on Rules of the two branches, acting concurrently,
394 shall make final report not later than the third Wednesday of March of the second annual session
395 of the General Court on all matters referred to them before the third Wednesday in February of
396 the second annual session and within 30 days on all matters referred to them on and after the
397 third Wednesday in February of the second annual session of the General Court except that the
398 committee on Health Care Financing shall make final report not later than the last Wednesday of
399 April of the second annual session on all matters referred to them on or before the fourth
400 Wednesday of March and within 30 days on all matters referred to it after the fourth Wednesday
401 in March of the second annual session of the General Court. When the time within which said

402 committees are required to report has expired, all matters upon which no report has then been
403 made shall forthwith be reported by the chairman of the committee on the part of the branch in
404 which they were respectively introduced, with an adverse recommendation under this rule. If the
405 chairman fails to make such report by the end of the legislative day next following the expiration
406 date, all matters remaining unreported shall be placed in the Orders of the Day by the Clerk of
407 the branch in which the matter was originally filed with an adverse report under this rule. Matters
408 which have been referred under Joint Rule 29, upon which the chairmen of the committees on
409 Rules fail to make a report, shall be placed by the respective Clerks in the Orders of the Day of
410 the branch in which the subject matter was referred to said committees. Committees to whom are
411 referred subjects of legislation may combine petitions of similar subject matter, or other forms of
412 legislation of similar subject matter, into 1 adverse report, and the report on the petition shall be
413 that said petitions or other forms of legislation "ought NOT to pass," and if the report is
414 accepted, all the matters contained in the report shall be disposed of. However, petitions upon
415 which an adverse report is accepted in only 1 branch may not be combined with other subjects of
416 legislation upon which adverse reports must be accepted, in concurrence. This rule shall not
417 apply to petitions referred to the committees on Rules of the two branches, acting concurrently,
418 under the second paragraph of Joint Rule 12. This rule shall not be rescinded, amended or
419 suspended, except by a concurrent vote of four-fifths of the members of each branch present and
420 voting thereon. Notwithstanding Joint Rule 30, this rule shall not be rescinded, amended or
421 suspended more than 3 times except by unanimous consent. [Amended Feb. 2, 1891; Jan. 25,
422 1894; Jan. 16, 1903; Jan. 20, 1904; Dec. 22, 1920; April 17, 1925; Jan. 12, 1939; Jan. 15, 1945;
423 Jan. 6, 1947; May 7, 1953; Jan. 27, 1955; Jan. 30, 1967; Jan. 7, 1971 ; Feb. 4, 1974 , June 12,
424 1995 ; July 17, 2003; Feb. 20, 2007; Feb. 12, 2009.]

425 10A. The form for all subjects of legislation receiving a favorable report shall be "ought to pass."
426 The form for all subjects of legislation receiving an adverse report shall be "ought NOT to pass."
427 A committee to whom is referred any other matter may report recommending that the same be
428 placed on file. [Adopted Jan. 7, 1971.]

429 Committees of Conference.

430 11. Committees of conference shall consist of 3 members on the part of each branch,
431 representing its vote; and their report, if agreed to by a majority of each committee, shall be
432 made to the branch asking for the conference, and may be either accepted or rejected, but no
433 other action shall be had, except through a new committee of conference.

434

435 Committees of conference to whom are referred matters of difference in respect to bills or
436 resolves, shall, before filing their reports, have the same approved by each committee on Bills in
437 the Third Reading. [Amended April 22, 1937; Feb. 12, 2009.]

438

439 11A. Committees of conference to whom are referred matters of difference in respect to
440 appropriation bills, including capital outlay programs, shall, before filing their reports, have the
441 same approved by each committee on Bills in the Third Reading.

442

443 Upon the appointment of a committee of conference to whom matters of difference in respect to
444 any appropriation bill or in respect to any bill providing for capital outlay programs and projects
445 are referred, the clerk of the branch requesting said committee of conference shall make

446 available to members of the General Court a list of the matters in disagreement identified by item
447 number and item purpose and showing the amount made available by each branch of the General
448 Court, and any other matters in disagreement and the position of each of the said branches.

449 The report of said committee of conference shall consist of the matters of difference so referred
450 and so identified, showing the amounts appropriated by each of the said branches and other
451 matters in disagreement and the position of each branch with respect to those matters, and shall
452 state said committee's recommendations with respect to the matters so referred. Matters on which
453 there exists no disagreement between the branches shall not be disturbed by the committee on
454 conference.

455

456 The committees on ways and means of each branch of the General Court shall assist such
457 committee of conference in any and all matters necessary to the preparation and completion of its
458 report. [Adopted July 30, 1974 . Amended Oct. 3, 1983 .]

459

460 11B. No report from a committee of conference shall be considered or acted upon by either
461 branch until the calendar day following the day on which said report shall have been available to
462 the public and to the members of the General Court. The committee shall file its report no later
463 than 8 p.m. on the day preceding its consideration and the General Court shall not consider said
464 report before 1 p.m. on the following day, except that a report from such committee of
465 conference that it is unable to agree may be considered and acted upon at the time that such
466 report is file. [Adopted Oct. 3, 1983. Amended July 17, 2003; July 21 and September 20, 2005.]

467

468 11C. Reports, other than those filed under Rule 11A, from a committee of conference shall,
469 whenever practicable, be accompanied by a summary which shall be filed with the clerk.

470 [Adopted Feb. 12, 2009.]

471 11D. Upon the filing of a report by a committee of conference the clerk shall, as soon as
472 practicable, make the report and the summary of the report available to all members
473 electronically and to the public on the official website of the General Court. [Adopted Feb. 12,
474 2009.]

475 **Limit of Time allowed for New Business.**

476 12. Resolutions intended for adoption by both branches of the General Court, petitions, and all
477 other subjects of legislation, shall be deposited with the Clerk of either branch prior to 5 p.m. on
478 the third Friday in January of the first annual session of the General Court.

479 All such matters except messages from the Governor, reports required or authorized to be made
480 to the General Court and petitions filed or approved by the voters of a city or town, or the mayor
481 and city council, or other legislative body of a city, or the town meeting of a town, for the
482 enactment of a special law under Section 8 of Article LXXXIX of the Amendments to the
483 Constitution and which do not affect the powers, duties, etc., of state departments, boards,
484 commissions, etc., or which do not affect generally the laws of the Commonwealth deposited
485 with the respective clerks subsequent to 5 p.m. on the third Friday of January of the first annual
486 session of the General Court shall be referred by the Clerks to the committees on the Rules of the
487 two branches, acting concurrently. No such matter shall be admitted for consideration except on
488 report of the committees on Rules of the two branches, acting concurrently, and then upon

489 approval of two-thirds of the members of each branch voting thereon. Matters upon which
490 suspension of Joint Rule 12 has been negated shall be placed on file.

491 At any special session called under Rule 26A, however, matters relating to the facts constituting
492 the necessity for convening such session shall, if otherwise admissible, be admitted as though
493 filed seasonably under the first sentence of this rule. Any recommendations from the Governor
494 shall be similarly considered. This rule shall not be rescinded, amended or suspended, except by
495 a concurrent vote of two-thirds of the members of each branch present and voting thereon.

496 [Amended Feb. 7, 18 90; Feb. 2, 18 91; Feb. 7, 18 93; Jan. 10, 18 98; Jan. 9, 18 99; Feb. 15, 19
497 01; May 4, 19 04; Jan. 31, 19 10; Feb. 2, 19 17; Dec. 22, 19 20; March 30, 19 21; Jan. 30, 19 23;
498 Feb. 15, 19 33; Jan. 12 and Aug. 7, 19 39; Jan. 15, 19 45; Jan. 6, 19 47; May 27, 19 48; Jan. 30,
499 19 67; March 26, 19 69; Jan. 7, 1971 ; Jan. 15 and Oct. 2, 1973 ; Oct 3, 1983 , June 12, 1995 ;
500 Jan. 26, 2005; July 17, 2003; Jan. 26, 2005; July 21, 2005; Sept. 20, 2005; Feb. 12, 2009.]

501 12A. All formal business of the first annual session of the General Court shall be concluded not
502 later than the third Wednesday in November of that calendar year and all formal business of the
503 second annual session shall be concluded not later than the last day of July of that calendar year.

504 In order to assist the Senate and House in its analysis and appraisal of laws enacted by the
505 General Court, each joint standing committee, upon conclusion of the formal business of the
506 annual sessions, shall, as authorized by Joint Rule 1, initiate oversight hearings to evaluate the
507 effectiveness, application and administration of the subject matter of laws within the jurisdiction
508 of that committee. [Adopted June 12. 1995.]

509

510 Unfinished Business of the Session.

511 12B. Any matter pending before the General Court at the end of the first annual session and any
512 special session held in the same year shall carry over into the second annual session of the same
513 General Court in the same legislative status as it was at the conclusion of the first annual session
514 or any special session held during that year; provided, however, that any measure making or
515 supplementing an appropriation for a fiscal year submitted to or returned to the General Court by
516 the Governor, under Article LXIII of the Amendments to the Constitution, in the first annual
517 session or in a special session held during that year shall cease to exist upon the termination of
518 the first annual session. [Adopted June 12. 1995.]

519 Papers to be deposited with the Clerks.

520 13. Information intended for presentation to the General Court by any Representative or Senator
521 shall be deposited with the Clerk of the branch to which the member belongs; and all such
522 information, unless they be subject to other rules or of the rules of the Senate or House, shall be
523 referred by the Clerk, with the approval of the President or Speaker, to appropriate committees,
524 subject to such changes as the Senate or House may make. The reading of information so
525 referred may be dispensed with, but they shall, except as provided in these rules, be entered in
526 the Journal of the same on the next legislative day after such reference.

527 A member may include a brief statement of intent with all papers intended for presentation to the
528 General Court. Upon a favorable report by a joint standing committee, a committee may include
529 a brief written statement of intent. Said statement shall be dated and shall include the scope of
530 the matter presented for consideration; provided, however, this rule shall not be construed to
531 require the presentation of such statement of intent under this rule. [Adopted Feb. 7, 1890 .

532 Amended Feb. 2, 1891 ; Feb. 7, 1893 ; Jan. 25, 1894 ; Dec. 22, 1920 ; May 25, 1923 ; Feb. 15,
533 1933 ; Jan. 12, 1971 ; June 3, 1985; Feb. 12, 2009 .]

534

535 Dockets of Legislative Counsel and Agents.

536 14. The committees on Rules of the two branches, acting concurrently, may prescribe the manner
537 and form of keeping the dockets of legislative agents which are required by law. [Adopted Feb.
538 2, 1891; Amended Feb. 19, 1920 .]

539 Duties of the Clerk.

540 15. If any part of the report of a committee over the signature of the chairman or members of the
541 committee is amended in either branch, the Clerk of that branch shall endorse upon the report
542 such amendment.

543 16. All papers, while on their passage between the 2 branches, may be under the signature of the
544 respective Clerks, except as to the adopting of emergency preambles and the final passage of
545 bills and resolves. Messages may be sent by such persons as each branch may direct. [Amended
546 Feb. 21, 1919 .]

547 17. After bills and resolves have passed both branches to be engrossed, they shall be in the
548 charge of the Clerks of the 2 branches, who shall prepare the same for final passage in the
549 manner prescribed by law; and when so prepared the same shall be delivered to the Clerk of the
550 House of Representatives; and when the bills have been passed to be enacted or the resolves have
551 been passed in the House, they shall, in like manner, be delivered to the Senate Clerk and
552 Parliamentarian. If a bill or resolve contains an emergency preamble, it shall be delivered in like

553 manner, to the Senate after the preamble has been adopted by the House of Representatives and
554 before the bill or resolve is put upon its final passage in that branch. If the Senate concurs in
555 adopting the preamble, the bill or resolve shall be returned to the House to be there first put upon
556 its final passage, under Joint Rule No. 22. [Amended Feb. 24, 1914 ; Feb. 21, 1919 ; Jan. 7, 1971
557 .]

558 18. [Omitted in 1971.]

559 19. The Clerk of the branch in which a bill or resolve originated shall make an endorsement on
560 the envelope of the engrossed copy of the bill, certifying in which branch the bill originated,
561 which endorsement shall be entered on the journals by the Clerks respectively. [Amended Jan.
562 28, 1889 ; Feb. 24, 1914 .]

563 20. Bills, resolves and other papers requiring the approval of the Governor shall be laid before
564 the Governor for the Governor's approbation by the Senate Clerk and Parliamentarian, who shall
565 enter upon the journal of the Senate the day and date on which the same were so laid before the
566 Governor. [Amended Jan. 28, 1889 ; Jan. 7, 1971 .]

567 **Presentation and Distribution of Documents.**

568 21. The committees on Rules of the two branches, acting concurrently, may establish regulations
569 for the distribution of bills, reports or other documents. Bills, reports or other documents shall
570 be made available to members electronically and, except for petitions not assigned bill numbers,
571 published on the Internet. The committees on Rules of the two branches, acting concurrently,
572 may make such changes pertaining to the availability of bills, reports or other documents as they
573 deem necessary for expediting the work of the legislature.

574 Bills, reports and other documents, available under the general order of either branch, may be
575 distributed as follows: copies to each member of the Senate and House of Representatives (to be
576 placed on his file under the direction of the Sergeant-at-Arms, if desired by the member); copies
577 to each Clerk in either branch, and copies to each reporter in regular attendance, to whom a seat
578 has been assigned in either branch; copies to the Executive; copies to the Secretary's office;
579 copies to the State Library; copy to each Public Library in the Commonwealth.

580 [Amended Jan. 8, 1886 ; Jan. 28, 1889 ; Jan. 27, 1911 ; Feb. 19, 1920 ; Jan. 6, 1947 ; Apr. 5, 19
581 67 ; Jan. 7, 1971; Feb. 12, 2009.]

582 Emergency Measures.

583 22. The vote on the preamble of an emergency law, which under the requirements of Article
584 XLVIII, as amended by Article LXVII of the Amendments of the Constitution shall, upon
585 request of 2 members of the Senate or of 5 members of the House of Representatives, be taken
586 by call of the yeas and nays, shall be had after the proposed law has been prepared for final
587 passage; and neither branch shall vote on the enactment of a bill or on the passage of a resolve
588 containing an emergency preamble until it has been determined whether the preamble shall
589 remain or be eliminated. If the bill contains an emergency preamble, a motion to amend the bill
590 may be received in either branch before the adoption of the emergency preamble, and the
591 amendment may contain a new emergency preamble. If the 2 branches concur in adopting the
592 preamble, the bill or resolve shall first be put upon its final passage in the House of
593 Representatives. If either branch fails to adopt the preamble, notice of its action shall be sent to
594 the other branch; and the bill or resolve, duly endorsed, shall again be prepared for final passage
595 without the preamble and without any provision that the bill or the resolve shall take effect

596 earlier than 90 days after it has become law. Procedure shall be otherwise under the joint rules
597 and the rules of the Senate and the House of Representatives. [Adopted Feb. 21, 1919 . Amended
598 Jan. 30, 1923 ; Jan. 7, 1971; Feb. 20, 2007; Feb. 12, 2009.]

599 22A. Bills and resolves passed to be engrossed by both branches and before being transmitted by
600 the clerks to the Legislative Engrossing Division shall be made available to the committees on
601 Bills in the Third Reading of the two branches, acting jointly, who shall examine them to ensure
602 accuracy in the text; that the legislation is correct as to form; that references to previous
603 amendments to any particular law are correct and to ensure proper consistency with the language
604 of existing statutes. These committees, with the approval of the majority and minority leadership
605 of both branches may make corrections which are not substantive in nature. The clerks of both
606 branches shall be immediately notified, in writing, of any such changes. Errors discovered by the
607 committees of a substantive nature shall be reported to the General Court, which in turn shall
608 take appropriate action under its rules. Upon completion of examination and possible correction
609 of any such bills and resolves, the bills and resolves shall be returned to the clerks, who in turn,
610 shall transmit them to the Legislative Engrossing Division to be prepared for final passage.

611 [Adopted Sept. 16, 1971 .]

612 Legislative Amendments to the Constitution.

613 23. All proposals for amendments to the Constitution referred to a joint committee on the first
614 annual session of the General Court shall be reported by said committee not later than the last
615 Wednesday of April in said year, and proposals for amendments to the Constitution referred to a
616 joint committee subsequent to the last Wednesday in April of the first annual session shall be
617 reported by said committee not later than the last Wednesday of April in the second session of

618 the same General Court. The committee shall file its report, either recommending that the
619 proposal ought to pass or ought not to pass, with any official papers in its possession that relate
620 thereto, with the Clerk of the Senate. When the time within which said committees are required
621 to report has expired, all matters upon which no report has been made shall forthwith be placed
622 in the Journal of the respective branches, with an adverse report under this rule; and shall then be
623 placed on file in the office of the Clerk of the Senate. For further information of the members of
624 the Senate and House of Representatives, the respective Clerks shall also place all such matters
625 under a separate heading in the Calendar of each branch, as soon as is practicable. In each branch
626 the report shall be read and forthwith placed on file; and no further legislative action shall be
627 taken on the measure unless consideration in joint session is called for by vote of either branch,
628 under Section 2 of Part IV of Article XLVIII (as amended by Article LXXXI) of the
629 Amendments to the Constitution. A joint committee to which is referred any recommendation for
630 an amendment to the Constitution made by the Governor or contained in a report authorized to
631 be made to the General Court may report on the recommendation a proposal for a legisla?tive
632 amendment, which shall be deemed to have been introduced by the member of the Senate who
633 reports for the committee; and the procedure as regards reporting, filing and subsequent action
634 shall be that provided for legislative amendments by this rule. Or the joint committee may report
635 ought not to pass for the reason that no legislation is necessary or that the recommendation ought
636 not to pass; and in such cases the usual procedure as regards similar reports by joint commit?tees
637 shall be followed. If such an adverse report is amended in the Senate by substituting a proposal
638 for a legislative amendment, notice of the Senate's action shall be sent to the House and said
639 proposal, together with the official papers relating to the subject, shall be in the custody of the
640 Clerk of the Senate; and if said report is so amended in the House, the proposal, duly endorsed,

641 together with the other papers, shall be sent to the Senate for its information and shall be kept in
642 the custody of its Clerk. No further legislative action shall be taken in either branch on a proposal
643 so substituted unless consideration in joint session is called for under the Constitution. If either
644 branch calls for the consideration of any proposal in joint session, notice of its action shall be
645 sent to the other branch; and it shall then be the duty of the Senate and the House of
646 Representatives to arrange for the holding of the joint session not later than the second
647 Wednesday in May. Subject to the requirements of the Constitution, joint sessions or
648 continuances of joint sessions of the 2 branches to consider proposals for specific amendments to
649 the Constitution, and all rules or procedures, shall be determined only by concurrent votes of
650 the 2 branches. The rules relative to joint conventions shall apply to the joint sessions of the 2
651 houses. [Adopted Feb. 21, 1919. Amended March 30, 1921; April 11, 1935 ; Jan. 12, 1939; Jan.
652 15, 1945; Nov. 9, 1951; Jan. 15, 1973; July 1, 1974; Feb. 12, 2009.]

653 **Executive Reorganization Plans.**

654 23A. Any reorganization plan, accompanied by a bill, submitted by the Governor under Article
655 LXXXVII of the Amendments to the Constitution shall be referred by the Clerks of the Senate
656 and the House, with the approval of the President and Speaker, to a joint standing committee
657 within 5 days of the presentation of the reorganization plan.

658 Said committee, to which is referred any such reorganization plan, shall, as required by said
659 Article, not later than 30 days after the presentation of such plan by the Governor, hold a public
660 hearing on the reorganization plan; and shall not later than 10 days after such hearing report that
661 it either approves or disapproves such plan.

662 When recommending action, the committee shall make, in each branch, a separate report of its
663 recommenda?tions, and shall file said report together with the commit?tee's recommendations
664 and the reasons for those recommendations, in writing. Majority and minority reports shall be
665 signed by the members of said committee. Any official papers in the possession of said
666 committee that relate thereto shall be filed with the Clerk of the Senate.

667

668 If the committee recommends favorable action, the report shall be that the reorganization plan
669 "ought to be approved". If the committee recommends adverse action, the report shall be that the
670 reorganization plan "ought NOT to be approved". In each instance, the question shall be "Shall
671 this reorganization plan be approved?"

672

673 In each branch, the report shall be read and forthwith recorded in the Journal. On the legislative
674 day next follow?ing the Journal record, the report shall be placed in the Orders of the Day of the
675 Senate and the House.

676

677 When the time within which a joint committee is required to report on a reorganization plan has
678 expired, a matter upon which no report has been made shall forthwith be placed in the Orders of
679 the Day by the Clerks of each branch and the question shall be "Shall this reorganization plan be
680 approved?".

681 When such plan is before either branch, no motion relating to said plan shall be allowed except
682 the motions to lay on the table (only in the Senate), to postpone to a time certain, or to commit or

683 recommit (at the pleasure of either branch). The motions to take a recess, to adjourn, the previous
684 question (if provided in the branch debating the issue), to close debate at a specified time, and
685 the motion to reconsider shall also be in order.

686

687 A motion to discharge any committee to which is referred or to which is recommitted a
688 reorganization plan shall not be in order prior to the expiration of 40 days after the Governor's
689 presentation of such plan. After the expiration of said 40 days, a motion to discharge a committee
690 shall be decided by a majority vote of the branch in which the motion is made.

691 Unless disapproved by a majority vote of the members of either of the 2 branches of the General
692 Court present and voting, the General Court not having prorogued within 60 days from the date
693 of presentation by the Governor, the plan shall be approved and shall take effect as provided by
694 Article LXXXVII of the Amendments to the Constitution.

695

696 Within 7 days of the expiration of the 60 days from the date of presentation of said plan by the
697 Governor, unless the question has already been decided, the Clerks of the Senate and House of
698 Representatives shall place the plan in the Orders of the Day; and no motions except the motions
699 to take a recess, to adjourn, and previous question, or to close debate at a specified time, shall be
700 in order.

701 No such reorganization plan presented to the General Court shall be subject to change or
702 amendment before expiration of such 60 days. [Adopted June 13, 1967; Amended March 27,
703 1969 ; June 12, 1995; Feb. 12, 2009.]

704 Joint Conventions.

705 24. The President of the Senate shall preside in Conventions of the 2 branches, and such
706 Conventions shall be held in the Representatives' Chamber; the Senate Clerk and Parliamentarian
707 shall be the Clerk of the Convention, and a record of the proceedings of the Convention shall be
708 entered at large on the journals of both branches. [Amended Feb. 20, 2007.]

709 25. When an agreement has been made by the 2 branches to go into Convention, such agreement
710 shall not be altered or annulled, except by concurrent vote, excepting that it shall be in order to
711 recess the convention from time to time upon a majority vote of said convention. [Amended Jan.
712 7, 1971 .]

713 26. No business shall be entered on, in Convention, other than that which may be agreed on
714 before the Convention is formed.

715 Special Sessions.

716 26A. If written statements of 21 members of the Senate and 81 members of the House of
717 Representatives, that in their opinion it is necessary that the General Court assemble in special
718 session on a particular date and time specified in their statements during a recess of the General
719 Court, are filed with their respective Clerks, such Clerks shall forthwith notify all the members
720 of their respective branches to assemble at the State House in Boston, on said date at the time so
721 specified. When so assembled, the first business to be taken up shall be the question of the
722 necessity of so assembling, under Article I of Section I of Chapter I of Part the Second of the
723 Constitution of the Commonwealth. If 21 members of the Senate and 81 members of the House
724 of Representatives judge by vote taken by call of the yeas and nays that such assembling of the
725 General Court is necessary, specifying in such vote the facts constituting such necessity, the

726 General Court shall then complete its organization as a special session, proceed to the
727 consideration of the suspension of Joint Rule 12A which if suspended by the required two-thirds
728 of the members of both branches shall permit the General Court to proceed to the consideration
729 of matters properly before it. Nothing in this rule shall prevent the General Court from
730 assembling in any other constitutional manner when it judges necessary. [Adopted Aug. 7, 1939 .
731 Amended March 2, 1943 ; March 27, 19 69 ; May 5, 1979; July 17, 2003; July 21 and September
732 20, 2005.]

733 Joint Elections.

734 27. In all elections by joint ballot a time shall be assigned for such election at least 1 day
735 previous to such election.

736 27A. In all cases of elections by ballot a majority of the votes cast shall be necessary for a
737 choice, and where there shall be no such a majority on the first ballot the ballots shall be repeated
738 until a majority is obtained; and in balloting, blanks shall be rejected and not taken into the count
739 in the enumeration of votes, excepting that when the number of blanks shall be more than the
740 number of votes received by the candidate having the highest number of votes, then the election
741 shall be declared void and the balloting shall be repeated as provided herein. [Adopted March 27,
742 1969 .]

743 28. [Omitted March 28, 1972 .]

744 References to the Committees on Rules.

745 29. All motions and orders authorizing joint committees to travel or to employ stenographers, or
746 authorizing joint committees or special commissions composed as a whole or in part of members

747 of the General Court to make investigations or to file special reports, all propositions reported by
748 joint committees which authorize investigations or special reports by joint committees or by
749 special commissions composed as a whole or in part of members of the General Court, all
750 motions or orders proposed for joint adoption which provide that information be transmitted to
751 the General Court, and all matters referred under the second paragraph of Joint Rule 12, shall be
752 referred without debate to the committees on Rules of the two branches acting concurrently, who
753 shall report on the matter, under Joint Rule 10. All matters which have been referred under this
754 rule shall, in each instance, be reported back into the branch making such reference. [Adopted
755 Jan. 10, 1898 . Amended Jan. 20, 1904; Jan. 28, 1913; Feb. 19 and Dec. 22, 1920; April 11,
756 1935; April 22, 1937; Jan. 27, 1955; Jan. 30, 1967; Oct. 18, 1971 .]

757 30. All motions or orders extending the time within which joint committees and the committees
758 on Rules of the two branches, acting concurrently, are required to report shall be referred without
759 debate to the committees on Rules of the two branches, acting concurrently, who shall report
760 recommending what action should be taken on the motion or order. Such extension shall be
761 granted by a concurrent majority vote if recommended by the committees on Rules of the two
762 branches, acting concurrently; but no such extension shall be granted, against the
763 recommendation of the committees, except by a four-fifths vote of the members of each branch
764 present and voting on the extension. This rule shall not be rescinded, amended or suspended,
765 except by a concurrent vote of four-fifths of the members of each branch present and voting
766 thereon. [Adopted Jan. 16, 1903 . Amended Feb. 6, 1912 ; Feb. 19, 1920 ; Jan. 6, 1947 ; Jan. 27,
767 1955 ; June 7, 1965 .]

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Members.

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31. A member of either branch who directly or indirectly solicits for such member or others any position or office within the gift or control of a railroad corporation, street railway company, gas or electric light company, telegraph or telephone company, aqueduct or water company, or other public service corporation, shall be subject to suspension for such solicitation, or to such other penalty as the branch of which the person is a member may see fit to impose. [See G. L. 271, sec. 40.] [Adopted May 22, 1902.]

Accommodations for Reporters.

32. Subject to the approval and direction of the committees on Rules of the two branches, acting concurrently, during the session, and of the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives after prorogation, the use of the rooms and facilities assigned to reporters in the State House shall be under the control of the organizations of legislative reporters known as the Massachusetts State House Press Association and the State House Broadcasters Association. No person shall be permitted to use such rooms or facilities who is not entitled to the privileges of the reporters' galleries of the Senate or of the House. Within 10 days after the General Court convenes the Massachusetts State House Press Association and the State House Broadcasters Association shall each transmit to the President of the Senate, the Speaker of the House of Representatives and the Sergeant-at-Arms a list of the legislative reporters with the principal publication or news service which each represents. [Adopted Jan. 27, 1911 . Amended Feb. 24, 1914 ; Feb. 19, 1920 ; April 17, 1925 ; May 23, 1979; Feb. 12, 2009.]

Suspension of Rules.

790 33. Any joint rule except Rule 10 and Rule 30 may be altered, suspended or rescinded by a
791 concurrent vote of two-thirds of the members of each branch present and voting thereon.
792 [Amended Feb. 7, 18 93 . Adopted in revised form Jan. 9, 18 99 . Amended Jan. 16, 19 03 ; Jan.
793 26, 2005 .]

794 Audit of Accounts.

795 34. The committees on Rules of the two branches, acting concurrently, shall provide that an
796 outside independent audit of joint financial accounts be conducted by a certified public
797 accountant no less frequently that at the end of each second fiscal year. A copy of such audit
798 shall be filed with the Clerks of the Senate and House of Representatives and made available for
799 public inspection upon reasonable notice and during regular office hours. [Adopted May 30,
800 1985 .]

801 35. The committees on Rules of the two branches, acting concurrently, shall reexamine the Joint
802 Rules of the House and Senate as needed, but at least every 4 years, and shall report to each
803 branch any recommendations it may have to facilitate the work of the respective branches and
804 the joint standing committees. [Adopted June 12, 1995 .]