



## Administrative Policy

Title: Brown Act Meeting Safety & Participation Protocols					
Administered By: Management Services (City Manager)					
Policy No.	Issue Date	Revision Date	Dept. Head Approved	City Manager Approved	Mayor Approved
07400.009	09-15-21	N/A			

### ARTICLE I - PURPOSE

#### Section 1.1 General Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish safety and participation protocols for meetings conducted pursuant to the Ralph M. Brown Act.

#### Section 1.2 Superseded Policies

This policy supersedes and replaces the following policies, which are hereby eliminated in their entirety and are of no further force and effect:

None.

### ARTICLE II - DEFINITIONS AND SCOPE

#### Section 2.1 Definitions

For purposes of this policy, the following definitions shall apply:

- A. Brown Act Meeting. The term "Brown Act Meeting" shall mean a meeting of a legislative body required to be conducted in public pursuant to the agenda and other requirements of the Ralph M. Brown Act (Government Code Sections 54950 et seq.).

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- B. Presiding Officer. The term “Presiding Officer” shall mean the official charged by the Corona Municipal Code or other applicable law, rule or regulation with presiding over the Brown Act Meeting.
- C. Rules of Decorum. The term “Rules of Decorum” shall mean those rules and regulations set forth in Corona Municipal Code Section 2.12.020 or other applicable law, rule or regulation.

## **Section 2.2 General Scope**

Unless otherwise stipulated herein, this policy applies to all City Brown Act Meetings. All officials and employees shall comply with the provisions outlined in this policy. It is the responsibility of all supervision to ensure that the provisions outlined in this policy are enforced for those City employees under their authority.

## **Section 2.3 Exemptions from Scope**

None.

# **ARTICLE III – BROWN ACT MEETING SAFETY & PARTICIPATION PROTOCOLS**

## **Section 3.1 Protocols Attached Hereto as Exhibit “A”**

The City of Corona Brown Act Meeting Safety & Participation Protocols shall be those attached hereto as Exhibit “A” and incorporated herein by reference.

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### **PRIOR VERSIONS**

ISSUED: 09-15-21

REVISED: N/A

## EXHIBIT "A"

### CITY OF CORONA BROWN ACT MEETING SAFETY & PARTICIPATION PROTOCOLS

**FIRE:** Exit the building through side or rear exits (call 911)

**ACTIVE SHOOTER:** RUN, HIDE, FIGHT (call 911)

**MEETING DISRUPTION** (due to verbal or other actions prohibited by CMC 2.12.02 – Rules of Decorum):

1. The presiding officer will warn the person regarding how they are violating the Rules of Decorum (e.g. continuing to speak after their allotted time has expired), then wait a brief, reasonable period of time (e.g. up to about 15 seconds).
2. If the person continues, the presiding officer will warn the person again and explain what mitigation measures may be taken (e.g. the microphone may be turned off or the camera may be redirected from them).
3. If the person continues, the presiding officer may call for a brief break (e.g. 5 - 10 minutes or so).
4. During the break, the presiding officer will caucus with appropriate staff present (e.g. Police Chief, City Manager, City Attorney, Department Director, etc.) in the rear hallway or other private location to establish any necessary mitigation measures going forward, which may include, but are not necessarily limited to, the following:
  - a. **Clerk or Secretary:** will automatically turn off the microphone for every speaker when their allotted time expires or turn off the microphone at any time at the direction of the presiding officer.
  - b. **Broadcaster:** will maintain video on the front of the room, but will cut-out the speaker podium from view.
  - c. **Police:** will tell the person(s) who had disrupted the meeting that they must abide by the Rules of Decorum, as provided in CMC 2.12.020; if they continue to disrupt the meeting, they will be removed from the meeting at the discretion of the legislative body pursuant to CMC 2.12.020.
  - d. **Presiding Officer:** will let the audience know of the mitigation measures to be implemented going forward, that no additional warnings or breaks may be granted and that everyone must abide by the Rules of Decorum, as provided in CMC 2.12; if anyone disrupts the meeting, they can be removed from the meeting at the discretion of the legislative body pursuant to CMC 2.12.020 or the meeting room may be cleared in accordance with the Ralph M. Brown Act.
  - e. **Police:** If directed by the presiding officer, as provided for in CMC 2.12, shall remove anyone disrupting the meeting. As provided for in CMC 2.12.020 (C)(3), any person who resists removal by a law enforcement officer may be charged with a criminal violation.

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### **De-Escalation Tips**

- ✓ Thank each speaker for taking the time to attend and for their comments. Don't engage in direct or immediate debate with speakers over their comments/opinions shared.
- ✓ Acknowledge the importance of the topic and that it is normal to have strong emotions about it, but note that everyone – city officials, staff and the public – has a responsibility to ensure that the Rules of Decorum are met, since that is the only way in which to help ensure that meetings are run effectively and that decisions are made with the public's best interests foremost in mind.
- ✓ Thank residents for speaking up in a civil, respectful manner and staying focused on the issue.
- ✓ If at any point in the meeting emotions escalate to the point of concern, call for a brief break (e.g. 5 - 10 minutes or so). This provides a cooling-off period and helps bring down the level of emotions.

### **Permissible and Impermissible Protocols**

#### **The City CAN:**

- ✓ The presiding officer can, unless overruled by a majority of the members present (including the presiding officer), establish one or more of the following rules or procedures:
  - Reduce the City's traditional 3 minute public comment time limit to 1-2 minutes;
  - Limit the overall public comment time period for one or more particular agenda items, including, but not limited to, the general public comment agenda item;
  - Limit comments on a particular agenda item to that specific topic;
  - Limit general public comments to issues within the subject matter jurisdiction of the legislative body;
  - Direct Fire or Police to strictly enforce the meeting room occupancy limit;
  - Reserve seating for certain staff, project applicants and others;
  - Prohibit or limit standing in the side or center aisle ways (other than in a designated cue area for public speakers which may be maintained by staff);
  - Establish a time for the meeting room to be opened to the public;
  - Limit public admission to the meeting room on a first-come, first-served basis;
  - If the meeting room occupancy limit has been met, form and maintain cue lines outside of the meeting room, in locations to be determined by staff, and admit members of the public into the meeting room one person at a time to speak before the legislative body; any member of the public who has been admitted for the purpose of speaking may be required to immediately leave the meeting room when their time limit for speaking has expired;
  - Any other rules or procedures that are reasonably necessary under the circumstances; and
  - In all cases accommodations should be made as required by the Ralph M. Brown Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act, or other applicable law.
- ✓ Regulate the Rules of Decorum (CMC 2.12.020), including having any person removed from the meeting room who disrupts the meeting in violation of CMC 2.12.020 or other applicable law.

**The City CANNOT:**

- ✓ Regulate the content of a person's speech.
- ✓ Prohibit a person from speaking because the presiding officer or any other person disapproves or disagrees with the content of what they say or how they say it - rude, insulting or inaccurate comments are allowed, although the City can always encourage civility and discourage personal, irrelevant, slanderous or profane remarks, as well as disorderly conduct or loud, threatening or abusive language.