

Book	Policy Manual
Section	000 Joint Operating Committee Procedures
Title	Attendance at Meetings Via Electronic Communications
Code	006.1
Status	Active
Adopted	August 4, 2021

### **Authority**

The Joint Operating Committee recognizes that factors such as illness, travel, schedule conflicts, weather conditions and other emergency situations can make impossible the physical presence of a Joint Operating Committee member or other necessary participants at a Joint Operating Committee meeting, and that electronic communications can enable a Joint Operating Committee member or other necessary participants to participate in a meeting electronically from a remote location.

A Joint Operating Committee member shall be able to attend a Joint Operating Committee meeting, and participate in Joint Operating Committee deliberations and voting, through electronic communications, but only under extraordinary circumstances. The Joint Operating Committee Chairperson may permit other necessary participants to participate in meetings via electronic communications as the Chairperson deems appropriate.

The Joint Operating Committee authorizes the administration to provide the equipment and facilities required to implement this Joint Operating Committee procedure.[\[1\]](#)

### **Guidelines**

A Joint Operating Committee member who attends a meeting through electronic communications shall be considered present only if the member can hear everything said at the meeting and all those attending the meeting can hear everything said by that member and other participants addressing the Joint Operating Committee. If the Chairperson determines either condition is not occurring, the Chairperson shall terminate the Joint Operating Committee member's attendance through electronic communications.

A majority of Joint Operating Committee members shall be physically present at a Joint Operating Committee meeting when a Joint Operating Committee member attends through electronic communications.

To attend a Joint Operating Committee meeting through electronic communications, a Joint Operating Committee member shall comply with the following:

1. Submit such request to the Chairperson at least three (3) days prior to the meeting.
2. Ensure that the remote location is quiet and free from background noise and interruptions.
3. Participate in the entire Joint Operating Committee meeting.

### **Emergency Conditions**

In the event that the county, state or federal public health authorities, the Governor, or any similar authority with appropriate jurisdiction declares an emergency condition that prevents or discourages public gatherings due to a public health or safety concern, the Joint Operating Committee shall be authorized to conduct meetings primarily or entirely via electronic communications to enable all Joint Operating Committee members and other necessary participants to fully participate in the conduct of official Joint Operating Committee business through electronic communications.[\[2\]](#)

Meetings held primarily or entirely via electronic communications shall be conducted in a manner that assures compliance with the public access and public comment requirements of the Sunshine Act. All rules normally applicable to in-person meetings of the Joint Operating Committee shall be observed in meetings held primarily or entirely via electronic means to the extent practicable and appropriate to the nature and features of the technology used.[\[3\]](#)[\[4\]](#)

The requirement for Joint Operating Committee members to submit a request to participate in meetings through electronic communications shall be waived during such emergency conditions.

The Joint Operating Committee authorizes the administration to utilize available technical resources to permit the public to attend and submit public comment during open meetings via electronic communications, in accordance with law and Joint Operating Committee procedures and policy.[\[3\]](#)[\[4\]](#)

Legal

1. 24 P.S. 1850.1
  2. Pol. 805
  3. 65 Pa. C.S.A. 701 et seq
  4. Pol. 903
- 24 P.S. 422  
Pol. 006