

**HOUSE . . . . . No. 2025**

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**The Commonwealth of Massachusetts**



*House of Representatives, January 31, 2023.*

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**In the One Hundred and Ninety-Third General Court  
(2023-2024)**  
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1           *Ordered*, “Committees.

2    1. 1. Joint standing committees shall be appointed at the beginning of the biennial session as  
3 follows:-

4    A committee on Advanced Information Technology, the Internet and Cybersecurity;

5    A committee on Agriculture;

6    A committee on Bonding, Capital Expenditures and State Assets

7    A committee on Cannabis Policy;

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

9    A committee on Community Development and Small Businesses;

- 10 A committee on Consumer Protection and Professional Licensure;
- 11 A committee on Emergency Preparedness and Management;
- 12 A committee on Economic Development and Emerging Technologies;
- 13 A committee on Education;
- 14 A committee on Elder Affairs;
- 15 A committee on Election Laws;
- 16 A committee on Environment and Natural Resources;
- 17 A committee on Financial Services;
- 18 A committee on Health Care Financing;
- 19 A committee on Higher Education;
- 20 A committee on Housing;
- 21 A committee on the Judiciary;
- 22 A committee on Labor and Workforce Development;
- 23 A committee on Mental Health, Substance Use and Recovery;
- 24 A committee on Municipalities and Regional Government;
- 25 A committee on Public Health;
- 26 A committee on Public Safety and Homeland Security;

27 A committee on Public Service;

28 A committee on Racial Equity, Civil Rights and Inclusion;

29 A committee on Revenue;

30 A committee on State Administration and Regulatory Oversight;

31 A committee on Telecommunications, Utilities and Energy;

32 A committee on Tourism, Arts and Cultural Development;

33 A committee on Transportation; and

34 A committee on Veterans Affairs.

35 Each to consist of 6 members of the Senate, and 11 on the part of the House except the

36 committees on Bonding, Capital Expenditures and State Assets, Economic Development and

37 Emerging Technologies, Public Safety and Homeland Security, Mental Health, Substance Use

38 and Recovery, Health Care Financing and Transportation which shall consist of 7 members of

39 the Senate and 13 of the House.

40 Within 4 weeks of the appointment of joint standing committees in the first annual session of the

41 General Court, each joint standing committee shall adopt rules of procedure regarding its

42 conduct. Said rules of procedure, together with any amendments, shall be filed with the Clerk of

43 the Senate and the Clerk of the House and shall be available to the public and members of the

44 General Court on the official website for the General Court.

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

49 Matters referred by either the Senate or the House to its committee on Ways and Means shall be  
50 considered by the respective committees of the 2 branches, acting as a joint committee, when, in  
51 the judgment of the chairs of the respective committees of the 2 branches, the interests of  
52 legislation or the expedition of business will be better served by such joint consideration. Matters  
53 may also be referred to the committees on Ways and Means, of the 2 branches, as a joint  
54 committee.

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

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

64 (i) each joint committee shall review and study, on a continuing basis, the implementation,  
65 administration, execution and effectiveness of those laws, or parts of law, the subject matter of  
66 which is within the jurisdiction of that committee, the administrative regulations adopted to

67 implement those laws, and those state agencies or entities having responsibilities for the  
68 administration and execution of such laws;

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

73 (iii) each committee shall also review and study any conditions and circumstances which may  
74 indicate the necessity or desirability of enacting new legislation within the jurisdiction of that  
75 committee, regardless of whether any matter has been introduced on that subject, and shall, on a  
76 continuing basis, undertake research on matters within the jurisdiction of that committee.

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

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

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

85 The Senate and House chairs of a joint committee may appoint subcommittees to investigate and  
86 study any matter referred to said subcommittee. Any subcommittee so established shall be co-  
87 chaired by a majority member of the Senate and a majority member of the House who are  
88 members of the joint standing committee appointing the subcommittee. The composition of the

89 subcommittee shall be proportional to the composition of the appointing joint committee;  
90 provided, however, that not less than 10 per cent of the subcommittee's members shall be from  
91 the minority party. Chairs of subcommittees shall not be considered chairs under section 9B of  
92 chapter 3 of the General Laws. A subcommittee may, upon completion of an investigation and  
93 study, report the results of the investigation and study together with legislation, if any, by filing  
94 the same with the Senate and House chairs of the appointing joint committee.

95 Temporary employees of the general court assigned to a joint committee who are students at an  
96 accredited education institution or employees or grantees of other non-profit organizations under  
97 section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code may receive compensation from such  
98 organization, according to that organization's regular program of providing such compensation  
99 for temporary governmental or public service employment. A temporary employee's Senate or  
100 House supervisor shall establish the employee's total compensation, shall verify that the sum of  
101 the employee's state compensation, if any, and that any outside compensation the employee is to  
102 receive under this rule would not exceed this total compensation, and shall file the written terms  
103 of the employee's compensation with the Senate or House Human Resources Office, where it  
104 shall be available for public inspection. The temporary employee shall sign a confidentiality and  
105 ethics agreement provided by the Senate Personnel Office or House Human Resources Office.

106 The Senate and House Offices of Human Resources shall publish an employee handbook for  
107 joint employees of both branches of the general court. The handbook shall be developed with  
108 the advice and approval of both the Counsel to the Senate and the Counsel to the House. The  
109 handbook shall address access by joint employees to the human resource related services and  
110 programs of each branch of the general court. Joint employees shall complete any training

111 required by either branch of the general court, as may be agreed upon by the Senate and House  
112 Offices of Human Resources.

113 [Amended Jan. 6, 18 82; Jan. 5, 18 83; Jan. 7, 18 84; Jan. 8 and 26, 1885; Jan. 8, 18 86; Jan. 12,  
114 18 87; Jan. 9, 18 88; Jan. 28, 18 89; Jan. 8, 18 90; Feb. 2, 18 91; Jan. 11 and Feb. 10, 18 92; Feb.  
115 7, 18 93; Jan. 8. 1894; Jan. 7, 18 95; Jan. 7, 18 96; Jan. 11, 18 97; Jan. 10, 18 98; Jan. 9, 18 99;  
116 Jan. 22 and 29, 1901; Jan. 6, 19 02; Jan. 9, 19 03; Jan. 8, 19 04; Jan. 6, 19 05; Jan. 4, 19 07; Jan.  
117 5, 19 10; Jan. 4, 19 11; Jan. 1, 19 13; Jan. 12, 19 14; Jan. 2, 19 18; Jan. 1 and 8 and Feb. 21,  
118 1919; Jan. 7, 19 20; Jan. 5, 19 21; April 17 and 30, 1925; Jan. 5, 19 27; Jan. 7, 19 31; Jan. 6, 19  
119 37; Jan. 4, 19 39; Jan. 1, 19 41; Jan. 3, 19 45; Jan. 2, 19 46; Jan. 6, 19 47; Feb. 1, 19 49; Jan. 7,  
120 19 53; Jan. 7, 19 59; Jan. 30, 19 61; Jan. 7, 19 63; Jan. 12, 19 65; Feb. 24, 19 65; Mar. 10, 19 66;  
121 Jan. 30, 19 67; Jan. 7, 1971 ; July 23, 1974 ; Sept. 30 and Oct. 12, 1976 ; Nov. 3, 1981 ; Dec. 21,  
122 1981 ; Mar. 15, 1982 ; Oct. 3, 1983 ; June 3, 1985 ; Jan. 25 and Mar. 14, 1988 ; Mar. 27, 1995 ,  
123 June 12, 1995 ; July 17, 2003 ; Jan. 26, 2005; July 21 and September 20, 2005; Feb. 20, 2007;  
124 Feb 12, 2009; Feb. 15, 2017; Mar 7, 2019.]

125 1A. All meetings of joint committees acting concurrently, Senate and House standing  
126 committees, special committees of the Senate and House of Representatives, and joint special  
127 committees and committees of conference on the disagreeing votes of the 2 branches shall be  
128 open to the public, unless a majority shall vote otherwise; provided, that such committees may, at  
129 the discretion of the chairs of said committees, assemble and vote remotely and allow remote  
130 access to the public. [Adopted July 17, 1973. Amended July 18, 1974; Feb. 12, 2009.]

131 1B. A joint standing committee shall hold a public hearing on each matter referred to it in each  
132 legislative session. [Adopted June 3, 1985; Amended Feb. 12, 2009.]

133 1C. All joint standing committees shall schedule committee hearings and executive sessions  
134 upon agreement of the chairs and so as not to conflict, to the extent feasible, with the schedules  
135 of other committees and, to the extent feasible, the day of the week and times during that day set  
136 aside for formal sessions by the respective branches from the first Wednesday in January through  
137 the fourth Wednesday of April in the first annual session. [Adopted June 3, 1985; Amended June  
138 12, 1995; Mar. 7, 2019.]

139 All hearings of joint standing committees shall be conducted in-person with the option of remote  
140 participation available to both members of the joint standing committee and the public; provided,  
141 however, that the chairs of said joint standing committees shall be physically present at the  
142 hearing location where in-person public testimony is offered. All joint standing committees, in  
143 the conduct of their hearings, shall utilize, to the extent practicable, online platforms or systems  
144 that allow for synchronous, audio-visual communication between the chairs of the committee  
145 and individuals offering testimony remotely. All hearings of joint standing committees shall be  
146 publicly livestreamed on the website of the General Court and shall display and transmit, in real-  
147 time, the audio-visual attributes of public testimony offered remotely; provided further, that said  
148 livestream shall be archived on the website of the General Court for the duration of the  
149 legislative session. Members of joint standing committees may participate remotely and shall  
150 have the same privileges, rights and responsibilities as if the member were physically present at  
151 the hearing location, and other members of the Senate and House of Representatives may offer  
152 remote testimony before joint standing committees of which they are not a member. The chairs  
153 of the joint standing committees shall use best efforts to prioritize the testimony of those  
154 physically present at the hearing location and may, in their discretion, allow individuals  
155 participating in-person a greater amount of time to testify than those participating remotely. All



156 notices of hearings of joint standing committees issued pursuant to Joint Rule 1D at which public  
157 testimony is being solicited shall include instructions on how to offer testimony both in-person  
158 and remotely. Nothing in this rule shall preclude a joint standing committee from conducting  
159 hearings in which only written testimony is accepted; provided, however, that such hearings shall  
160 only consider home rule petitions referred to the joint standing committee pursuant to Joint Rule  
161 7B, or any other matter referred to a joint standing committee after having first been reported  
162 favorably by a separate joint standing committee sharing jurisdiction.

163 1D. All meetings of joint standing committees, and special joint committees of the Senate and  
164 House of Representatives, and joint special committees and committees of conference on the  
165 disagreeing votes of the 2 branches shall be open to the public, and any person shall be permitted  
166 to attend any such meeting unless such committee convenes in executive session, as provided  
167 herein. All joint standing committees shall determine a schedule for committee hearings to be  
168 held from the beginning of the first annual session through the fourth Wednesday in June in said  
169 session. These committee schedules shall be submitted to the Clerk of the House who shall cause  
170 them to be published on the official website for the General Court. Establishment of such  
171 schedules shall not preclude joint standing committees from scheduling additional hearings or  
172 meetings as needed. No executive session shall be held until after the committee has first  
173 convened in an open session for which notice has been given, the presiding officer has stated the  
174 purpose of the executive session, a majority of the committee members present has voted to go  
175 into executive session, the vote of each member has been recorded on a roll call vote, and the  
176 presiding officer has stated before the executive session if the committee will reconvene after the  
177 executive session. The records of all such roll calls shall be kept in the offices of the committee

178 for the duration of the General Court during which said vote was recorded, and shall be available  
179 for public inspection upon reasonable notice and during regular office hours.

180 Committees shall provide to members of the committee either the text or comprehensive  
181 summaries of the bills or other forms of legislative matters prior to the beginning of an executive  
182 session or poll. All joint standing committees, and special joint committees of the Senate and  
183 House of Representatives, shall notify the Sergeant-at-Arms of the time, place and agenda of all  
184 public hearings and executive sessions not less than 72 hours prior to the time of such meetings.  
185 If public testimony is being solicited, agendas shall include an electronic mail address and  
186 physical mail address for the submission of testimony. The Sergeant-at-Arms shall notify the  
187 clerk, who shall inform all members electronically and publish such information on the official  
188 website of the General Court whenever practicable.

189 Nothing contained in this rule shall prohibit a joint standing committee or special joint  
190 committee of the Senate and the House of Representatives from taking appropriate action  
191 including, but not limited to, the exclusion of a person from a committee meeting in order to  
192 prevent the disruption of or interference with committee proceedings. All meetings of joint  
193 standing committees, and special joint committees of the Senate and House of Representatives,  
194 shall be limited to no more than 50 bills to be discussed in a hearing, unless it can be determined  
195 that all of the bills being considered are of the same subject matter.

196 The 72 hour requirement shall be suspended in an emergency only after all reasonable efforts  
197 have been made to contact all committee members and upon a recorded vote of at least a  
198 majority of the members of each branch appointed to the committee, but not less than two-thirds  
199 of the members of each branch voting.

200 A meeting of a committee may be recorded by a person in attendance by means of a recorder or  
201 any other means of audio/visual reproduction except when a meeting is held in executive session;  
202 provided, that a person seeking to record a meeting of a committee notifies the Chairs of the  
203 committee prior to commencing such recording; and provided further that during such recording  
204 there is no interference with the conduct of the meeting.

205 The Chairs of each committee shall preserve decorum and order during each committee hearing.  
206 Persons attending hearings shall be required to refrain from the use of cellular telephones,  
207 beepers and pagers. The use of visual aids including, without limitation, posters, displays, or  
208 charts shall be permitted only upon approval of the Chairs. [Adopted June 3, 1985. Amended  
209 June 12, 1995; Feb. 20, 2007; Mar. 14, 2013; Mar. 7, 2019.]

210 1E. The joint standing committee on Health Care Financing shall review all legislation relating  
211 to health care to evaluate the appropriateness and fiscal effect of such legislation. A matter  
212 within the jurisdiction of said committee may, if appropriate, initially be referred to another joint  
213 standing committee sharing jurisdiction of the subject-matter. Any matter reported favorably by  
214 such joint standing committee shall be referred to the joint committee on Health Care Financing;  
215 provided, however, that notwithstanding any rule to the contrary, any such matter so reported  
216 shall not be read a first time in the branch in which the report was received. The next favorable  
217 report on any such matter, if made by a joint committee, may be made to either branch. Such  
218 next favorable report shall be considered the first reading. The branch of origin for any such bill  
219 so reported shall be the branch receiving such favorable report.

220 For all matters initially referred to the joint committee on Health Care Financing and not  
221 previously referred to another joint committee, the joint committee on Health Care Financing

222 may make favorable reports to either branch, at the discretion of the committee, except that  
223 reports on money bills shall be made to the House.

224 In compliance with section 38A of chapter 3 of the General Laws, the joint committee on Health  
225 Care Financing when reporting on bills shall include a fiscal note prepared under section 3A of  
226 chapter 29 of the General Laws, showing the estimated cost or the fiscal effect of the proposed  
227 legislation, if, in the opinion of said committee, such cost or fiscal effect exceeds the sum of  
228 \$100,000; provided, however, that any matter reported by the committee on Health Care  
229 Financing with a fiscal effect of less than \$100,000 shall not be referred, under the rules, to the  
230 committee on Ways and Means.[Adopted Jan. 26, 2005; Amended May 19, 2005; Feb. 20, 2007;  
231 Feb. 12, 2009.]

232 1F. The joint committee on Bonding, Capital Expenditures and State Assets shall review all  
233 legislation providing for the giving, loaning or pledging of the credit of the Commonwealth (see  
234 Article LXII of the Amendments to the Constitution, as amended by Article LXXXIV). Said  
235 committee shall be responsible for evaluating such legislation and determining the  
236 appropriateness of enacting legislation containing increased bond authorizations for the  
237 Commonwealth. The committee shall periodically review and hold open public hearings,  
238 accepting oral and written testimony on the status of the bonds and notes of the Commonwealth,  
239 including (1) general obligation debt; (2) dedicated income tax debt; and (3) special obligation  
240 debt. The committee shall also, in its continuing study of the state's bonding practices, review

241 the Commonwealth's liabilities relative to (a) state-supported debt; (b) state-guaranteed debt; and  
242 (c) indirect obligations.

243 Any bill providing for borrowing for new projects, and requiring the Commonwealth to issue  
244 bonds for such purpose, shall, prior to its reference to the committee on Ways and Means, be  
245 referred to the committee on Bonding, Capital Expenditures and State Assets for report on its  
246 relationship to the finances of the Commonwealth. A measure may initially be referred to  
247 another joint committee with jurisdiction over the subject matter before being referred to the  
248 committee on Bonding, Capital Expenditures and State Assets; provided, however, that  
249 notwithstanding any rule to the contrary, any such matter so reported shall not be read a first time  
250 in the branch in which the report was received. The next favorable report on any such matter by  
251 the committee on Bonding, Capital Expenditures and State Assets shall be considered the first  
252 reading. The branch of origin for any such bill so reported shall be the branch receiving such  
253 favorable report.

254 The provisions of Joint Rule 4 shall apply to all matters referred to the joint committee on  
255 Bonding, Capital Expenditures and State Assets, except that where constitutionally prohibited.

256 The joint committee shall consult with the various agencies of the Executive branch and the  
257 office of the Treasurer and Receiver-General relative to project expenditures, availability of

258 funds, the sale of new bonds and the resultant debt obligations, federal reimbursements and other  
259 related funding and bonding issues.

260 The joint committee on Bonding, Capital Expenditures and State Assets shall be authorized to  
261 conduct hearings relative to the statutory authority of the Executive branch and the Treasurer and  
262 Receiver-General in the issuance and sale of bonds and notes and the expenditure of capital  
263 funds by the various agencies and authorities of the Commonwealth. The committee shall  
264 determine whether such laws, administrative regulations and programs are being implemented in  
265 accordance with the intent of the General Court.

266 The committee on Bonding, Capital Expenditures and State Assets shall be authorized to report  
267 to the General Court from time to time on the results of its hearings and to file drafts of  
268 legislation necessary to carry its recommendations into effect.

269 Messages from the Governor setting terms of bonds and notes, or for the de-authorization or  
270 authorization of bonds and notes, shall be referred to the committee on Bonding, Capital  
271 Expenditures and State Assets.

272 1G. The President of the Senate, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, Minority Leader  
273 of the Senate, Minority Leader of the House of Representatives, the Senate and House chairs and  
274 the Senate and House ranking minority members of the joint committee on Public Safety and  
275 Homeland Security may receive security clearance from federal and state homeland security

276 officials in order to be granted access to confidential homeland security briefings, information  
277 and materials. The President of the Senate, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, the  
278 Senate and House committee chairs and the Senate and House ranking minority members may  
279 designate 1 or more members of their staff who may receive such security clearance.

280 Any person who receives security clearance under this rule shall sign all confidentiality  
281 agreements required by homeland security officials. The breach of any such confidentiality  
282 agreement shall constitute a violation of the Joint Rules of the Senate and House of  
283 Representatives. Any alleged violation of a confidentiality agreement shall be referred for  
284 investigation to the Senate committee on Ethics and Rules or the House committee on Ethics,  
285 respectively, and, if appropriate, to law enforcement authorities for potential criminal  
286 prosecution. [Adopted Jan. 26, 2005; Amended Feb. 12, 2009; Mar. 7, 2019.]

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

289 2A. No member of either branch shall purchase, directly or indirectly, the stock or other  
290 securities of any corporation or association knowing that there is pending before the General  
291 Court any measure specially granting to such corporation or association any immunity,  
292 exemption, privilege or benefit or any measure providing for the creation of, or directly affecting  
293 any, contractual relations between such corporation or association and the Commonwealth. This  
294 rule shall not apply to the purchase of securities issued by the Commonwealth or any political  
295 subdivision of the Commonwealth. [See G.L. chapter 268, section 10.] [Adopted Jan. 16, 1922.]

296 3. When the General Court is in session, authorization for any committee of the Senate or House  
297 of Representatives to travel during the session of the General Court shall be approved by a vote

298 of two-thirds of the members of its branch present and voting. When the General Court is in  
299 session, authorization for any committee of the Senate or House of Representatives to sit and  
300 travel during the recess of the General Court shall be approved by a vote of two-thirds of the  
301 members of each branch present and voting. During the recess of the General Court, the  
302 President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives may, by written consent,  
303 allow standing committees of their respective branches or appoint special committees to sit,  
304 travel and incur expenses not exceeding sums authorized in writing by said presiding officers and  
305 appropriated for such purposes. When the General Court is in session, authorization for any joint  
306 committee to travel during the session, or to sit or travel during the recess, of the General Court  
307 shall be approved by a vote of two-thirds of the members of each branch present and voting.  
308 During the recess of the General Court, the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House  
309 of Representatives, acting jointly, may, by written consent, allow joint committees or appoint  
310 joint special committees to sit, travel and incur expenses not exceeding sums authorized in  
311 writing by said presiding officers and appropriated for such purposes. The Clerks of the Senate  
312 and House of Representatives shall be notified of any appointments made and authorizations  
313 granted during the recess for said committees to sit, travel and incur expenses during the recess  
314 and the Clerks shall enter such information in the journals for the next year, as soon as may be  
315 practicable. Committees authorized by the presiding officers to sit during the recess in the odd  
316 numbered year shall report not later than the fourth Wednesday of January during the following  
317 year and committees authorized by the presiding officers to sit during the recess in the even  
318 numbered year shall report not later than the fourth Wednesday of December during the same  
319 year.



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

327 All bills for the traveling expenses of committees shall be submitted by the Sergeant-at-Arms to  
328 the committee by whom they have been incurred and shall be approved by a majority of said  
329 committee before being presented to the Comptroller for payment. [Adopted Feb. 7, 1890;  
330 Amended Feb. 2, 1891 ; Jan. 20, 1904 ; April 17, 1925 ; March 2, 1943 ; July 27, 1950 ; Oct. 18,  
331 1971 ; March 28, 1972 ; Jan. 15, 1973; Feb. 12, 2009.]

332 3A. A joint standing committee may, upon the written and signed report of two-thirds of the  
333 members of the Senate and two-thirds of the members of the House appointed to said committee,  
334 report a bill or other form of legislation without said legislation being founded upon petition;  
335 provided, however, that matters so reported shall be germane to the subject matters regularly  
336 referred to the committee. The committee shall hold a public hearing on such bill or other form  
337 of legislation before it is reported. A bill or other form of legislation so reported shall be placed  
338 in the Orders of the Day by the Clerk of the respective branch to which it is reported or referred  
339 to a standing committee of said branch under the rules. All reports of committees not founded  
340 upon petition shall bear the designation ‘committee bill’, ‘resolve’, ‘order’ or ‘resolution’, as the  
341 case may be, in the Orders of the Day. Committees to which messages from the Governor,  
342 reports of state officers, boards, committees, commissions and others authorized to report to the

343 General Court, may report by bill or otherwise such legislation as may be germane to the subject  
344 matter referred to them. [Adopted June 3, 1985 .]

345 4. Favorable reports, and adverse reports on subjects of legislation other than petitions, by joint  
346 committees shall be made to the branch in which the matter was originally introduced, unless the  
347 committee decides otherwise under its own rules and, except that reports on money bills shall be  
348 made to the House and if adverse reports on matters other than petitions which are accompanied  
349 by money bills are accepted by the House, this shall constitute final rejection. Adverse reports by  
350 joint committees on petitions shall be made to the branch in which the petition was originally  
351 introduced, except that such adverse reports on petitions accompanied by proposed money bills  
352 shall be made to the House; and, if accepted by the branch in which they are made, shall be  
353 considered as a final rejection. When a report is made from any committee to either branch, and  
354 the subject-matter of the report is subsequently referred to a joint committee, such committee,  
355 except for the committee on Health Care Financing, shall report its action to the branch in which  
356 the reference originated. [See also Joint Rule 5.]

357 A vote of a joint standing committee to give legislation a favorable or adverse report shall be  
358 conducted by a roll call upon request of 2 committee members present at the committee meeting.  
359 Such votes shall be recorded on appropriate forms that show all votes for and against the  
360 particular committee action. The records of all such roll calls shall be kept in the offices of the  
361 committee for the duration of the General Court during which said vote was recorded, and shall  
362 be available for public inspection upon reasonable notice and during regular office hours.

363 All committee members shall have an opportunity to sign a form accompanying a report of the  
364 committee signifying approval of, dissent or abstention from a report of a joint standing

365 committee before the report is final or filed. No signature shall be valid unless the report to  
366 which the signature is affixed includes the substantially complete text of the legislation being  
367 reported. [Amended Jan. 3, 1952; April 8, 1959; June 7, 1965; Jan. 7, 1971; March 11, 1974;  
368 June 3, 1985; Feb. 20, 2007; Feb. 15, 2017.]

369 4A. In compliance with section 38A of chapter 3 of the General Laws, all joint committees of the  
370 General Court when reporting on bills referred to them shall include a fiscal note prepared under  
371 section 3A of chapter 29 of the General Laws, showing the estimated cost or the fiscal effect of  
372 the proposed legislation, if, in the opinion of said committee, such cost exceeds \$100,000. Such  
373 fiscal note shall be filed electronically in the office of the clerk to which the report is being  
374 made, and shall be promptly made available on the official website of the General Court.

375 [Adopted Jan. 15, 1973.]

376 5. Matters reported adversely by joint committees and the committees on Rules of the two  
377 branches, acting concurrently, may be recommitted to the same committees at the pleasure of the  
378 branch acting on the report, and bills or resolves may be recommitted in either branch. If a bill or  
379 resolve is laid aside in either branch for the reason that it is declared to be broader in its scope  
380 than the subject-matter upon which it is based, the subject-matter shall be recommitted to the  
381 committee. A concurrent vote shall, however, be necessary for re-committal, with instructions.  
382 After recommitment, report shall, in all cases, be made to the branch originating the  
383 recommitment. [Amended Feb. 2, 1891; April 11, 1935; Jan. 6, 1947; May 7, 19 53; March 26,  
384 1963; Jan. 30, 1967; Jan. 7, 1971; March 11, 1974.]

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

388 Joint Petitions.

389 6A. A member of the Senate and a member of the House of Representatives may file a joint  
390 petition in either branch and shall endorse their name on the petition and a brief statement of the  
391 nature and object of the instrument and the reading of the instrument shall be dispensed with,  
392 unless specially ordered. The petition shall be filed in the office of the clerk of either the Senate  
393 or House of Representatives, depending on whether it is a 'Joint Senate/House Petition' or a  
394 'Joint House/Senate Petition' but the Journal records in the Senate and House of Representatives  
395 shall carry both members' names as presenters of the petition. [Adopted Jan. 15, 1973.]

396 7. Whenever, upon any application for an act of incorporation or other legislation, the purpose  
397 for which such legislation is sought can be secured without detriment to the public interests by a  
398 general law or under existing laws, the committee to which the matter is referred shall report  
399 such general law, or 'ought not to pass'. [Amended Feb. 2, 1891; Feb. 7, 18 93; Jan. 7, 1971.]

400 7A. A petition for legislation to authorize a county to reinstate in its service a person formerly  
401 employed by it, or to retire or pension or grant an annuity to any person, or to increase any  
402 retirement allowance, pension or annuity, or to pay any sum of money in the nature of a pension  
403 or retirement allowance, or to pay any salary which would have accrued to a deceased official or  
404 employee but for their death, or to pay any claim for damages or otherwise, or to alter the  
405 benefits or change the restrictions of any county retirement or pension law, shall, subsequently to  
406 the procedure required by Senate Rule No. 20 and by House Rule No. 24, be reported adversely,

407 unless, when filed it be the petition of, or be approved by, a majority of the county  
408 commissioners. [Adopted April 29, 1915. Amended Jan. 13, Feb. 19 and Dec. 22, 1920; May 24,  
409 1926; April 11, 1935; April 22, 1937; Jan. 12, 1939; Jan. 15, 1945; Feb. 20, 1951; Jan. 30, 1967;  
410 Jan. 7, 1971; Jan. 15, 1973; Mar. 7, 2019.]

411 7B. A petition, the operation of which is restricted to a particular city or town (and which does  
412 not affect the powers, duties, etc., of state departments, boards, commissions, etc., or which does  
413 not affect generally the laws of the Commonwealth) and which is not filed in conformity with  
414 Section 8 of Article LXXXIX of the Amendments to the Constitution shall, subsequent to the  
415 procedure required by Senate Rule 20 and House Rule 24, be reported adversely, unless it be on  
416 petition filed or approved by the voters of a city or town, or the mayor and city council, or other  
417 legislative body, of a city, or the town meeting of a town. A joint committee to which is  
418 inadvertently referred a petition or other subject of legislation the operation of which is restricted  
419 to a particular city or town and which is not in conformity with Section 8 of Article LXXXIX of  
420 the Amendments to the Constitution shall report a general law which applies alike to all cities, or  
421 to all towns, or to all cities and towns, or to a class of not fewer than 2; or shall report ‘ought not  
422 to pass’, with the further endorsement that it ‘would be unconstitutional to enact such special  
423 law’.

424 Any petition that subsequently conforms to Section 8 of Article LXXXIX of the Amendments to  
425 the Constitution after filing, which have followed the procedures set forth in Senate Rule 20 or  
426 House Rule 24, shall be forthwith reported from the committee on Rules and be referred by the  
427 Clerk to an appropriate committee.[Adopted Jan. 13, 1920. Amended Feb. 19 and Dec. 22, 1920;  
428 May 24, 1926; April 11, 1935; April 22, 1937; Jan. 12, 1939; Jan. 9, 1941; Jan. 15, 1945; Feb.  
429 20, 1951; Jan. 30, 1967; Jan. 7 and Mar. 22, 1971 ; Jan. 15, 1973; March 14, 2013.]

430 7C. The approval vote required to file a petition, the operation of which is restricted to a  
431 particular city or town under Section 8 of Article LXXXIX of the Amendments to the  
432 Constitution of the Commonwealth, shall not expire prior to the final day of the next immediate  
433 biennial session in which the petition was filed and no additional vote shall be required to file a  
434 petition unless a vote to rescind such approval is passed by the voters of a city or town, or the  
435 mayor and city council or other legislative body of a city, or the select board and the town  
436 meeting or other legislative body of the town. [Adopted, Mar. 14, 2013; Amended Feb. 15,  
437 2017.]

438 7D. The approval of a substantive amendment to a petition restricted to a single city or town and  
439 requiring a vote of the city of town before enactment of the petition shall be provided to the  
440 General Court before the enactment of the petition and shall be reviewed by House Counsel and  
441 Senate Counsel prior to the enactment of the petition in either branch. [Adopted , Feb. 15, 2017.]

442 Notice to Parties Interested.

443 8. No legislation affecting the rights of individuals or the rights of a private or municipal  
444 corporation, otherwise than as it affects generally the people of the Commonwealth or the people  
445 of the city or town to which it specifically applies, shall be proposed or introduced except by a  
446 petition, nor shall any bill or resolve embodying such legislation be reported by a committee  
447 except upon a petition duly referred, nor shall such a bill or resolve be reported by a committee,  
448 whether on an original reference or on a re-committal with instructions to hear the parties, until it  
449 is made to appear to the satisfaction of the committee that proper notice of the proposed  
450 legislation has been given by public advertisement or otherwise to all parties interested, without  
451 expense to the Commonwealth, or until evidence satisfactory to the committee is produced that

452 all parties interested have in writing waived notice. A committee reporting adversely due to lack  
453 proper notice or of a waiver of proper notice shall so state in its report and no bill or resolve shall  
454 be in order as a substitute for, or amendment of, such report. Objection to the violation of this  
455 rule may be taken at any stage prior to that of the third reading. [Adopted Feb. 7, 1890. Amended  
456 Dec. 22, 1920 ; Jan. 12, 1939 ; Jan. 15, 1945; Jan. 7, 1971.]

457 9. A petition for the incorporation of a city or town, for the annexation of 1 municipality to  
458 another, for the consolidation of 2 or more municipalities or for the division of an existing  
459 municipality, or for the incorporation or revival of a railroad, street railway, elevated railroad,  
460 canal, telephone, telegraph, water, gas, electric light, power or other public service corporation,  
461 for the amendment, alteration or extension of the charter or corporate powers or privileges, or for  
462 the change of name, of any such company, whether specially incorporated or organized under the  
463 General Laws, or for authority to take water for a water supply, or relative to building structures  
464 in or over navigable or tide waters, shall be placed on file, and not referred to a committee ,  
465 unless the petitioner has given the notice and followed the procedure required by section 5 of  
466 chapter 3 of the General Laws . But if, no objection being raised, any such petition is referred to  
467 a committee without such required notice or procedure, the committee shall forthwith report  
468 adversely, setting forth as the reason for such report failure to comply with the law, unless  
469 evidence satisfactory to the committee is produced that all parties interested have in writing  
470 waived notice. In case a bill or resolve is reported upon such a petition, after proof of such  
471 waiver of notice, this fact shall be set forth in the report of the committee. When an adverse  
472 report is made by a committee, on account of failure to give the required notice, no bill or resolve  
473 shall be substituted for such report, nor shall such report be recommitted or referred to another  
474 committee.

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

482 Any petition placed on file for want of proper notice or procedure under this rule shall not affect  
483 action upon any other measure involving the same subject matter. [Adopted Feb. 7, 1890.  
484 Amended Feb. 2, 1891; Feb. 3, 1898; Jan. 16, 1903; Feb. 19 and Dec. 22, 1920; May 24, 1926;  
485 Feb. 27, 1929; April 11, 1935; Jan. 6, 1938; Jan. 12, 1939; Jan. 9, 1941; Jan. 15, 1945; April 8,  
486 1959; Jan. 7, 1963; Jan. 7, 1971 ; Jan. 15, 1973 , June 12, 1995; Feb. 12, 2009; Mar. 7, 2019.]

487 Limit of Time allowed for Reports of Committees.

488 10. All joint committees and the committees on Rules of the two branches, acting concurrently,  
489 shall make final report not later than the first Wednesday in February of the second annual  
490 session of the General Court on all matters referred to them before the second Wednesday of  
491 January of the second annual session and within 30 days on all matters referred to them on and  
492 after the second Wednesday of January of the second annual session of the General Court except  
493 that the committee on Health Care Financing shall make final report not later than the last  
494 Wednesday of March of the second annual session on all matters referred to them on or before  
495 the fourth Wednesday of February and within 30 days on all matters referred to it after the fourth  
496 Wednesday in February of the second annual session of the General Court. When the time within



497 which said committees are required to report has expired, all matters upon which no report has  
498 then been made shall forthwith be reported by the chair of the committee on the part of the  
499 branch in which they were respectively introduced, with an adverse recommendation under this  
500 rule. If the chair fails to make such report by the end of the legislative day next following the  
501 expiration date, all matters remaining unreported shall be placed in the Orders of the Day by the  
502 Clerk of the branch in which the matter was originally filed with an adverse report under this  
503 rule. Matters which have been referred under Joint Rule 29, upon which the chairs of the  
504 committees on Rules fail to make a report, shall be placed by the respective Clerks in the Orders  
505 of the Day of the branch in which the subject matter was referred to said committees.  
506 Committees to whom are referred subjects of legislation may combine petitions of similar  
507 subject matter, or other forms of legislation of similar subject matter, into 1 adverse report, and  
508 the report on the petition shall be that said petitions or other forms of legislation 'ought NOT to  
509 pass,' and if the report is accepted, all the matters contained in the report shall be disposed of.  
510 However, petitions upon which an adverse report is accepted in only 1 branch may not be  
511 combined with other subjects of legislation upon which adverse reports must be accepted, in  
512 concurrence. This rule shall not apply to petitions referred to the committees on Rules of the two  
513 branches, acting concurrently, under the second paragraph of Joint Rule 12. This rule shall not be  
514 rescinded, amended or suspended, except by a concurrent vote of four-fifths of the members of  
515 each branch present and voting thereon. Notwithstanding Joint Rule 30, this rule shall not be  
516 rescinded, amended or suspended more than 3 times except by unanimous consent. [Amended  
517 Feb. 2, 1891; Jan. 25, 1894; Jan. 16, 1903; Jan. 20, 1904; Dec. 22, 1920; April 17, 1925; Jan. 12,  
518 1939; Jan. 15, 1945; Jan. 6, 1947; May 7, 1953; Jan. 27, 1955; Jan. 30, 1967; Jan. 7, 1971; Feb.

519 4, 1974, June 12, 1995; July 17, 2003; Feb. 20, 2007; Feb. 12, 2009; Feb. 15, 2017; Mar. 7,  
520 2019.]

521 10A. The form for all subjects of legislation receiving a favorable report shall be ‘ought to pass.’  
522 The form for all subjects of legislation receiving an adverse report shall be ‘ought NOT to pass.’  
523 A committee to whom is referred any other matter may report recommending that the same be  
524 placed on file. [Adopted Jan. 7, 1971.]

525 Committees of Conference.

526 11. Committees of conference shall consist of 3 members on the part of each branch, one  
527 member of each branch being a member of the minority party representing its vote; and their  
528 report, if agreed to by a majority of each committee, shall be made to the branch asking for the  
529 conference, and may be either accepted or rejected, but no other action shall be had, except  
530 through a new committee of conference.

531 Committees of conference to whom are referred matters of difference in respect to bills or  
532 resolves, shall, after filing their reports, but before consideration by either branch, have the same  
533 approved or discharged by each committee on Bills in the Third Reading [Amended April 22,  
534 1937; Feb. 12, 2009; Feb. 3, 2011; Feb. 15, 2017; Mar. 7, 2019.]

535 11A. Committees of conference to whom are referred matters of difference in respect to  
536 appropriation bills, including capital outlay programs, shall, after filing their reports but before  
537 consideration by either branch have the same approved or discharged by each committee on Bills  
538 in the Third Reading.

539 Upon the appointment of a committee of conference to whom matters of difference in respect to  
540 any appropriation bill or in respect to any bill providing for capital outlay programs and projects  
541 are referred, the clerk of the branch requesting said committee of conference shall make  
542 available to members of the General Court a list of the matters in disagreement identified by item  
543 number and item purpose and showing the amount made available by each branch of the General  
544 Court, and any other matters in disagreement and the position of each of the said branches.

545 The report of said committee of conference shall consist of the matters of difference so referred  
546 and so identified, showing the amounts appropriated by each of the said branches and other  
547 matters in disagreement and the position of each branch with respect to those matters, and shall  
548 state said committee's recommendations with respect to the matters so referred. Matters on which  
549 there exists no disagreement between the branches shall not be disturbed by the committee on  
550 conference.

551 The committees on ways and means of each branch of the General Court shall assist such  
552 committee of conference in any and all matters necessary to the preparation and completion of its  
553 report. [Adopted July 30, 1974; Amended Oct. 3, 1983; Feb. 3, 2011.]

554 11B. No report from a committee of conference shall be considered or acted upon by either  
555 branch until the calendar day following the day on which said report shall have been available to  
556 the public and to the members of the General Court. The committee shall file its report no later  
557 than 8 p.m. on the day preceding its consideration and the General Court shall not consider said  
558 report before 1 p.m. on the following day, except that a report from such committee of  
559 conference that it is unable to agree may be considered and acted upon at the time that such

560 report is filed. [Adopted Oct. 3, 1983. Amended July 17, 2003; July 21 and September 20, 2005;  
561 Feb. 3, 2011.]

562 11C. Reports, other than those filed under Rule 11A, from a committee of conference shall,  
563 whenever practicable, be accompanied by a summary which shall be filed with the clerk.  
564 [Adopted Feb. 12, 2009; Feb. 3, 2011.]

565 11D. Upon the filing of a report by a committee of conference the clerk of the branch in which  
566 the committee of conference filed its report shall make the report and the summary of the report  
567 available to all members electronically and to the public on the official website of the General  
568 Court by 9 p.m. on the day preceding its consideration. [Adopted Feb. 12, 2009; Feb. 3, 2011.]

569 11E. Subsequent to the filing of a report of a committee of conference, an addendum may be  
570 submitted to the clerk of the branch in which the report had been filed. The addendum shall  
571 indicate that it contains only matters inadvertently omitted from or included in the report, and  
572 shall be signed by all of members of the House and Senate who had signed the conference  
573 committee report. The addendum shall be approved by both the Counsel to the House and the  
574 Counsel to the Senate. The addendum, having been approved by both the Counsel to the House  
575 and the Counsel to the Senate, shall be posted to the official website of the General Court  
576 immediately upon receipt by the clerk of the branch to which it was submitted. [Adopted Mar.  
577 14, 2013.]

578 Limit of Time allowed for New Business.

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

582 All such matters except messages from the Governor, reports required or authorized to be made  
583 to the General Court and petitions filed or approved by the voters of a city or town, or the mayor  
584 and city council, or other legislative body of a city, or the town meeting of a town, for the  
585 enactment of a special law under Section 8 of Article LXXXIX of the Amendments to the  
586 Constitution and which do not affect the powers, duties, etc., of state departments, boards,  
587 commissions, etc., or which do not affect generally the laws of the Commonwealth deposited  
588 with the respective clerks subsequent to 5 p.m. on the third Friday of January of the first annual  
589 session of the General Court shall be referred by the Clerks to the committees on the Rules of the  
590 two branches, acting concurrently. No such matter shall be admitted for consideration except on  
591 report of the committees on Rules of the two branches, acting concurrently, and then upon  
592 approval of two-thirds of the members of each branch voting thereon. Matters upon which  
593 suspension of Joint Rule 12 has been negated shall be placed on file.

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

599 [Amended Feb. 7, 18 90; Feb. 2, 18 91; Feb. 7, 18 93; Jan. 10, 18 98; Jan. 9, 18 99; Feb. 15, 19  
600 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;  
601 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,  
602 19 67; March 26, 19 69; Jan. 7, 1971 ; Jan. 15 and Oct. 2, 1973 ; Oct 3, 1983 , June 12, 1995 ;  
603 Jan. 26, 2005; July 17, 2003; Jan. 26, 2005; July 21, 2005; Sept. 20, 2005; Feb. 12, 2009.]

604 12A. All formal business of the first annual session of the General Court shall be concluded not  
605 later than the third Wednesday in November of that calendar year and all formal business of the  
606 second annual session shall be concluded not later than the last day of July of that calendar year.

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

612 Unfinished Business of the Session.

613 12B. Any matter pending before the General Court at the end of the first annual session and any  
614 special session held in the same year shall carry over into the second annual session of the same  
615 General Court in the same legislative status as it was at the conclusion of the first annual session  
616 or any special session held during that year; provided, however, that any measure making or  
617 supplementing an appropriation for a fiscal year submitted to or returned to the General Court by  
618 the Governor, under Article LXIII of the Amendments to the Constitution, in the first annual  
619 session or in a special session held during that year shall cease to exist upon the termination of  
620 the first annual session. [Adopted June 12, 1995.]

621 Papers to be deposited with the Clerks.

622 13. Information intended for presentation to the General Court by any Representative or Senator  
623 shall be deposited with the Clerk of the branch to which the member belongs; and all such  
624 information, unless they be subject to other rules or of the rules of the Senate or House, shall be  
625 referred by the Clerk, with the approval of the President or Speaker, to appropriate committees,

626 subject to such changes as the Senate or House may make. The reading of information so  
627 referred may be dispensed with, but they shall, except as provided in these rules, be entered in  
628 the Journal of the same on the next legislative day after such reference.

629 A member may include a brief statement of intent with all papers intended for presentation to the  
630 General Court. Upon a favorable report by a joint standing committee, a committee may include  
631 a brief written statement of intent. Said statement shall be dated and shall include the scope of  
632 the matter presented for consideration; provided, however, this rule shall not be construed to  
633 require the presentation of such statement of intent under this rule. [Adopted Feb. 7, 1890.  
634 Amended Feb. 2, 1891; Feb. 7, 1893; Jan. 25, 1894; Dec. 22, 1920; May 25, 1923; Feb. 15,  
635 1933; Jan. 12, 1971; June 3, 1985; Feb. 12, 2009.]

636 Dockets of Legislative Counsel and Agents.

637 14. The committees on Rules of the two branches, acting concurrently, may prescribe the manner  
638 and form of keeping the dockets of legislative agents which are required by law. [Adopted Feb.  
639 2, 1891; Amended Feb. 19, 1920.]

640 Duties of the Clerk.

641 15. If any part of the report of a committee over the signature of the chair or members of the  
642 committee is amended in either branch, the Clerk of that branch shall endorse upon the report  
643 such amendment. [Amended Mar. 7, 2019.]

644 16. All papers, while on their passage between the 2 branches, may be under the signature of the  
645 respective Clerks, except as to the adopting of emergency preambles and the final passage of

646 bills and resolves. Messages may be sent by such persons as each branch may direct. [Amended  
647 Feb. 21, 1919.]

648 17. After bills and resolves have passed both branches to be engrossed, they shall be in the  
649 charge of the Clerks of the 2 branches, who shall prepare the same for final passage in the  
650 manner prescribed by law; and when so prepared the same shall be delivered to the Clerk of the  
651 House of Representatives; and when the bills have been passed to be enacted or the resolves have  
652 been passed in the House, they shall, in like manner, be delivered to the Senate Clerk and  
653 Parliamentarian. If a bill or resolve contains an emergency preamble, it shall be delivered in like  
654 manner, to the Senate after the preamble has been adopted by the House of Representatives and  
655 before the bill or resolve is put upon its final passage in that branch. If the Senate concurs in  
656 adopting the preamble, the bill or resolve shall be returned to the House to be there first put upon  
657 its final passage, under Joint Rule No. 22. [Amended Feb. 24, 1914; Feb. 21, 1919; Jan. 7, 1971.]

658 18. [Omitted in 1971.]

659 19. The Clerk of the branch in which a bill or resolve originated shall make an endorsement on  
660 the envelope of the engrossed copy of the bill, certifying in which branch the bill originated,  
661 which endorsement shall be entered on the journals by the Clerks respectively. [Amended Jan.  
662 28, 1889; Feb. 24, 1914.]

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

667 Presentation and Distribution of Documents.



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

674 The Clerks of the House of Representatives and the Senate shall be responsible for publishing  
675 the journals of their respective chamber, the book Public Officers of Massachusetts, the  
676 committee book and any other publications per order of the committees on Rules. [Amended Jan.  
677 8, 1886 ; Jan. 28, 1889 ; Jan. 27, 1911 ; Feb. 19, 1920 ; Jan. 6, 1947 ; Apr. 5, 19 67 ; Jan. 7,  
678 1971; Feb. 12, 2009; Mar. 14, 2013.]

679 Emergency Measures.

680 22. The vote on the preamble of an emergency law, which under the requirements of Article  
681 XLVIII, as amended by Article LXVII of the Amendments of the Constitution shall, upon  
682 request of 2 members of the Senate or of 5 members of the House of Representatives, be taken  
683 by call of the yeas and nays, shall be had after the proposed law has been prepared for final  
684 passage; and neither branch shall vote on the enactment of a bill or on the passage of a resolve  
685 containing an emergency preamble until it has been determined whether the preamble shall  
686 remain or be eliminated. If the bill contains an emergency preamble, a motion to amend the bill  
687 may be received in either branch before the adoption of the emergency preamble, and the  
688 amendment may contain a new emergency preamble. If the 2 branches concur in adopting the  
689 preamble, the bill or resolve shall first be put upon its final passage in the House of

690 Representatives. If either branch fails to adopt the preamble, notice of its action shall be sent to  
691 the other branch; and the bill or resolve, duly endorsed, shall again be prepared for final passage  
692 without the preamble and without any provision that the bill or the resolve shall take effect  
693 earlier than 90 days after it has become law. Procedure shall be otherwise under the joint rules  
694 and the rules of the Senate and the House of Representatives. [Adopted Feb. 21, 1919. Amended  
695 Jan. 30, 1923; Jan. 7, 1971; Feb. 20, 2007; Feb. 12, 2009.]

696 22A. Bills and resolves passed to be engrossed by both branches and before being transmitted by  
697 the clerks to the Legislative Engrossing Division shall be made available to the committees on  
698 Bills in the Third Reading of the two branches, acting jointly, who shall examine them to ensure  
699 accuracy in the text; that the legislation is correct as to form; that references to previous  
700 amendments to any particular law are correct and to ensure proper consistency with the language  
701 of existing statutes. These committees, with the approval of the majority and minority leadership  
702 of both branches may make corrections which are not substantive in nature. The clerks of both  
703 branches shall be immediately notified, in writing, of any such changes. Errors discovered by the  
704 committees of a substantive nature shall be reported to the General Court, which in turn shall  
705 take appropriate action under its rules. Upon completion of examination and possible correction  
706 of any such bills and resolves, the bills and resolves shall be returned to the clerks, who in turn,  
707 shall transmit them to the Legislative Engrossing Division to be prepared for final passage.  
708 [Adopted Sept. 16, 1971.]

709 Legislative Amendments to the Constitution.

710 23. All proposals for amendments to the Constitution referred to a joint committee on the first  
711 annual session of the General Court shall be reported by said committee not later than the last

712 Wednesday of April in said year, and proposals for amendments to the Constitution referred to a  
713 joint committee subsequent to the last Wednesday in April of the first annual session shall be  
714 reported by said committee not later than the last Wednesday of April in the second session of  
715 the same General Court. The committee shall file its report, either recommending that the  
716 proposal ought to pass or ought not to pass, with any official papers in its possession that relate  
717 thereto, with the Clerk of the Senate. When the time within which said committees are required  
718 to report has expired, all matters upon which no report has been made shall forthwith be placed  
719 in the Journal of the respective branches, with an adverse report under this rule; and shall then be  
720 placed on file in the office of the Clerk of the Senate. For further information of the members of  
721 the Senate and House of Representatives, the respective Clerks shall also place all such matters  
722 under a separate heading in the Calendar of each branch, as soon as is practicable. In each branch  
723 the report shall be read and forthwith placed on file; and no further legislative action shall be  
724 taken on the measure unless consideration in joint session is called for by vote of either branch,  
725 under Section 2 of Part IV of Article XLVIII (as amended by Article LXXXI) of the  
726 Amendments to the Constitution. A joint committee to which is referred any recommendation for  
727 an amendment to the Constitution made by the Governor or contained in a report authorized to  
728 be made to the General Court may report on the recommendation a proposal for a legislative  
729 amendment, which shall be deemed to have been introduced by the member of the Senate who  
730 reports for the committee; and the procedure as regards reporting, filing and subsequent action  
731 shall be that provided for legislative amendments by this rule. Or the joint committee may report  
732 ought not to pass for the reason that no legislation is necessary or that the recommendation ought  
733 not to pass; and in such cases the usual procedure as regards similar reports by joint committees  
734 shall be followed. If such an adverse report is amended in the Senate by substituting a proposal

735 for a legislative amendment, notice of the Senate's action shall be sent to the House and said  
736 proposal, together with the official papers relating to the subject, shall be in the custody of the  
737 Clerk of the Senate; and if said report is so amended in the House, the proposal, duly endorsed,  
738 together with the other papers, shall be sent to the Senate for its information and shall be kept in  
739 the custody of its Clerk. No further legislative action shall be taken in either branch on a proposal  
740 so substituted unless consideration in joint session is called for under the Constitution. If either  
741 branch calls for the consideration of any proposal in joint session, notice of its action shall be  
742 sent to the other branch; and it shall then be the duty of the Senate and the House of  
743 Representatives to arrange for the holding of the joint session not later than the second  
744 Wednesday in May. Subject to the requirements of the Constitution, joint sessions or  
745 continuances of joint sessions of the 2 branches to consider proposals for specific amendments to  
746 the Constitution, and all rules or procedures, shall be determined only by concurrent votes of the  
747 2 branches. The rules relative to joint conventions shall apply to the joint sessions of the 2  
748 houses. [Adopted Feb. 21, 1919. Amended March 30, 1921; April 11, 1935; Jan. 12, 1939; Jan.  
749 15, 1945; Nov. 9, 1951; Jan. 15, 1973; July 1, 1974; Feb. 12, 2009.]

750 Executive Reorganization Plans.

751 23A. Any reorganization plan, accompanied by a bill, submitted by the Governor under Article  
752 LXXXVII of the Amendments to the Constitution shall be referred by the Clerks of the Senate  
753 and the House, with the approval of the President and Speaker, to a joint standing committee  
754 within 5 days of the presentation of the reorganization plan.

755 Said committee, to which is referred any such reorganization plan, shall, as required by said  
756 Article, not later than 30 days after the presentation of such plan by the Governor, hold a public

757 hearing on the reorganization plan; and shall not later than 10 days after such hearing report that  
758 it either approves or disapproves such plan.

759 When recommending action, the committee shall make, in each branch, a separate report of its  
760 recommendations, and shall file said report together with the committee's recommendations and  
761 the reasons for those recommendations, in writing. Majority and minority reports shall be signed  
762 by the members of said committee. Any official papers in the possession of said committee that  
763 relate thereto shall be filed with the Clerk of the Senate.

764 If the committee recommends favorable action, the report shall be that the reorganization plan  
765 'ought to be approved'. If the committee recommends adverse action, the report shall be that the  
766 reorganization plan 'ought NOT to be approved'. In each instance, the question shall be 'Shall  
767 this reorganization plan be approved?'

768 In each branch, the report shall be read and forthwith recorded in the Journal. On the legislative  
769 day next following the Journal record, the report shall be placed in the Orders of the Day of the  
770 Senate and the House.

771 When the time within which a joint committee is required to report on a reorganization plan has  
772 expired, a matter upon which no report has been made shall forthwith be placed in the Orders of  
773 the Day by the Clerks of each branch and the question shall be 'Shall this reorganization plan be  
774 approved?'

775 When such plan is before either branch, no motion relating to said plan shall be allowed except  
776 the motions to lay on the table (only in the Senate), to postpone to a time certain, or to commit or  
777 recommit (at the pleasure of either branch). The motions to take a recess, to adjourn, the previous

778 question (if provided in the branch debating the issue), to close debate at a specified time, and  
779 the motion to reconsider shall also be in order.

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

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

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

793 No such reorganization plan presented to the General Court shall be subject to change or  
794 amendment before expiration of such 60 days. [Adopted June 13, 1967; Amended March 27,  
795 1969; June 12, 1995; Feb. 12, 2009.]

796 Joint Conventions.

797 24. The President of the Senate shall preside in Conventions of the 2 branches, and such  
798 Conventions shall be held in the Representatives' Chamber; the Senate Clerk and Parliamentarian

799 shall be the Clerk of the Convention, and a record of the proceedings of the Convention shall be  
800 entered at large on the journals of both branches. [Amended Feb. 20, 2007.]

801 25. When an agreement has been made by the 2 branches to go into Convention, such agreement  
802 shall not be altered or annulled, except by concurrent vote, excepting that it shall be in order to  
803 recess the convention from time to time upon a majority vote of said convention. [Amended Jan.  
804 7, 1971 .]

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

807 Special Sessions.

808 26A. If written statements of 21 members of the Senate and 81 members of the House of  
809 Representatives, that in their opinion it is necessary that the General Court assemble in special  
810 session on a particular date and time specified in their statements during a recess of the General  
811 Court, are filed with their respective Clerks, such Clerks shall forthwith notify all the members  
812 of their respective branches to assemble at the State House in Boston, on said date at the time so  
813 specified. When so assembled, the first business to be taken up shall be the question of the  
814 necessity of so assembling, under Article I of Section I of Chapter I of Part the Second of the  
815 Constitution of the Commonwealth. If 21 members of the Senate and 81 members of the House  
816 of Representatives judge by vote taken by call of the yeas and nays that such assembling of the  
817 General Court is necessary, specifying in such vote the facts constituting such necessity, the  
818 General Court shall then complete its organization as a special session, proceed to the  
819 consideration of the suspension of Joint Rule 12A which if suspended by the required two-thirds  
820 of the members of both branches shall permit the General Court to proceed to the consideration

821 of matters properly before it. Nothing in this rule shall prevent the General Court from  
822 assembling in any other constitutional manner when it judges necessary. [Adopted Aug. 7, 1939.  
823 Amended March 2, 1943; March 27, 19 69; May 5, 1979; July 17, 2003; July 21 and September  
824 20, 2005.]

825 Joint Elections.

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

828 27A. In all cases of elections by ballot a majority of the votes cast shall be necessary for a  
829 choice, and where there shall be no such a majority on the first ballot the ballots shall be repeated  
830 until a majority is obtained; and in balloting, blanks shall be rejected and not taken into the count  
831 in the enumeration of votes, excepting that when the number of blanks shall be more than the  
832 number of votes received by the candidate having the highest number of votes, then the election  
833 shall be declared void and the balloting shall be repeated as provided herein. [Adopted March 27,  
834 1969 .]

835 28. [Omitted March 28, 1972 .]

836 References to the Committees on Rules.

837 29. All motions and orders authorizing joint committees to travel or to employ stenographers, or  
838 authorizing joint committees or special commissions composed as a whole or in part of members  
839 of the General Court to make investigations or to file special reports, all propositions reported by  
840 joint committees which authorize investigations or special reports by joint committees or by  
841 special commissions composed as a whole or in part of members of the General Court, all



842 motions or orders proposed for joint adoption which provide that information be transmitted to  
843 the General Court, and all matters referred under the second paragraph of Joint Rule 12, shall be  
844 referred without debate to the committees on Rules of the two branches acting concurrently, who  
845 shall report on the matter, under Joint Rule 10. All matters which have been referred under this  
846 rule shall, in each instance, be reported back into the branch making such reference. [Adopted  
847 Jan. 10, 1898. Amended Jan. 20, 1904; Jan. 28, 1913; Feb. 19 and Dec. 22, 1920; April 11, 1935;  
848 April 22, 1937; Jan. 27, 1955; Jan. 30, 1967; Oct. 18, 1971.]

849 29A. Meetings of any special commission, special legislative commission, task force or other  
850 group authorized or required by a statute, resolve, rule, or order to make or conduct an  
851 investigation or study of any issue shall be conducted openly and transparently. Meetings of any  
852 special commission, special legislative commission, task force or other group authorized or  
853 required by a statute, resolve, rule, or order to make or conduct an investigation or study of any  
854 issue and which are chaired by members of the general court shall be posted and conducted  
855 pursuant to the rules of the senate and house of representatives and shall be conducted according  
856 to the following requirements:

- 857 a.) Meetings shall be open to the public;
- 858 b.) Meetings shall be announced by appropriate notice at least 72 hours in advance;
- 859 c.) Any documents used in a meeting be provided to the public upon request in a manner to  
860 be determined by the chair;
- 861 d.) Public testimony shall be accepted in a manner to be determined by the chair;

862 e.) The chair shall maintain a summary of the subjects discussed at each meeting, a list of  
863 documents and other exhibits used at the meetings, and shall maintain a record of proceedings,  
864 including a record of all votes. For the purposes of this rule a video or audio recording made  
865 available to the public shall be considered an adequate record of the proceedings. [Adopted, Feb.  
866 15, 2017; Amended Mar. 7, 2019.]

867 30. All motions or orders extending the time within which joint committees and the committees  
868 on Rules of the two branches, acting concurrently, are required to report shall be referred without  
869 debate to the committees on Rules of the two branches, acting concurrently, who shall report  
870 recommending what action should be taken on the motion or order. Such extension shall be  
871 granted by a concurrent majority vote if recommended by the committees on Rules of the two  
872 branches, acting concurrently; but no such extension shall be granted, against the  
873 recommendation of the committees, except by a four-fifths vote of the members of each branch  
874 present and voting on the extension. This rule shall not be rescinded, amended or suspended,  
875 except by a concurrent vote of four-fifths of the members of each branch present and voting  
876 thereon. [Adopted Jan. 16, 1903. Amended Feb. 6, 1912; Feb. 19, 1920; Jan. 6, 1947; Jan. 27,  
877 1955; June 7, 1965.]

878 Members.

879 31. A member of either branch who directly or indirectly solicits for such member or others any  
880 position or office within the gift or control of a railroad corporation, street railway company, gas  
881 or electric light company, telegraph or telephone company, aqueduct or water company, or other  
882 public service corporation, shall be subject to suspension for such solicitation, or to such other

883 penalty as the branch of which the person is a member may see fit to impose. [See G. L. 271, sec.  
884 40.] [Adopted May 22, 1902.]

885 Accommodations for Reporters.

886 32. Subject to the approval and direction of the committees on Rules of the two branches, acting  
887 concurrently, during the session, and of the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House  
888 of Representatives after prorogation, the use of the rooms and facilities assigned to reporters in  
889 the State House shall be under the control of the organizations of legislative reporters known as  
890 the Massachusetts State House Press Association and the State House Broadcasters Association.  
891 No person shall be permitted to use such rooms or facilities who is not entitled to the privileges  
892 of the reporters' galleries of the Senate or of the House. Within 10 days after the General Court  
893 convenes the Massachusetts State House Press Association and the State House Broadcasters  
894 Association shall each transmit to the President of the Senate, the Speaker of the House of  
895 Representatives and the Sergeant-at-Arms a list of the legislative reporters with the principal  
896 publication or news service which each represents. [Adopted Jan. 27, 1911. Amended Feb. 24,  
897 1914; Feb. 19, 1920; April 17, 1925; May 23, 1979; Feb. 12, 2009.]

898 Suspension of Rules.

899 33. Any joint rule except Rule 10 and Rule 30 may be altered, suspended or rescinded by a  
900 concurrent vote of two-thirds of the members of each branch present and voting thereon.  
901 [Amended Feb. 7, 1893. Adopted in revised form Jan. 9, 1899. Amended Jan. 16, 1903; Jan. 26,  
902 2005.]

903 Audit of Accounts.

904 34. The committees on Rules of the two branches, acting concurrently, shall provide that an  
905 outside independent audit of joint financial accounts be conducted by a certified public  
906 accountant no less frequently than at the end of each second fiscal year. A copy of such audit  
907 shall be filed with the Clerks of the Senate and House of Representatives, and made available for  
908 public inspection upon reasonable notice and during regular office hours. [Adopted May 30,  
909 1985.]

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

914 Procurement.

915 36. (a) The House Business Manager and Chief Financial Officer of the Senate shall complete  
916 the procurement of all goods and services from the joint legislative accounts. Procurements for  
917 goods or services shall be made pursuant to a statewide procurement contract established by the  
918 operational services division, to the extent practicable, as determined by the House Business  
919 Manager and the Chief Financial Officer of the Senate. If the Business Manager and the Chief  
920 Financial Officer determine that a procurement cannot be made using a statewide procurement  
921 contract established by the operational services division, they may procure the required goods or  
922 services under subsections (b), (c) or (d).

923 (b) Procurement of a supply or service from a vendor not on a statewide procurement contract  
924 valued at less than \$10,000 shall be made at the discretion of the House Business Manager and  
925 the Chief Financial Officer of the Senate.

926 (c) If the House Business Manager and the Chief Financial Officer of the Senate seek to procure  
927 a supply or service from a vendor not on a statewide procurement contract valued at \$10,000 or  
928 more, but less than \$100,000, they shall seek written or oral quotations from not fewer than 3  
929 persons customarily providing such supply or service. The House Business Manager and the  
930 Chief Financial Officer of the Senate shall record the names and addresses of all persons from  
931 whom quotations were sought , the names and addresses of all persons submitting quotations  
932 and the date and amount of each quotation. The House Business Manager and the Chief  
933 Financial Officer of the Senate shall transmit said records to House and Senate Counsel for  
934 review with a recommendation as to what quotation offers the needed quality of supply or  
935 service at the best value for the General Court. Upon completion of the review by the House and  
936 Senate Counsels, the House Business Manager and the Chief Financial Officer of the Senate  
937 shall award the contract to the responsible person whose quotation offers the needed quality of  
938 supply or service and which represents the best value for the General Court.

939 (d) If the House Business Manager and the Chief Financial Officer of the Senate seek to procure  
940 a supply or service from a vendor not on a statewide procurement contract valued at \$100,000 or  
941 more, the House Business Manager and the Chief Financial Officer of the Senate shall seek  
942 proposals through a competitive bid process, which shall be established by the House and Senate  
943 Counsel; provided, however, that House and Senate Counsel shall file the competitive bid  
944 process with the Clerk of the House and the Clerk of the Senate no later than March 31st of the  
945 first year of the session.

946 (e) The House Business Manager and the Chief Financial Officer of the Senate shall maintain a  
947 file on each procurement not executed using a statewide procurement contract established by the  
948 operational services division and in excess of \$10,000 and shall include in such file all

949 documents constituting the agreement for goods and services and all documents required by  
950 subsection (c) or (d). The files maintained shall be available for inspection by members of the  
951 General Court during regular business hours unless the information is otherwise protected by  
952 state or federal law.

953 (f) Whenever the time required to comply with a requirement of this rule would endanger the  
954 health, safety or convenience of the members, staff or visitors to the House of Representatives or  
955 Senate the House Business Manager and the Senate Chief Financial Officer may make an  
956 emergency procurement without satisfying the requirement of this rules; provided, however, that  
957 both the House Business Manager and the Senate Chief Financial Officer certify in writing that:  
958 (i) an emergency exists and explain the nature thereof; (ii) the emergency procurement is limited  
959 to only supplies or services necessary to meet the emergency; (iii) shall conform to the  
960 requirements of rule to the extent practicable under the circumstances; (iv) each contractor's  
961 name, (v) the amount and the type of each contract; (vi) the supplies or services provided under  
962 each contract; (vii) and basis for determining the need for an emergency procurement.

963 (g) Notwithstanding subsection (a) and (d), all procurements for legal consulting services and  
964 legal resources shall be handled exclusively by House and Senate Counsel in compliance with  
965 the provisions of this rule.

966 (h) If, in the determination of the House Business Manager and the Chief Financial Officer of the  
967 Senate, an emergency procurement of greater than \$10,000 is necessary, the House Business  
968 Manager and the Chief Financial Officer of the Senate may procure the goods or services  
969 immediately and create and maintain a file explaining the nature of the emergency and the goods  
970 or services that were procured as a result. The House Business Manager and the Chief Financial

971 Officer of the Senate shall document the goods or services that were procured, the process used  
972 to procure the goods or services, the vendors that were contacted and any other information  
973 relevant to the procurement, and make that information available to members of the General  
974 Court during regular business hours, unless the information is otherwise protected by state or  
975 federal law. [Adopted Mar. 14, 2013; Amended Feb. 15, 2017; Mar. 7, 2019].

976

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