



Green Rules of Order

ADAPTED FOR ONLINE MEETINGS



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Intro

The following document is a proposed amendment of the “Green Party Rules of Procedure Full” for use at the 19th General Meeting of the Green Party of Canada, as found in Bylaw 10.1.3 at:

<https://www.greenparty.ca/en/party/documents/rules-procedure>

The Green Rules of Order are the procedures used to govern decision-making, the conduct of members, and the presentation, discussion, debate, and amendment of motions during a meeting. A motion that the Green Rules of Procedure Adapted for Online Meetings be adopted as the rules of procedure for the General Meeting will be presented for consideration by membership. This would not replace the standing Green Rules document.

[Refer to III Procedure During the Online Meeting](#) for details on how the meeting will be conducted.

I. Definitions

Facilitator: the person who is in charge of moving the business of the membership forward, and thus moderates discussion, offers pathways forward for the membership to move the business, and recognizes speakers. The facilitator should understand Green Rules and have enough experience to know when to follow the intent of them and have the confidence of enough of the membership to carry the authority needed to move the business effectively.

Co-Facilitator: the person appointed to maintain a speaker's list, give an opinion on points of order that arise, or substitute for the facilitator if they need to step down temporarily. The co-facilitator should understand Green Rules and have enough experience to know when to follow the intent of them and have the confidence of enough of the membership to carry the authority needed to move the business effectively.

Recorder: the person who keeps track of the wording of proposed motions and amendments, records the wording and voting percentages of all decisions on motions, and keeps the official minutes of a session.

Timekeeper: the person who keeps track of the time spent on each area of the discussion and lets the facilitator know when time is up so that the meeting may meet its time commitments. The timekeeper can also track the overall agenda timing and make suggestions to the facilitator on how to bring it back on track.

Fairness Committee: A committee of mediators, preferably who do not have voting rights at the meeting, whose task is to (1) monitor the temperature of debate in the meeting, (2) on request, counsel members and others who have issue with some aspect of the meeting, and (3), on request from the facilitators or members, actively mediate conflict or complaints that may arise from the meeting. This committee may be called upon to meet with opposing parties separately from the meeting in order to help opposing parties work out their differences.

Online breakout rooms will be made available to the Fairness Committee for side meetings. The facilitator has the authority to choose how to handle the order of business while the Fairness Committee is meeting with opposing parties and may notify the side meeting when there is an upcoming vote.

Motion: A written or verbal statement that describes a proposed action or decision presented to the entire meeting for consideration and a vote. Motions include procedural motions, emergency motions, and proposals (directives, constitution and bylaw amendments, policy). Motions are documented by the recorder.

Proposal: A directive to council, an amendment to the Constitution or Bylaws, or a policy that is under consideration at the General Meeting. The term 'proposal' will be used in this document when referring to directives to council, constitutional or bylaw amendments, or policy motions.

Amendment: A modification or addition to the main motion proposed by one or more members at the meeting. The main motion's speakers' list may be suspended, and a separate speakers' list may be started in order to moderate discussion on the amendment. Amendments require a vote to be accepted and incorporated into the main motion.

Friendly Amendment: Amendments proposed in agreement with the proposal submitter or designate, and moved after the original motion has been presented.

Straw Poll: This is not the same as a deciding vote, as a straw poll is not a binding decision. The facilitator may use a straw poll to test the room to determine if members are in support of a suggestion by the facilitator, to decide whether to allow more time for discussion, or to move business forward faster.

Deciding Vote: A formal way of determining the acceptance or rejection of a motion or proposal, using a Yes/No online vote.

Voting Thresholds: As per Green Rules step (m) in section III PROCEDURE.

More than 60% support is required for policy and directive proposals to pass. More than two thirds (66.6%) support is needed for procedural motions. In keeping with GPC Constitution 10.1.3 and 10.2.3, Constitutional and Bylaw proposals require more than 50% support to pass. These voting thresholds only come into effect if membership fails to reach consensus.

Tabling a Motion/Proposal: to suspend further consideration of the motion/proposal.

Point of Order: A way of signaling the meeting that there is the need for clarification, language translation, a procedural suggestion, or for additional information. The facilitator will try to allow for a variety of voices to be heard, and to address constructive feedback. If overused, points of order may impede the business of the meeting.

II. Before the online general meeting

The proposals presented at the GM will reflect the proposal wording when the 60 day notice of the General Meeting was sent to members. Directives, Constitutional and Bylaw proposals can be viewed under the Governance Proposals tab and the policy proposals can be viewed under the Policy Proposals tab of the Annual General Meeting page of WeDecide.

The Green Party of Canada's Constitution requires that directives to council and amendments to the Constitution and Bylaws must be presented to membership at a general meeting. For policy, the only requirement is that the motion is adopted in a vote open to all members. This means there is the opportunity to consider policy proposals in a separate stream, moved and adopted in a process outside the agenda of the General Meeting as part of the Party's evolution to a Continuous Motion Development (CMD) model, further to the 2018 directive to "continuously improve the Party's policy

development process, adapting and building on the recommendations in the 2017 Committee for Motion Development”. Although policy proposals were included in the general meeting notice, a motion to move, workshop, debate, and vote on policy proposals through CMD will be presented at the GM.

Wedecide.green.ca provides a Workshop area for proposal submitters to work with members on amendments in advance of the general meeting. Members can propose amendments using the comment feature and submitters may incorporate friendly amendments into the Workshop version of the proposal. Any friendly amendments drafted in advance of the meeting will be presented for consideration from the floor of the general meeting plenary. The Annual General Meeting will not include breakout sessions and all amendments to proposals will be moved from the plenary floor.

III. Procedure during the online meeting

PRESENTATION OF MOTIONS

1

The facilitator will present or ask for the presentation of the motion (i.e., procedural), proposal (i.e., constitutional) or issue to be considered.

2

The facilitator will then ask for a moment of silence during which everyone will be asked to note any questions they have concerning the resolution, proposal or issue presented.

3

The facilitator will then ask if anyone requires clarification about the meaning of the motion/proposal, or issue under consideration. To signal a request for clarification, members are to raise their hand using the reactions tab in the Zoom taskbar.

The facilitator or presenter will then speak to requests for clarification. The motion or proposal may not be amended at this time. It is more fair to everyone at the meeting if everyone understands what is before the meeting before the meeting proceeds to discuss, amend, or adopt/reject the motion/proposal.

4

If the motion under consideration is a proposal, the facilitator asks if the proposal submitter, or their designate, has a friendly amendment, prepared in advance of the meeting, to be presented for consideration by membership.

The full text of the friendly amendment must be submitted at the time of the speaker's recognition during the general meeting, with the proposed text change indicated. Generally accepted as a minor modification, and without substantive change to the original intent, which would require reconsidering the original as a new proposal. Note: the meeting may consider an amendment moved from the floor that was not accepted by the proposal submitter (not friendly), provided it does not substantially change the original intent of the proposal. This means that the meeting may adopt language that differs from the preferred language of the submitter and amend a proposal while maintaining its main and intended purpose.

5

The facilitator then opens the floor to discussion and/or amendments. Members enter the Speakers List by raising their hands using the reactions tab in the Zoom taskbar.

The facilitator may remind members of the time allocated for discussion and amendments.

Amendments that would **change the intent** of the original motion/proposal are **not permitted**. If there are any objections to a “friendly amendment”, or for any other proposed amendments, the same process for discussing motions themselves is applied to discussing

amendments (polling the membership, addressing points of clarification, discussion if there are objections, and finally voting). Any proposed non-friendly amendments would require both a mover and a seconder to be considered.

6

The facilitator monitors the meeting for agreement. Where it is not obvious that a majority of members either agree or do not agree with the proposed amendment, the facilitator may use an online straw poll to determine if members are ready to make a decision on the proposed amendment.

Straw Poll: Should we close discussion and move to a vote on the friendly amendment to the motion/proposal under consideration?

Yes

No

DISCUSSION

7

If the straw poll indicates the need for more information/clarification, the facilitator will reopen a speakers list for further discussion. After further discussion, the facilitator may opt to poll the meeting. This additional poll will help the facilitator determine how members wish to proceed:

Straw Poll: Should we close discussion and move to a vote on the friendly amendment to the motion/proposal under consideration?

Yes

No

Straw Poll: Should we close discussion on the motion/proposal and proceed to a vote?

Yes

No

TEST FOR AGREEMENT

8

If a decision is to be made, and there appears to be general agreement with a motion or proposal as amended, or there is no further discussion, the facilitator will test for agreement by asking if anyone is strongly opposed to the motion/proposal. Agreement should not be interpreted to mean unanimity, only that all members can accept the particular motion/proposal.

9

If a decision is to be made and it appears the proposal requires additional workshopping that exceeds the allotted time available, members may decide to return the proposal to the submitter for additional work in the WeDecide Workshop.

FIRM DISAGREEMENT

10

If a decision is to be made and there appears to be **firm disagreement** over certain issues, the facilitator may propose returning the proposal to the submitter for additional work in the WeDecide Workshop, or that those on either side of the issue, along with those who originally formulated the proposal, and the Fairness Committee, meet outside of the meeting (in an online breakout room for a side meeting) to resolve the issue(s) and then report back to the meeting.

If the parties are unwilling or are unable to hold a side meeting, or if after the side meeting there is no agreement, the facilitator polls the meeting to determine whether to continue the discussion or proceed to a vote.

Once the current issue on the floor has been dealt with, the parties are asked to report back on whether they have reached an agreement on a proposed amendment. If so, they will present that amendment and the facilitator tests for agreement before putting the amended proposal to a vote.

Straw Poll: Should we close discussion and proceed to a deciding vote? (Used to poll the meeting on a course of action when disagreeing parties are either unable to come to an agreement or are unwilling or unable to hold a side meeting).

Yes

No

Straw Poll: Should we close discussion and table this motion/proposal?

Yes

No

Straw Poll: Should we close discussion and return this proposal to the submitter for additional work?

Yes

No

STRONG OBJECTION

11

If any member has a **strong objection** to the proposed agreement, they should be prepared to state the reason for the objection including the basic Green Party value that is at issue. During plenary, type “strong objection” into the Question and Answer (Q&A) feature of Zoom. The facilitator or co-facilitator will identify there is a strong objection, and the floor will be given to the member raising the strong objection. The facilitator should ask the meeting whether there are any recommendations on how to amend the motion to address the concerns raised.

The facilitator may ask anyone who has a strong objection if they are willing to stand aside and allow a test for agreement of the remaining members.

STANDING ASIDE

12

If a member cannot *support* a motion but is willing to let it proceed, that person may **stand aside**. This person's reasons for opposing the motion, or not agreeing fully with the motion, are noted in the minutes for future reference. A stand aside vote is noted, but does not count in the vote tally, meaning a stand aside vote does not affect the voting results.

To signal a stand aside, type “stand aside” in the Q&A feature of Zoom. The co-facilitator will unmute the member’s microphone so the member can present their concern to the General Meeting. The co-facilitator will signal the Recorder to note the reason for the stand aside in the minutes. Technological limitations in Zoom prevent having “stand aside” as a voting option. If you wish to stand aside, do NOT vote in the Deciding Vote Poll.

CHECK-IN

13

When the timekeeper calls 5 minutes remaining, the facilitator may take a poll of the members to determine how to proceed:

Straw Poll: Do you have enough information to vote on the proposal/motion?

Yes

No

Straw Poll: Should we close discussion and proceed to a vote on the suggested amendment?"

Yes

No

Straw Poll: Do you agree with the way we are proposing to handle this situation (state proposed solution & situation)?

Yes

No

DECIDING VOTE

14

The facilitator reconfirms the wording of the amended motion/proposal being voted on (if needed) and moves to a Deciding Vote by launching the Deciding Vote Poll:

Deciding Vote: Do you support passing the motion/proposal under consideration?

Yes

No

Deciding Vote: Do you support the amendment to the motion/proposal under consideration?

Yes

No

COMING UP TO END OF ALLOTTED TIME

15

If the online general meeting comes to the end of the allotted time for discussing proposals, and discussion on any proposal is not yet complete, the co-chair or facilitator will identify the options available to members which will include sending the outstanding proposal(s) to the Workshop on WeDecide for consideration at the next general meeting.

IV. Voting rights

a) Only Green Party of Canada members in good standing may register and will be given access to the General Meeting. Registrations made after the formal deadline for registrations has passed (e.g., typically 48 hours before the start of the General Meeting) will be given attendance and voting rights on a best effort basis.

b) The facilitator and co-facilitator cannot vote or prevent agreement.

V. Online facilitation

- a) The online facilitator is primarily responsible for:
 - 1) Interpreting these rules of order, with the right to consult with the Fairness Committee where they deem it necessary;
 - 2) Reminding members of agreements (i.e., procedural motions) that were passed by members;
 - 3) Managing the meeting in a way the facilitator feels is consistent at all times with the wishes of the members present online.

- b) The online co-facilitator is primarily responsible for:
 - 1) Assisting the online facilitator in interpreting these rules of order;
 - 2) Keeping the speakers' list, with or without the assistance of online technical support (including support from members of the Fairness Committee);
 - 3) Assisting the facilitator in managing the online meeting.

- c) The facilitator(s) are responsible for keeping the meeting focused on one issue at a time and may recommend to the meeting the division of items for specific discussion or decision on each part.

- d) Any person may request the facilitator to test for agreement but only the facilitator may test for agreement or conduct a vote. The facilitator will poll the meeting if it is not obvious that the meeting is ready for the test for agreement.

- e) The facilitators may not prevent agreement or vote.

- f) If any one of the two facilitators wishes to participate actively in a discussion, object to a proposed agreement, or temporarily leave the meeting, they must give up their facilitation to the other facilitator person who then may select from the meeting a stand-in

co-facilitator for the duration of the discussion at hand. Any "step asides" of facilitation will be in effect until the matter under discussion is resolved. Following this, the original facilitator may regain their facilitation duties.

g) The facilitator may propose to the meeting to temporarily change, suspend, or add to any procedure, of these Rules of Procedure, if it is felt it would improve the situation at hand. In doing so, the duration of the temporary change, suspension, or addition must be specified, and acceptance of the temporary change, suspension, or addition shall be determined through the adoption of a procedural motion. Any accepted temporary changes, suspensions, or additions shall cease to be in effect at the conclusion of the meeting.

VI. Points of order

During plenary, to signal a point of order, type the appropriate abbreviation and reason into the Q&A feature of Zoom. The co-facilitator will identify there is a "Point of Order". The proceedings will be suspended, and the floor will be given to the member to present their point of order. The co-facilitator will unmute the member's microphone so the member can present their point of order. The member is to state their full name and then speak to the point of order.

a) Any member of the meeting may ask the facilitator about a Point of Clarification (POC) if they do not understand a procedure or wording of a motion/proposal. To signal a point of clarification, type POC and the issue into the Q&A feature of Zoom.

b) A Point of Procedure (POP) is used if a member believes a violation of procedural rules has taken place, or a member has a procedural suggestion they feel will aid or improve the facilitation discussion at hand. If a violation of procedural rules has occurred, the member must state the rule at issue at the outset. The decision to halt the meeting to offer a procedural suggestion should not be overused and must balance respecting the role of the facilitator with moving the business of

membership forward. To signal a point of procedure, type POP and the issue into the Q&A feature of Zoom.

c) Any member of the meeting may signal the facilitator on a Point of Information (POI) or the facilitator or recorder may independently request a point of information:

- 1) when there is some item of information that is necessary for the discussion; or
- 2) when there is an item in discussion which must be accurately recorded in the Minutes.

To signal a point of information, type POI and the issue into the Q&A feature of Zoom.

d) Any member of the meeting may signal the facilitator on a Point of Translation (POT). A Point of Translation is used when the meeting is being conducted in one language and language help is needed. To signal a point of translation, type POT into the Q&A feature of Zoom.

e) Members often use Call The Question to signal a wish to stop debate and vote on the issue at hand. Call the question is not part of the Green Rules, however, it will be noted, and consideration will be given to polling the room on the need for more discussion.

f) The facilitator has discretion on when and how many points will be addressed in order to balance the moving of the business forward with the participation of the members. The facilitator may call for contrary views, or at their discretion may rule on the point, or seek the advice of the Fairness Committee. If possible, a solution should be presented by the person raising the concern.

VII. Challenging the facilitation or conduct of others

Issuing a challenge is the most serious action a member can take in a general meeting and should only be used in exceptional circumstances. During plenary, to raise a challenge, type “Challenge” and the reason into the Q&A feature of Zoom. Upon any such challenge listed in step (a), and for the duration of the challenge, the meeting closes to any further business. The co-facilitator will identify there is a challenge and the floor will be given to the member raising the challenge. Please note, the member will be asked to turn on their video to speak to the challenge.

a) A member of the meeting, other than the facilitators, may challenge the facilitation or challenge the conduct of another person in the meeting:

- 1) if they feel that the facilitator has not made a fair and accurate ruling;
- 2) if they feel that a person is misrepresenting the rules for preventing a decision;
- 3) if they feel that a person is being obstructionist; or
- 4) if they feel that some other serious violation has taken place.

b) The facilitator will hear the nature and reasons for the challenge and may call for contrary views or seek the opinion of the Fairness Committee. If it is the facilitation that is being challenged, the facilitator must immediately give up facilitation of the meeting to the co-facilitator, who in turn may ask for the appointment of a temporary co-facilitator. The acting facilitator will then poll the meeting on the challenge using the “Deciding Vote” poll.

c) The challenge will be considered carried if a majority of the members at the meeting voted to accept the challenge. Upon acceptance of the challenge, the acting facilitator, in consultation with the meeting, may propose to the meeting a further resolution to resolve issues related to the success of the challenge. Resolution may include, but is not limited to:

- 1) The action or decision that was challenged may be reversed;
- 2) The facilitator may step down for the remainder of the meeting and a new facilitator may be appointed.

VIII. Minutes

a) Each decision making plenary will have at least one person designated as a recorder to record the minutes at all times. A video recording of the general meeting will be made in addition to the designated recorder.

b) The minutes shall include (at a minimum):

- 1) The title and purpose of the meeting and session;
- 2) The date, time the meeting or session convened;
- 3) The persons in attendance and their membership/voting status. The number of attendees will be recorded in the minutes;
- 4) The names of the facilitators, recorder(s), and timekeeper(s);
- 5) Agenda items or discussion topic headings, each followed by the approved wording of any motions accepted or any motions rejected during the agenda item, and the context or rationale for a particular decision including any major points (including stand asides) brought forward. Such context provided in addition to any approved wording of motions, should be in summary form and not personalized where possible;
- 6) The date and time the meeting or session adjourned;
- 7) Relevant or necessary attachments or appendices.

c) The recorder shall ensure that completed minutes are forwarded to the party or meeting secretary for formatting, filing and distribution. The party or meeting secretary shall ensure that completed minutes are received from the recorders of each session.

d) The recorder shall be permitted to participate actively in the meeting to the extent that their voting or membership status allows.

IX. Timekeeping

a) Each decision-making plenary will have a person designated as timekeeper to keep track of time spent on parts of the session determined by the meeting.

b) At a minimum, as determined by the meeting, the timekeeper will notify the facilitator when

- 1) Allotted time is close to running out;
- 2) Allotted time has run out;
- 3) The timekeeper shall be permitted to participate actively in the meeting to the extent to which their voting or membership status allows;
- 4) The timekeeper will announce when the speaker's time is exceeded in accordance with time limit procedures adopted by membership.