



## Legislation Text

---

**File #:** 2012-0412, **Version:** 1

---

Clerk 10/03/2012

AN ORDINANCE relating to the council rules; and amending Ordinance 11683,  
Section 2, as amended, and K.C.C. 1.24.015.

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE COUNCIL OF KING COUNTY:

**SECTION 1. Findings:**

- A. Section 220.40 of the King County Charter requires the council to adopt by ordinance rules of procedure governing the time, place and conduct of its meetings.
- B. Consistent with the county charter, the council adopted by ordinance rules of procedure, which are codified in K.C.C. chapter 1.24.
- C. The council provides public hearing for public testimony on every proposed ordinance as required by the county charter. Recently a few individuals have urged the council to adopt a rule providing for the opportunity to give general public comment at council meetings, unrelated to pending legislation. In response, the council amended the council rules in Ordinance 17335 to provide for general public comment on matters relating to county government on the fourth Monday of each month.
- D. Some of the individuals urging adoption of a new public comment rule repeatedly have signed up to testify about a proposed ordinance but have refused to confine their testimony to matters germane to proposed legislation. In these cases, the individuals have been ruled out of order by the chair of the council. After such a ruling, some of these individuals have refused to leave the speaking podium, have continued to argue with the chair after being ordered to leave the podium and have been required by security staff to leave the council chambers in order to stop the disruption to official council business.

E. To prevent continued future disruption of council meetings, it is appropriate to authorize the council chair to require that testimony by any person who within the prior 12 months has been ruled out order while testifying before the council must be submitted in writing rather than orally.

SECTION 2. Ordinance 11683, Section 2, as amended, and K.C.C. 1.24.015 are each hereby amended to read as follows:

The chair of the council has the following powers and duties:

A. The chair shall:

1. Call the council to order at the hour appointed for meeting and, if a quorum is present, shall cause the minutes of the previous meeting to be approved;

2. Proceed with the order of business; and

3. Adjourn the council upon a motion to adjourn approved by a majority of members present;

B. The chair shall preserve order and decorum and in the interest of efficiency may impose time and subject matter limits for testimony and comment given by the public and members of the council. To prevent disruption of council meetings, if a person testifying before the council is ruled out of order by the chair, the chair may also order that any testimony by such a person offered to the council within the next twelve months must be presented in writing rather than orally. If the chair so orders, the chair shall so state on the record of a council meeting and shall attempt to notify the person in writing of the order if contact information for the person is available;

C. The chair shall promote efficient operation of the council, which shall include setting the agenda and expediting parliamentary debate or, if there is no objection from any other member, expediting the passage of routine motions. The chair's act of adding to, removing from or taking out of order an item on a distributed and posted agenda may be appealed to the full body by any two members under Rule 5.D, K.C.C. 1.24.045.D. The chair shall discourage activities that are dilatory or disruptive. The chair shall endeavor to facilitate the will of the majority of members present at all times;

D. The chair may speak to points of order, inquiry or information in preference to other members.

Upon a ruling of the chair on a point of order, the chair shall allow any two members to immediately request that the decision be placed before the body. If a majority of members present agree to the ruling of the chair, the business of the council must proceed without further debate. If a majority of the members present do not support the ruling of the chair, the chair shall immediately allow a procedural motion to dispense with the issue in question, proceeding until a decision of the council is secured and the business of the council is allowed to proceed;

E. The chair shall refer legislation to committees unless there is an objection to a referral. If there is an objection by a member, the chair's referral will stand unless a majority of the members present vote to support the objection. If the objection is sustained, the chair shall refer the legislation to another committee, unless there is an objection to the referral.

F. Any motion that proposes to censure a councilmember for violating the council's antiharassment policy shall be referred to the employment and administration committee;

G. The chair shall introduce all legislation relating to land use appeals, road vacations, plat applications, current use assessments and other similar land use decisions. If recommended by action of the employment and administration committee, the chair shall introduce any motion that proposes to censure a councilmember for violating the council's antiharassment policy, unless the chair is the subject of the motion; and

H. The chair shall provide copies to all councilmembers of all official communications and requests for council action addressed to the chair from the executive, the sheriff, the assessor, the presiding judge of the district or superior court or the prosecuting attorney.