

STANDING COMMITTEE ON HOUSE SERVICES



**FIFTH REPORT
OF THE
TWENTY-NINTH LEGISLATURE**

Temporary Modifications to the Legislative Assembly
Rules, Procedures and Practices to Facilitate Sitzings During
the COVID-19 Pandemic

April 6, 2021

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN



April 6, 2021

To the Honourable Members of the Legislative Assembly:

I have the pleasure to present the fifth report of the Standing Committee on House Services for the twenty-ninth legislature. The committee is authorized by the Assembly to examine such matters as it deems advisable with respect to the rules, procedures, practices, and powers of the Legislative Assembly, its operations, organization, and the facilities and service provided to the Assembly, its committees, and members. This report reflects the work of the committee, in consultation with the House leaders and the Clerks-at-the-Table, to assess and update the temporary modifications to the processes, practices, and *Rules and Procedures of the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan* that had previously been implemented during the June/July portion of the fourth session of the twenty-eighth legislature and the December to March portion of the first session of the twenty-ninth legislature in order to facilitate the sittings of the Legislative Assembly in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic.

In Chamber proceedings, the committee is now able to recommend that members be allowed to remove their masks to speak after being recognized by the Speaker or Chair. However, due to an increased risk of transmission in the Regina region, the Saskatchewan Health Authority has strongly discouraged unnecessary travel to and from the area. Accordingly, members are therefore asked to observe all Saskatchewan Health Authority public health guidelines and travel recommendations during the sitting period. In extenuating circumstances, the committee recommends that caucuses be permitted to approve a member's travel if it does not contravene a public health order. New practices and procedures are also proposed for the period April 6, 2021 to May 14, 2021 in order to test remote participation of a member during committee proceedings in room 8.

This report also builds on the fourth report of the Standing Committee on House Services which facilitated sittings during the Easter week period to provide for an April 6, 2021 resumption. It recommends extending the Easter week period through Saturday April 10, 2021 with the addition of two sitting days and incorporating all subsequent Fridays to provide for a 30-day sitting period with a May 14, 2021 completion day. After the budget debate has concluded, this committee recommends that government business be considered on Monday through Thursdays and private members' business be considered on Fridays.

The Standing Committee on House Services recommends that the proposed modifications detailed in this report be adopted for the period April 6, 2021 until October 1, 2021 to enable the Legislative Assembly to conduct its work safely during the pandemic. Government and opposition House leadership have worked diligently and co-operatively with the Clerks-at-the-Table to produce the recommendations contained in this report.

Respectfully submitted on behalf of the committee,

Hon. Randy Weekes, Chair
Speaker of the Legislative Assembly
MLA Biggar-Sask Valley

Composition of Committee

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Speaker of the Legislative Assembly
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Table of Contents

Introduction..... 1

Considerations for Assembly Sitings..... 2

Recommendation 18

Appendix 1 — Modifications to Rules, Procedures, and Practices 19

Appendix 2 — Chamber Seating Plan 27

Appendix 3 — Voting Groups for Recorded Divisions..... 28

Appendix 4 — Tally Sheet for Recorded Divisions (Government)..... 30

Appendix 5 — Tally Sheet for Recorded Divisions (Opposition) 31

Appendix 6 — Designated Proxy Form..... 32

Appendix 7 — Seating Plan for Committee Proceedings (Room 8)..... 33

Appendix 8 — Remote Participation Manual..... 34

Introduction

In March 2020, the spring sitting period of the fourth session of the twenty-eighth legislature was temporarily suspended due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The government declared Saskatchewan in a state of emergency, and numerous restrictions were imposed by the Saskatchewan Health Authority to mitigate the spread of COVID-19.

By the end of May, as the daily number of new cases had decreased and Saskatchewan Health Authority restrictions were gradually being relaxed, House leadership agreed to resume the session on a modified schedule. On June 15, 2020, the Assembly adopted the fifteenth report of the Standing Committee on House Services, outlining modifications to rules and practices to protect the safety of members and Legislative Assembly Service personnel during the sittings of the Legislative Assembly for the remainder of the session.

On December 1, 2020 the Standing Committee on House Services met again to consider which of the previous modifications to rules, practices, and procedures should be re-implemented and, in accordance with Saskatchewan Health Authority public health orders, recommendations, and guidelines, whether any additional considerations were needed to safely facilitate the sittings of the Assembly and its committees for the December 1, 2020 to March 1, 2021 portion of the first session of the twenty-ninth legislature. The committee's first report of the twenty-ninth legislature was adopted by the Legislative Assembly when the fall sitting period commenced later that day. The fall sitting period concluded on December 10, 2020.

In late January 2021, the government of Saskatchewan requested that the legislature be recalled for the spring sitting period on April 6, 2021. Because the week of April 6 is designated in the *Rules and Procedures of the Legislative Assembly* as a week that the Assembly shall not sit, accordingly, on February 1, 2021, the Standing Committee on House Services adopted its fourth report recommending that the ordinary time of sitting shall apply during the Easter week period from April 6, 2021 to April 8, 2021.

The committee met again on April 6, 2021 to consider the recommendations proposed in this report. This report recommends the Assembly extend the Easter week period through Saturday April 10, 2021 with the addition of two sitting days and that it sit on all subsequent Fridays to provide for a 30-day sitting period with a May 14, 2021 completion day. It also recommends reinstating budget day provisions from the fifteenth report of the twenty-eighth legislature to align with a spring sitting period. Once the Assembly has concluded its budget debate, the committee recommends that government business be considered Mondays through Thursdays and private members' business be considered on Fridays.

The Standing Committee on House Services recommends maintaining most of the provisions adopted in the first report of the twenty-ninth legislature, and it is proposing some additional provisions due to the ongoing and evolving context of the COVID-19 pandemic. Members are strongly encouraged to observe Saskatchewan Health Authority public health guidelines and travel recommendations outside of sitting hours, especially in light of the current elevated risk of transmission in the Regina region. While the committee recommends that masking continue to be mandatory for all individuals attending proceedings in committee room 8, it is now able to recommend that members be allowed to remove their masks while speaking in the Chamber after being recognized by the Speaker or Chair. Additionally, this report also includes a new proposal designed to test remote participation during committee proceedings in room 8.

The committee recommends that, when adopted, the modifications and changes detailed in this report be in place for the sessional period April 6, 2021 until October 1, 2021.

Considerations for Assembly Sittings

The following chart outlines the procedures and processes that will be impacted by the sittings of the Legislative Assembly during the spring sitting period of the first session of the twenty-ninth legislature. It notes the corresponding rules, practices, or services that will be affected and the modifications required to safely facilitate sittings of the Legislative Assembly in the current context of the COVID-19 pandemic. The rationale behind each proposed strategy is also described.

Modified Processes and Procedures Chart — Pandemic Response

Affected procedure and process	Affected rule, practice or service	Modifications to rule or practice	Rationale
SECTION 1 Days and times of sittings			
Sittings of the Assembly	4(4) Completion Day of first session	As prescribed by rule 4(4), the Completion Day of the first session of the twenty-ninth legislature shall be the 29th sitting day after the Budget Motion is moved unless otherwise ordered by the Assembly.	There is no need to modify the Completion Day at this time.
	6(1) Sittings: ordinary time of	The ordinary times for the daily meeting and adjournment of the sittings of the Assembly shall be modified as follows: Monday: 1:30 p.m. – 10:30 p.m. with a recess between 5:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m. Tuesday: 1:30 p.m. – 10:30 p.m. with a recess between 5:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m. Wednesday: 1:30 p.m. – 5:00 p.m. Thursday: 1:30 p.m. – 5:00 p.m. Friday: 10:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. Notwithstanding rule 6(1), the Assembly shall meet on Saturday, April 10, 2021 and the daily meeting and adjournment time shall be 10:00 a.m. until 1:00 p.m. Further, the daily meeting and adjournment time on Friday, April 9, 2021 shall be 1:30 p.m. until 5:00 p.m.	To reflect the agreement between the government and opposition House leaders, the sitting times have been amended.

***Standing Committee on House Services
Fifth Report of the Twenty-Ninth Legislature***

Affected procedure and process	Affected rule, practice or service	Modifications to rule or practice	Rationale
Sittings of the Assembly <i>(continued)</i>	14(3) Daily order of business	The daily order of business prescribed under rule 14(3)(a) shall apply to Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday. The daily order of business prescribed under rule 14(3)(b) will apply to Friday.	Modification to this rule is necessary to incorporate the changes to the ordinary time of sittings prescribed by rule 6(1) and to define Friday as the day for consideration of private members' business
	Private members' day debates: 25(1), 26(1), 26(2), 26(4)	All references to Thursday shall be changed to Friday in rules 25(1), 26(1), 26(2), and 26(4).	These changes provide the procedural framework necessary to conduct private members' day debates on Fridays.
SECTION 2 Business of the Assembly			
Budget documents	Modified practice	The symbolic gesture of sending a copy of the budget to the Finance critic will be suspended. Tabling of estimates will be accomplished by placing the message, estimate books, and budget motion at the central location for distributing papers at the conclusion of the budget speech. Estimates will be considered tabled when the Speaker reads the message of the Lieutenant Governor.	To minimize contact with papers and person-to-person contact. See delivering papers to the Table during a sitting. Members are asked to access the electronic version of documents from the ministry website.
Budget day guests	Modified practice	No guests will be permitted to attend the budget address.	In the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Speaker has suspended all visitor access to the Legislative Building.
Royal Assent	Modified practice	The Royal Assent ceremony shall be modified as follows: The premier and provincial secretary will remain at their places. The Lieutenant Governor and Aide de Camp shall properly physically distance themselves when entering the Chamber. Members situated in front rows will step back while the Lieutenant Governor enters and departs the Chamber.	The process of physical distancing can be maintained and risk minimized through these provisions. To maintain physical distancing requirements and minimize person-to-person contact, the Lieutenant Governor has advised the Clerk that he will assist by complying with whatever modifications are necessary for the assent of bills.

Standing Committee on House Services
Fifth Report of the Twenty-Ninth Legislature

Affected procedure and process	Affected rule, practice or service	Modifications to rule or practice	Rationale
Royal Assent (continued)		The Clerk and Speaker will present themselves at either end of the Table, and they will maintain appropriate physical distances when presenting the titles of the bills to the Lieutenant Governor. The Sergeant-at-Arms will attend to the mace at the end of the Table and remain in place until the departure of the Lieutenant Governor, at which point the mace will be laid on the Table.	
SECTION 3 Chamber proceedings a) General			
Masking requirements	Modified practice	All Legislative Assembly Service employees, government officials, and the media shall wear a mask at all times in the Chamber. All Members of the Legislative Assembly shall wear a mask at all times in the Chamber except when speaking during proceedings after being recognized by the Speaker.	In compliance with a November 19, 2020 Saskatchewan Health Authority public health order, the use of a non-medical mask is mandatory in all indoor public spaces. Under the November 19, 2020 Saskatchewan Health Authority public health order, the wearing of masks is not mandatory during proceedings before a legislative tribunal or court where the decision maker determines that removing the mask is essential to ensure the integrity of the proceeding or while members are speaking during a television news conference or interview. To allow members to be clearly heard in person and on the broadcast of Assembly proceedings, members are allowed to remove their masks during proceedings once they are recognized to speak.

Standing Committee on House Services
Fifth Report of the Twenty-Ninth Legislature

Affected procedure and process	Affected rule, practice or service	Modifications to rule or practice	Rationale
Masking requirements (<i>continued</i>)	47(1) Speaker to preserve order and decorum; 47(2) Rules for decorum in the Assembly	In accordance with Saskatchewan Health Authority public health orders and rules 47(1) and 47(2)(a), the Speaker has the authority to ensure that masking requirements are adhered to.	Under this provision, proper business attire in the Chamber includes the wearing of a mask.
Access to Chamber galleries	Modified practice	The attendance of guests in the Chamber shall remain suspended until public access to the Legislative Building is restored.	In the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Speaker has suspended all visitor access to the Legislative Building.
Relocation of press gallery to Speaker's gallery	14(2) Routine business Rule 48(1) [<i>jurisdiction of gallery as part of Chamber precinct</i>]	"Introduction of guests" shall not be called by the Speaker during the daily routine. The press gallery shall be closed to members of the media. Members of the press gallery association and accredited media registered with the Sergeant-at-Arms may observe proceedings from the Speaker's gallery provided the appropriate physical distancing is observed.	To protect the health and safety of Legislative Assembly Service personnel working in the press gallery and to facilitate physical distancing, the Speaker may limit access to the press gallery pursuant to rule 48, which specifies that the precinct of the Chamber includes the press gallery and that the Speaker may order the withdrawal of strangers. A stranger is anyone who is not a member or officer of the Assembly.
Speaker's parade	Modified practice	The practice of the daily parade shall be suspended. Clerks will be seated at the Table when the Speaker comes in through the back door, and the Sergeant-at-Arms will be standing before the Table with the mace on his shoulder. The Sergeant-at-Arms will lay the mace on the Table, and the daily proceedings will commence with the Speaker calling the Assembly to order and reciting the prayer.	To mitigate person-to-person contact and facilitate physical distancing.

Standing Committee on House Services
Fifth Report of the Twenty-Ninth Legislature

Affected procedure and process	Affected rule, practice or service	Modifications to rule or practice	Rationale
Pages	Disrupted service	There will be no Page service available.	To facilitate physical distancing, minimize person-to-person contact, and reduce the number of people handling paper, no Pages will be employed. Consequently there will be no messenger, document delivery, or refreshment service available.
Refreshments	47(2)(c) Rules for decorum in the Assembly	All participants must bring their own beverages in a plain container approved by the Speaker.	Due to the pandemic, the Legislative Assembly Service is not able to supply refreshments of any kind. Rule 47(2)(c) provides that beverages must be in a discreet container approved by the Speaker.
Publication of proceedings	<i>Hansard</i> workflow disruption	Typical <i>Hansard</i> publication time will be delayed.	Legislative Assembly Service personnel are required to follow the physical distancing standards outlined in the Saskatchewan Health Authority public health orders. This has resulted in changes to work flow that has reduced production time. Changes to the sitting times will further reduce the typical turnaround time for <i>Hansard</i> production.
b) Distribution and delivery of documents			
Delivering papers to the Table during a sitting	Rules regarding the delivery of papers to the Table: 14.1(1), 16(1), 21(2), 21(6), 22(2), 22(4), 24(5), 25(4), 26(2), 52, 60(1), 60(2), 63(5), 136(5)	During proceedings, papers which are required to be deposited at the Table shall be signed by the member before deposit at a central location. A Table officer will retrieve the paper, convey it to the Speaker for endorsement when necessary, and ensure its inclusion in the sessional record. Such papers include notice papers, motions, amendments, petitions, written questions, notices of motions for return, committee reports, tally sheets for recorded divisions, and other documents normally provided to the Table.	To facilitate physical distancing, minimize person to person contact, and reduce the number of people handling paper, no Pages will be employed. Members will deposit their own papers to a central location for retrieval by a Table officer. Signed paper forms are still required as a record of business conducted in the Assembly.

***Standing Committee on House Services
Fifth Report of the Twenty-Ninth Legislature***

Affected procedure and process	Affected rule, practice or service	Modifications to rule or practice	Rationale
Delivering papers to the Table during a sitting (continued)	Altered practice and service	Two central locations will be provided: one on the opposition side of the committee table and one on the government side.	
Distribution of documents to members	79(2), 81	There shall be no physical distribution of documents to members with the exception of a newly introduced bill, which will be available upon request from the Office of the Clerk.	To minimize person to person contact and reduce the number of people handling paper.
c) Members' participation in Chamber proceedings			
Attendance	2 Attendance required	Rule 2 shall not be applicable to any member unable to attend a sitting for reasons of the Legislative Assembly's compliance with Saskatchewan Health Authority public health orders.	Provides permission for members to be absent from a sitting of the Assembly due to the Legislative Assembly's compliance with Saskatchewan Health Authority public health orders. Adoption of this order supersedes the need for a Board of Internal Economy directive to substantiate the rule change.
Members to observe Saskatchewan Health Authority public health guidelines and travel recommendations	Modified practice	For the duration of the spring sessional period, members are strongly encouraged to observe Saskatchewan Health Authority public health guidelines and travel recommendations. Caucuses shall be responsible for the compliance of their members and staff with public health guidelines and orders. In extenuating circumstances, a caucus Whip may approve a member's travel outside the capital region if that travel does not violate a public health order.	On March 23, 2021, the Saskatchewan Health Authority stated that it strongly discouraged unnecessary travel to and from the Regina area due to an amplified risk of transmission of COVID-19 variants of concern. While the recommendation against unnecessary travel is in place, members are advised not to travel to and from constituencies outside of Regina. Acceptable practice may change as Saskatchewan Health Authority public health recommendations adapt to the changing context of the COVID-19 pandemic.

***Standing Committee on House Services
Fifth Report of the Twenty-Ninth Legislature***

Affected procedure and process	Affected rule, practice or service	Modifications to rule or practice	Rationale
Number of members to participate in Chamber proceedings	Modified practice and procedure	Up to 50 per cent of all members may be permitted in the Chamber at any given time, exclusive of the Speaker. Members shall be allowed to rotate in and out of the Chamber in accordance with the maximum percentage of members allowed. Members are required to maintain physical distancing and avoid person-to-person contact when entering and leaving the Chamber.	This maximum facilitates physical distancing and minimizes person-to-person contact. Rotation of members allows critics and ministers to alternate to address the business at hand and allows all members to participate in an order of business under consideration.
Seating arrangements	Modified practice	Members will sit in their designated seats, as indicated on the Chamber seating plan.	Individual desks in the Chamber have been placed at a distance from one another to facilitate physical distancing. Plexiglas shields have been installed between desks to mitigate the spread of COVID-19. (See Appendix 2 for Chamber seating plan).
d) Recorded divisions			
Voting	Temporary modification to voting process 69 Divisions	When a recorded division is demanded on a question, the regular rules for a recorded division shall apply except the recorded vote will be taken in two sections and proxy voting will be permitted for members unable to vote in person due to COVID-19. The following voting process will be observed: When a division is called, the Clerk will issue tally sheets for the whips or their designates to record any proxy votes.	Allocating members to separate voting groups enhances the safety of members and Legislative Assembly Service employees by staggering the number of members standing and speaking in the Chamber at one time and allowing for greater physical distancing. (See Appendix 3 for the allocation of members to voting groups). Proxy voting allows members not able to be present in the Chamber due to COVID-19 the right to exercise their right to vote. See section on proxy voting for additional information.

***Standing Committee on House Services
Fifth Report of the Twenty-Ninth Legislature***

Affected procedure and process	Affected rule, practice or service	Modifications to rule or practice	Rationale
Voting (continued)		Tally sheets will be placed at a central location on the floor of the Assembly. The respective whips or their designates shall retrieve their tally sheet from the central location. The Speaker shall advise members that the recorded division shall be taken in two sections in accordance with the row call prescribed by the Assembly. The Speaker shall advise members that when the bells are extinguished, the members allocated to the first voting section will take their seats in the Chamber. The Clerk will conduct the row call for yea and nay votes of the first group, following the regular practice for a recorded division. Once the first group of members has voted, the voting process will be repeated for the second group of members. The Speaker shall ask members of the first section to depart the Chamber so the second section may proceed to vote. Once the first group has departed, the Sergeant-at-Arms shall ring the bells for 5 seconds. Members of the second section shall enter the Chamber at the sound of the bell. The Clerk will conduct the row call for yea and nay votes of the second section, following the regular practice for a recorded division.	See section on delivering papers to the Table during a sitting for additional information on the retrieval and submission of tally sheets. (See appendices 4 and 5 for tally sheets). Voting shall be conducted strictly in accordance with the row call sections. This provides a structure for the Clerk to call the division, for Hansard to activate the microphones, and for Broadcast Services to follow the vote with the cameras.

Standing Committee on House Services
Fifth Report of the Twenty-Ninth Legislature

Affected procedure and process	Affected rule, practice or service	Modifications to rule or practice	Rationale
Voting (continued)		At the conclusion of the recorded division for the second group, the Speaker will call for any yea votes by proxy. The government whip and/or opposition whip (or their designates) stand and report those votes. The Speaker will then call for the nay votes by proxy, and the whips or their designates shall correspondingly report those votes. After reporting their proxy votes to the Speaker, the whips or their designates shall deposit their tally sheets at the designated document deposit location. Tally sheets shall be considered a sessional paper and the names of members voting yea and nay by proxy shall be entered into the <i>Votes and Proceedings</i> for that sitting day, and subsequently into the <i>Journals</i> of the Legislative Assembly. A separate tally sheet shall be provided for each vote. At the conclusion of voting, the Clerk will combine the results from the two row calls and the votes by proxy and report the totals to the Speaker.	
Proxy vote authorized for recorded divisions in the Legislative Assembly	Temporary rule	Proxy voting shall be available to any member physically unable to vote in a recorded division in the Assembly due to the COVID-19 public health emergency and the related measures that are in place. This temporary order shall apply to recorded divisions required in the Legislative Assembly or any committee of the whole Assembly.	Proxy voting gives members who are not able to be present in the Chamber due to COVID-19 the ability to exercise their right to vote.

Standing Committee on House Services
Fifth Report of the Twenty-Ninth Legislature

Affected procedure and process	Affected rule, practice or service	Modifications to rule or practice	Rationale
Proxy vote authorized for recorded divisions in the Legislative Assembly (continued)		A member shall be free to choose any other member who is eligible to vote in divisions to act as a designated proxy. A member must register a signed declaration of proxy with the Speaker at least 30 minutes before the daily commencement of proceedings. The declaration of proxy shall include the name of the designated proxy. An alternate may be named to act in the place of the designated proxy. The date or dates a proxy shall be authorized to vote on the member's behalf must be indicated on the form. The signed declaration may be submitted to the Speaker by email. A designated proxy shall act in strict accordance with the instruction given by the member. A member may change their designated proxy or withdraw their declaration of proxy by submission to the Speaker. A member's registered declaration of proxy shall be suspended when the member is present and able to vote in person. The designated proxy shall sign the tally sheet under the name of the absent member with notation of their designation as proxy. The record of a proxy vote shall be treated as part of the sessional record. Declarations submitted to the Speaker shall be provided to the Clerk and retained as part of the sessional record.	See Appendix 6 for the designated proxy form. The member may name an alternate proxy as a precaution if the designated proxy is not able to vote.

***Standing Committee on House Services
Fifth Report of the Twenty-Ninth Legislature***

Affected procedure and process	Affected rule, practice or service	Modifications to rule or practice	Rationale
SECTION 5 Committees of the Whole Assembly			
Seating of Chair in Committees of the Whole Assembly	Modified practice	The Chair of Committee of Finance or Committee of the Whole on Bills shall sit at the Table in the chair normally occupied by the Law Clerk and Parliamentary Counsel. The Clerk shall sit in the Clerk Assistant's seat.	Spacing at the Table conforms to physical distancing requirements and eliminates the need for sanitization desks and seats during the transition between Assembly and proceedings of committees of the whole.
Participation of officials in Committees of the Whole Assembly	Modified process	Adequate recesses must be scheduled for witnesses to attend the consideration of business in Committee of the Whole on Bills or Committee of Finance.	Disinfecting desks, minimization of person-to-person contact, and physical distancing all need to be taken into account with individuals entering and exiting the Chamber.
SECTION 6 Standing committees a) Chamber proceedings			
Participation in committee proceedings in the Chamber	Ordinary practice	All committee members may participate.	There is adequate space in the Chamber to allow all members to participate safely while practising physical distancing.
	Modified practice	A stand-up mike shall be in place for witness testimony.	A stand-up mike allows witnesses to testify without touching work surfaces, chairs, or spaces that others will soon occupy, so disinfection between speakers is not required.
Masking requirements	Modified practice	All Legislative Assembly Service employees and the media shall wear a mask at all times in the Chamber. All Members of the Legislative Assembly and government officials shall wear a mask at all times in the Chamber except when speaking during committee proceedings after being recognized by the Chair.	In compliance with a November 19, 2020 Saskatchewan Health Authority public health order, the use of a non-medical mask is mandatory in all indoor public spaces. Under the November 19, 2020 Saskatchewan Health Authority public health order, the wearing of masks is not mandatory during proceedings before a legislative tribunal or court where the decision maker determines that removing the mask is essential to ensure the integrity of the proceeding or while members are speaking during a

***Standing Committee on House Services
Fifth Report of the Twenty-Ninth Legislature***

Affected procedure and process	Affected rule, practice or service	Modifications to rule or practice	Rationale
			television news conference or interview. To allow members to be clearly heard in person and on the broadcast of Assembly proceedings, members are allowed to remove their masks during proceedings once they are recognized to speak.
b) Room 8 proceedings			
Participation of committee members in Room 8	Modified practice	All committee members may participate. Seating will be modified to facilitate physical distancing. Three chairs, spaced at appropriate physical distances, are available for members on each side of the committee table. The Chair will remain seated at the head of the table, and the Committee Clerk will sit at a separate desk to the side of the committee table. Some government members may need to sit on what is traditionally seen as the opposition side of the table.	Restricting the rights of members to participate in proceedings should be resorted to only when safety cannot otherwise be ensured. Modified seating, as outlined in Appendix 7, will allow all committee members to be safely seated at the committee to be present for proceedings in room 8 while adhering to physical distancing guidelines. It is an accepted parliamentary practice that when there are more members from one party than can be accommodated on their respective side of the Chamber or committee table, some members from that party are seated on the opposite side (e.g., twenty-second and twentieth legislatures). Name plates specifying the party membership of each committee member may be used to ensure officials know which party the member belongs to.
Remote participating member in policy field committees	Modified practice	During policy field committee meetings in room 8, one Member of the Legislative Assembly may be permitted to remotely participate in proceedings in the period from April 6, 2021 to May 14, 2021.	This proposal allows one Member of the Legislative Assembly, with notice, to participate remotely during deliberations in a policy field committee meeting in room 8.

Affected procedure and process	Affected rule, practice or service	Modifications to rule or practice	Rationale
Remote participating member in policy field committees (continued)		The remote participating member shall provide written notice via email on the day of the meeting of their intention to participate to the Chair and committee clerk a minimum of two hours prior to their participation in a meeting. In cases where more than one member provides notice, the Chair and Deputy Chair shall resolve the matter. The remote participating member shall be considered a non-permanent committee member in accordance with the provisions of rule 122(9).	
	125 Order and decorum	The Chair has the authority to maintain and decide all questions of order and decorum including those involving remote participation of a remote participating member. When technical problems arise, the Chair may limit the remote participating member to participate by audio only. In cases of order and decorum where the remote participating member does not comply with the ruling of the Chair, the Chair may direct the moderator to terminate the remote participating member's connection.	This proposal provides the Chair additional tools to preserve order and decorum during remote proceedings.
	Modified practice	When an opposition member is participating in a meeting remotely and no other opposition member is physically present in room 8 when a vote is called, a motion is moved, or a point of order is raised, the Chair shall suspend the meeting for up to 10 minutes. If a remote participating member experiences technical problems while questioning witnesses and no other opposition member is physically present, the Chair shall suspend the meeting for up to 10 minutes.	This proposal requires the Chair to allow up to 10 minutes to ensure that an opposition member is present before putting a question or when technical issues arise.

***Standing Committee on House Services
Fifth Report of the Twenty-Ninth Legislature***

Affected procedure and process	Affected rule, practice or service	Modifications to rule or practice	Rationale
Witness participation in room 8	Modified practice	Seating arrangements of witnesses will be limited to comply with Saskatchewan Health Authority public health orders for physical distancing. The minister and deputy minister shall sit at opposite ends of the witness table. One or more additional people (e.g., witnesses, media, caucus, or ministerial staff) could physically distance in seats behind them. A stand-up mike may be used for witness testimony.	Modified seating, as outlined in Appendix 7, allows for safe physical distancing of witnesses in room 8. A stand-up mike allows witnesses to testify without touching work surfaces, chairs, or spaces that others will soon occupy so disinfection between speakers is not required.
Masking requirements	Modified practice	All Members of the Legislative Assembly, Legislative Assembly Service employees, government officials, and the media must wear a mask at all times in room 8.	In compliance with a November 19, 2020 Saskatchewan Health Authority public health order, the use of a non-medical mask is mandatory in all indoor public spaces. To facilitate safety during committee proceedings in room 8, this provision will be in effect for all individuals at all times.
c) General			
Public access	128(1) Admission to meetings	Notwithstanding rule 128(1), all committee proceedings shall be closed to the public. The media shall not be allowed unrestricted access to committee meetings due to tight confines in committee room 8 and disinfecting requirements in the Speaker's gallery.	In the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Speaker has suspended all visitor access to the Legislative Building.
Substitutions	122(5) Temporary substitutions	Notwithstanding the requirement of rule 122(5) for the written notice of a temporary substitution of membership, a signed substitution notice may be filed	Electronic filing will minimize person-to-person contact and reduce the number of people handling paper.

***Standing Committee on House Services
Fifth Report of the Twenty-Ninth Legislature***

Affected procedure and process	Affected rule, practice or service	Modifications to rule or practice	Rationale
		by email with the Chair of the committee.	
Witnesses	Modified practice	Witnesses may be allowed to rotate in and out of the committee room. They may wait in the hallway while maintaining their required physical distances from one another until they are required to provide testimony at the stand-up mike.	This provision ensures physical distancing while allowing more witnesses to participate than can be accommodated in the committee room. The committee room door will remain open to minimize contact with the doorknob. This may create noise and disruption to committee proceedings; however, sessional ushers will be monitoring the hallways to remind individuals to minimize the noise levels outside the committee room. A display monitor will be available in the hallway for officials to observe the committee proceedings while seating in the hallway outside the committee room.
	Modified practice	A minister may need to exit the committee room to consult privately with officials.	Due to physical distancing requirements, ministers must be able to confer safely with officials. During committee proceedings in room 8, Room 4 will be available as a private area in which the minister and officials may confer. During committee proceedings in the Chamber, the minister and officials may confer in the vestibule at the front of the Chamber.
Recesses during and between items of business		Adequate recesses must be scheduled during the transition between items of committee business when separate ministries and their officials are to attend.	This will allow for the adequate disinfection of tables and seats prior to new participants or staff members taking their place.

***Standing Committee on House Services
Fifth Report of the Twenty-Ninth Legislature***

Affected procedure and process	Affected rule, practice or service	Modifications to rule or practice	Rationale
		Similarly, brief recesses may be necessary when Legislative Assembly Service personnel change shifts.	
Refreshments	47(2)(c)	All participants must bring their own beverages in a plain container approved by the Speaker.	Due to the pandemic, the Legislative Assembly Service is not able to supply refreshments of any kind.

Recommendation

The committee recommends:

That the Legislative Assembly implement the modifications to its rules, procedures, and practices as presented in Appendix 1 of this report, together with the associated forms and documents as presented in appendices 2 through 8; and,

That these implementations come into effect on April 6, 2021 and expire on October 1, 2021.

Appendix 1 — Modifications to Rules, Procedures, and Practices

Affected procedure and process	Affected rule, practice or service	Modifications to rule or practice
Sittings of the Assembly	4(4) Completion Day of first session	As prescribed by rule 4(4), the Completion Day of the first session of the twenty-ninth legislature shall be the 29th sitting day after the Budget Motion is moved unless otherwise ordered by the Assembly.
	6(1) Sittings: ordinary time of	The ordinary times for the daily meeting and adjournment of the sittings of the Assembly shall be modified as follows: Monday: 1:30 p.m. – 10:30 p.m. with a recess between 5:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m. Tuesday: 1:30 p.m. – 10:30 p.m. with a recess between 5:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m. Wednesday: 1:30 p.m. – 5:00 p.m. Thursday: 1:30 p.m. – 5:00 p.m. Friday: 10:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. Notwithstanding rule 6(1), the Assembly shall meet on Saturday, April 10, 2021 and the daily meeting and adjournment time shall be 10:00 a.m. until 1:00 p.m. Further, the daily meeting and adjournment time on Friday, April 9, 2021 shall be 1:30 p.m. until 5:00 p.m.
	14(3) Daily order of business	The daily order of business prescribed under rule 14(3)(a) shall apply to Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday. The daily order of business prescribed under rule 14(3)(b) will apply to Friday.
	Private members' day debates: 25(1), 26(1), 26(2), 26(4)	All references to Thursday shall be changed to Friday in rules 25(1), 26(1), 26(2), and 26(4).
Budget documents	Modified practice	The symbolic gesture of sending a copy of the budget to the Finance critic will be suspended. Tabling of estimates will be accomplished by placing the message, estimate books, and budget motion at the central location for distributing papers at the conclusion of the budget speech. Estimates will be considered tabled when the Speaker reads the message of the Lieutenant Governor.
Budget day guests	Modified practice	No guests will be permitted to attend the budget address.

***Standing Committee on House Services
Fifth Report of the Twenty-Ninth Legislature***

Affected procedure and process	Affected rule, practice or service	Modifications to rule or practice
Royal Assent	Modified practice	The Royal Assent ceremony shall be modified as follows: The premier and provincial secretary will remain at their places. The Lieutenant Governor and Aide de Camp shall properly physically distance themselves when entering the Chamber. Members situated in front rows will step back while the Lieutenant Governor enters and departs the Chamber. The Clerk and Speaker will present themselves at either end of the Table, and they will maintain appropriate physical distances when presenting the titles of the bills to the Lieutenant Governor. The Sergeant-at-Arms will attend to the mace at the end of the Table and remain in place until the departure of the Lieutenant Governor, at which point the mace will be laid on the Table.
Masking requirements	Modified practice 47(1), 47(2) <i>[order and decorum]</i>	All Legislative Assembly Service employees, government officials, and the media shall wear a mask at all times in the Chamber. All Members of the Legislative Assembly shall wear a mask at all times in the Chamber except when speaking during proceedings after being recognized by the Speaker. In accordance with Saskatchewan Health Authority public health orders and rules 47(1) and 47(2)(a), the Speaker has the authority to ensure that masking requirements are adhered to.
Access to Chamber galleries Relocation of press gallery to Speaker's gallery	Modified practice 14(2) Routine business 48(1) <i>[jurisdiction of gallery as part of Chamber precinct]</i>	The attendance of guests in the Chamber shall remain suspended until public access to the Legislative Building is restored. “Introduction of guests” shall not be called by the Speaker during the daily routine. The press gallery shall be closed to members of the media. Members of the press gallery association and accredited media registered with the Sergeant-at-Arms may observe proceedings from the Speaker's gallery provided the appropriate physical distancing is observed.

***Standing Committee on House Services
Fifth Report of the Twenty-Ninth Legislature***

Affected procedure and process	Affected rule, practice or service	Modifications to rule or practice
Speaker's parade	Modified practice	The practice of the daily parade shall be suspended. Clerks will be seated at the Table when the Speaker comes in through the back door, and the Sergeant-at-Arms will be standing before the Table with the mace on his shoulder. The Sergeant-at-Arms will lay the mace on the Table, and the daily proceedings will commence with the Speaker calling the Assembly to order and reciting the prayer.
Pages	Disrupted service	There will be no Page service available.
Refreshments	47(2)(c) Rules for decorum in the Assembly	All participants must bring their own beverages in a plain container approved by the Speaker.
Publication of proceedings	<i>Hansard</i> workflow disruption	Typical <i>Hansard</i> publication time will be delayed.
Delivering papers to the Table during a sitting	14.1(1), 16(1), 21(2), 21(6), 22(2), 22(4), 24(5), 25(4), 26(2), 52, 60(1), 60(2), 63(5), 136(5) Altered practice and service	During proceedings, papers which are required to be deposited at the Table shall be signed by the member before deposit at a central location. A Table officer will retrieve the paper, convey it to the Speaker for endorsement when necessary, and ensure its inclusion in the sessional record. Such papers include notice papers, motions, amendments, petitions, written questions, notices of motions for return, committee reports, tally sheets for recorded divisions, and other documents normally provided to the Table. Two central locations will be provided: one on the opposition side of the committee table and one on the government side.
Distribution of documents to members	79(2), 81	There shall be no physical distribution of documents to members with the exception of a newly introduced bill, which will be available upon request from the Office of the Clerk.
Attendance	2 Attendance required	Rule 2 shall not be applicable to any member unable to attend a sitting for reasons of the Legislative Assembly's compliance with Saskatchewan Health Authority public health orders.

***Standing Committee on House Services
Fifth Report of the Twenty-Ninth Legislature***

Affected procedure and process	Affected rule, practice or service	Modifications to rule or practice
Members to observe Saskatchewan Health Authority public health guidelines and travel recommendations	Modified practice	For the duration of the spring sessional period, members are strongly encouraged to observe Saskatchewan Health Authority public health guidelines and travel recommendations. Caucuses shall be responsible for the compliance of their members and staff with public health guidelines and orders. In extenuating circumstances, a caucus Whip may approve a member's travel outside the capital region if that travel does not violate a public health order.
Number of members to participate in Chamber proceedings	Modified practice and procedure	Up to 50 per cent of all members may be permitted in the Chamber at any given time, exclusive of the Speaker. Members shall be allowed to rotate in and out of the Chamber in accordance with the maximum percentage of members allowed. Members are required to maintain physical distancing and avoid person-to-person contact when entering and leaving the Chamber.
Seating arrangements	Modified practice	Members will sit in their designated seats, as indicated on the Chamber seating plan.
Voting	Temporary modification to voting process 69 Divisions	When a recorded division is demanded on a question, the regular rules for a recorded division shall apply except the recorded vote will be taken in two sections and proxy voting will be permitted for members unable to vote in person due to COVID-19. The following voting process will be observed: When a division is called, the Clerk will issue tally sheets for the whips or their designates to record any proxy votes. Tally sheets will be placed at a central location on the floor of the Assembly. The respective whips or their designates shall retrieve their tally sheet from the central location. The Speaker shall advise members that the recorded division shall be taken in two sections in accordance with the row call prescribed by the Assembly. The Speaker shall advise members that when the bells are extinguished, the members allocated to the first voting section will take their seats in the Chamber. The Clerk will conduct the row call for yea and nay votes of the first group, following the regular practice for a recorded division.

***Standing Committee on House Services
Fifth Report of the Twenty-Ninth Legislature***

Affected procedure and process	Affected rule, practice or service	Modifications to rule or practice
Voting (continued)		Once the first group of members has voted, the voting process will be repeated for the second group of members. The Speaker shall ask members of the first section to depart the Chamber so the second section may proceed to vote. Once the first group has departed, the Sergeant-at-Arms shall ring the bells for 5 seconds. Members of the second section shall enter the Chamber at the sound of the bell. The Clerk will conduct the row call for yea and nay votes of the second section, following the regular practice for a recorded division. At the conclusion of the recorded division for the second group, the Speaker will call for any yea votes by proxy. The government whip and/or opposition whip (or their designates) stand and report those votes. The Speaker will then call for the nay votes by proxy, and the whips or their designates shall correspondingly report those votes. After reporting their proxy votes to the Speaker, the whips or their designates shall deposit their tally sheets at the designated document deposit location. Tally sheets shall be considered a sessional paper and the names of members voting yea and nay by proxy shall be entered into the <i>Votes and Proceedings</i> for that sitting day, and subsequently into the <i>Journals</i> of the Legislative Assembly. A separate tally sheet shall be provided for each vote. At the conclusion of voting, the Clerk will combine the results from the two row calls and the votes by proxy and report the totals to the Speaker.
Proxy vote authorized for recorded divisions in the Legislative Assembly	Temporary rule	Proxy voting shall be available to any member physically unable to vote in a recorded division in the Assembly due to the COVID-19 public health emergency and the related measures that are in place. This temporary order shall apply to recorded divisions required in the Legislative Assembly or any committee of the whole Assembly. A member shall be free to choose any other member who is eligible to vote in divisions to act as a designated proxy. A member must register a signed declaration of proxy with the Speaker at least 30 minutes before the daily commencement of proceedings. The declaration of proxy shall include the name of the designated proxy. An alternate may be named to act in the place of the designated proxy. The date or dates a proxy shall be authorized to vote on the member's behalf must be indicated on the form. The signed declaration may be submitted to the Speaker by email.

***Standing Committee on House Services
Fifth Report of the Twenty-Ninth Legislature***

Affected procedure and process	Affected rule, practice or service	Modifications to rule or practice
Proxy vote authorized for recorded divisions in the Legislative Assembly <i>(continued)</i>		A designated proxy shall act in strict accordance with the instruction given by the member. A member may change their designated proxy or withdraw their declaration of proxy by submission to the Speaker. A member's registered declaration of proxy shall be suspended when the member is present and able to vote in person. The designated proxy shall sign the tally sheet under the name of the absent member with notation of their designation as proxy. The record of a proxy vote shall be treated as part of the sessional record. Declarations submitted to the Speaker shall be provided to the Clerk and retained as part of the sessional record.
Seating of Chair in Committees of the Whole Assembly	Modified practice	The Chair of Committee of Finance or Committee of the Whole on Bills shall sit at the Table in the chair normally occupied by the Law Clerk and Parliamentary Counsel. The Clerk shall sit in the Clerk Assistant's seat.
Participation of officials in Committees of the Whole Assembly	Modified process	Adequate recesses must be scheduled for witnesses to attend the consideration of business in Committee of the Whole on Bills or Committee of Finance.
Participation in committee proceedings in the Chamber	Ordinary practice Modified practice	All committee members may participate. A stand-up mike shall be in place for witness testimony.
Masking requirements	Modified practice	All Legislative Assembly Service employees and the media shall wear a mask at all times in the Chamber. All Members of the Legislative Assembly and government officials shall wear a mask at all times in the Chamber except when speaking during committee proceedings after being recognized by the Chair.
Participation of committee members in room 8	Modified practice	All committee members may participate. Seating will be modified to facilitate physical distancing. Three chairs, spaced at appropriate physical distances, are available for members on each side of the committee table. The Chair will remain seated at the head of

***Standing Committee on House Services
Fifth Report of the Twenty-Ninth Legislature***

Affected procedure and process	Affected rule, practice or service	Modifications to rule or practice
		the table, and the Committee Clerk will sit at a separate desk to the side of the committee table. Some government members may need to sit on what is traditionally seen as the opposition side of the table.
Remote participating member in policy field committees	Modified practice 125 Order and decorum	During policy field committee meetings in room 8, one Member of the Legislative Assembly may be permitted to remotely participate in proceedings in the period from April 6, 2021 to May 14, 2021. The remote participating member shall provide written notice via email on the day of the meeting of their intention to participate to the Chair and committee clerk a minimum of two hours prior to their participation in a meeting. In cases where more than one member provides notice, the Chair and Deputy Chair shall resolve the matter. The remote participating member shall be considered a non-permanent committee member in accordance with the provisions of rule 122(9). The Chair has the authority to maintain and decide all questions of order and decorum including those involving remote participation of a remote participating member. When technical problems arise, the Chair may limit the remote participating member to participate by audio only. In cases of order and decorum where the remote participating member does not comply with the ruling of the Chair, the Chair may direct the moderator to terminate the remote participating member's connection. When an opposition member is participating in a meeting remotely and no other opposition member is physically present in room 8 when a vote is called, a motion is moved, or a point of order is raised, the Chair shall suspend the meeting for up to 10 minutes. If a remote participating member experiences technical problems while questioning witnesses and no other opposition member is physically present, the Chair shall suspend the meeting for up to 10 minutes.
Witness participation in Room 8	Modified practice	Seating arrangements of witnesses will be limited to comply with Saskatchewan Health Authority public health orders for physical distancing. The minister and deputy minister shall sit at opposite ends of the witness table. One or more additional people (e.g., witnesses, media, caucus, or ministerial staff) could physically distance in seats behind them. A stand-up mike may be used for witness testimony.

***Standing Committee on House Services
Fifth Report of the Twenty-Ninth Legislature***

Affected procedure and process	Affected rule, practice or service	Modifications to rule or practice
Masking requirements	Modified practice	All Members of the Legislative Assembly, Legislative Assembly Service employees, government officials, and the media must wear a mask at all times in room 8.
Public access	128(1) Admission to meetings	Notwithstanding rule 128(1), all committee proceedings shall be closed to the public. The media shall not be allowed unrestricted access to committee meetings due to tight confines in committee room 8 and disinfecting requirements in the Speaker's gallery.
Substitutions	122(5) Temporary substitutions	Notwithstanding the requirement of rule 122(5) for the written notice of a temporary substitution of membership, a signed substitution notice may be filed by email with the Chair of the committee.
Witnesses	Modified practice	Witnesses may be allowed to rotate in and out of the committee room. They may wait in the hallway while maintaining their required physical distances from one another until they are required to provide testimony at the stand-up mike. A minister may need to exit the committee room to consult privately with officials.
Recesses during and between items of business		Adequate recesses must be scheduled during the transition between items of committee business when separate ministries and their officials are to attend. Similarly, brief recesses may be necessary when Legislative Assembly Service personnel change shifts.
Refreshments	47(2)(c)	All participants must bring their own beverages in a plain container approved by the Speaker.

SEATING PLAN
LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
of
SASKATCHEWAN

1st SESSION
29th LEGISLATURE

☐ Denotes Saskatchewan Party Member

☐ Denotes New Democratic Party Member



Terry Quinn
Sergeant-at-Arms

Terry Quinn
Sergeant-at-Arms

Appendix 3 — Voting Groups for Recorded Divisions

Group 1

Government		
Members	Yea	Nay
Mr. Moe		
Mr. Reiter		
Mr. Duncan		
Ms. Tell		
Ms. Eyre		
Mr. Merriman		
Mr. Kaeding		
Mr. Makowsky		
Ms. Ross (Regina Rochdale)		
Mr. Cockrill		
Ms. Wilson		
Mr. Ottenbreit		
Mr. Lawrence		
Mr. Jenson		
Ms. Ross (Prince Albert Northcote)		
Mr. Docherty		
Mr. Dennis		
Mr. Kirsch		
Mr. Goudy		
Mr. Francis		
Lisa Lambert		
Mr. McLeod		
Mr. Harrison (Cannington)		

Opposition		
Members	Yea	Nay
Mr. Meili		
Mr. Wotherspoon		
Ms. Young (Regina University)		
Ms. Bowes		
Ms. Beck		
Ms. Conway		

Total	Yea	Nay

Casting Vote	Yea	Nay

***Standing Committee on House Services
Fifth Report of the Twenty-Ninth Legislature***

Group 2

Government		
Members	Yea	Nay
Mr. Stewart		
Ms. Harpauer		
Mr. Morgan		
Mr. Wyant		
Mr. Bradshaw		
Mr. Harrison (Meadow Lake)		
Mr. Hindley		
Mr. Cheveldayoff		
Mr. Marit		
Ms. Carr		
Mr. McMorris		
Mr. Fiaz		
Mr. Hargrave		
Mr. Bonk		
Mr. Skoropad		
Mr. Keisig		
Mr. Meyers		
Mr. Buckingham		
Ms. Young (Lloydminster)		
Mr. Steele		
Mr. Nerlien		
Mr. Domotor		
Mr. Friesen		
Mr. Grewal		

Opposition		
Members	Yea	Nay
Ms. Sarauer		
Ms. Mowat		
Mr. Vermette		
Mr. Belanger		
Ms. Nippi-Albright		
Ms. Ritchie		
Mr. Love		

Total	Yea	Nay

Casting Vote	Yea	Nay

Appendix 4 — Tally Sheet for Recorded Divisions (Government)

RECORDED DIVISION — GOVERNMENT MEMBERS				
Question _____	Date _____	Clerk Initials _____		
YEA VOTE (Signature)	NAME	NAY VOTE (Signature)		
	Moe			
	Bonk			
	Bradshaw			
	Buckingham			
	Carr			
	Cheveldayoff			
	Cockrill			
	Dennis			
	Docherty			
	Domotor			
	Duncan			
	Eyre			
	Fiaz			
	Francis			
	Friesen			
	Goudy			
	Grewal			
	Hargrave			
	Harpauer			
	Harrison (Cannington)			
	Harrison (Meadow Lake)			
	Hindley			
	Jensen			
	Kaeding			
	Keisig			
	Kirsch			
	Lambert			
	Lawrence			
	Makowsky			
	Marit			
	McLeod			
	McMorris			
	Merriman			
	Meyers			
	Morgan			
	Nerlien			
	Ottenbreit			
	Reiter			
	Ross (PA Northcote)			
	Ross (Regina Rochdale)			
	Skoropad			
	Steele			
	Stewart			
	Tell			
	Wilson			
	Wyant			
	Young			
YEAS TOTAL		NAYS TOTAL		

Proxy to be indicated by placing (P) after signature of designated member.

Print name

Whip / Designate signature

Appendix 5 — Tally Sheet for Recorded Divisions (Opposition)

RECORDED DIVISION — OPPOSITION MEMBERS

Question _____ Date _____ Clerk Initials _____

YEA VOTE (Signature)		NAME	NAY VOTE (Signature)	
		Meili		
		Beck		
		Belanger		
		Bowes		
		Conway		
		Love		
		Mowat		
		Nippi-Albright		
		Ritchie		
		Sarauer		
		Vermette		
		Wotherspoon		
		Young		
YEAS TOTAL			NAYS TOTAL	

Proxy to be indicated by placing (P) after signature of designated member.

Print name

Whip / Designate signature

Appendix 6 — Designated Proxy Form



Mr. Speaker,

If I am physically unable to vote in a recorded division in the Assembly due to the COVID-19 public health emergency and the related measures that are in place, I authorize the member(s) designated by this form to be my proxy for such purposes.

I hereby designate the following member(s) to cast my vote by proxy

Proxy member's name

Alternate Proxy member's name

☐

On

(Date(s))

☐

For the period

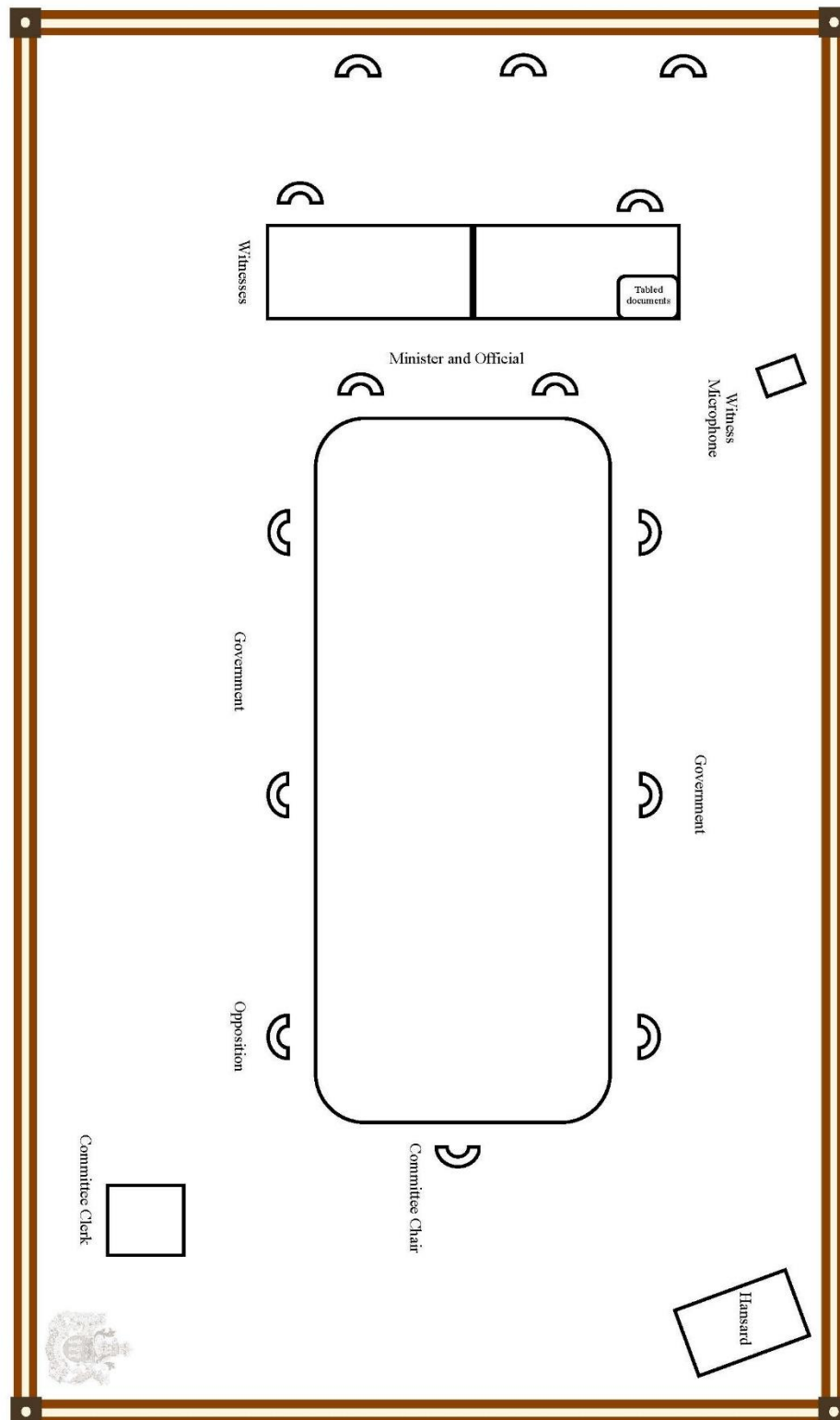
(Dates)

Member's name

Member's signature

Date

Appendix 7 — Seating Plan for Committee Proceedings (Room 8)



Appendix 8 — Remote Participation Manual



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN

MEMBERS' GUIDE TO REMOTE PARTICIPATION IN STANDING COMMITTEES

APRIL 2021

Contents

Introduction.....	36
Training and Technical Requirements	36
Preparing for the Meeting	37
Procedure for Remote Participation.....	38
Using Zoom	39
Joining the Meeting	39
Sending a Private Message	40
Muting and Unmuting the Microphone	41
Troubleshooting Tips.....	42

Introduction

For the period April 6, 2021 to May 14, 2021 one Member of the Legislative Assembly (MLA) per meeting be allowed to participate remotely in policy field committee meetings in room 8.

A remote participating member (RPM) is permitted to participate virtually only during the questioning of ministers and officials and may not vote, move motions, raise points of order, or otherwise participate in any of the committee's decision-making functions.

This guide outlines the user protocols and procedures that an RPM must follow to participate remotely in committee proceedings.

Training and Technical Requirements

Before becoming an RPM, a member should participate in the remote participation training provided by the Procedural Services branch.

Virtual participation will be facilitated through Zoom. To participate, an RPM will require a computing device, browser, speaker(s) and microphone, web camera, and an internet connection that meet or exceed the following minimum requirements:

- Processor — Dual core 2 ghz or higher (Intel i3/i5/i7 or AMD equivalent)
- Operating system — Windows 10 or Apple macOS 10.9 or later
- Browser — Current version of Chrome V.12 or higher, Firefox V.27 or higher, Safari (Apple) V.7 or higher, or Edge V.12 or higher
- Speakers and a microphone — USB plug-in, 3.5 mm or wireless Bluetooth
(built-in speakers/microphones are not recommended due to poor audio quality)
- Webcam or HD webcam — built-in or USB plug-in
- Internet connection — minimum 1.2 mbps up/down

Preparing for the Meeting

Please remember that any Zoom participation in a meeting will be broadcast on the Legislative Channel and live-streamed on the Internet as part of committee proceedings. As such, RPMs should take the following into account while preparing for the meeting:

Assembly practice and the *Rules and Procedures of the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan* pertaining to order and decorum apply to RPMs:

- Members must be dressed in appropriate business attire or ethnic dress [rule 47(2)(a)]. Current Assembly practice is that men must wear neckties and jackets during committee proceedings.
- Food is not permitted [rule 47(2)(b)].
- Non-alcoholic beverages are permitted in discreet containers approved by the Chair [rule 47(2)(c)].
- Smoking is not permitted [rule 47(2)(d)].
- Exhibit of non-parliamentary items as part of a background in remote proceedings is prohibited [based on rule 47(2)(f)].

The location chosen for Zoom participation impacts the audio and video quality. For the best results:

- The location should have sufficient lighting, if possible, while minimizing bright lighting from behind (e.g. sitting in front of a window or a lamp).
- A neutral and private setting should be chosen (e.g. a quiet room not likely to have people moving through or extraneous noise).
- To maintain privacy, the location should minimize what people can see in the background.

RPMs should consider the following in regard to device placement, camera shot, and connection:

- The camera shot should capture the RPM's head and shoulders (as outlined in the television guidelines).
- The computing device should be positioned in such a way that the RPM can look directly at the camera and screen while sitting normally.
- Movement of the computing device/camera should be minimized (i.e. place on a desk or table as opposed to on an RPM's lap).
- To ensure that the best connection to the meeting is maintained, RPMs should avoid the use of other broadband intensive apps or programs during the meeting (e.g. Netflix, YouTube, Fortnite, etc.) on the device the RPM is using and all other devices connected to the internet.

Ultimately, the Chair has the authority to maintain and decide all questions of order and decorum including those caused by technical difficulties that render remote participation untenable [rule 125]. When matters of order and decorum arise involving remote participation or remote participating members, the Chair may limit the remote participating member's participation to audio only or may terminate the virtual feed entirely.

Procedure for Remote Participation

1. An RPM must provide notice of their intention to remotely participate in committee proceedings a minimum of two hours prior to the start of the committee meeting. Notice can be provided through email to committees@legassembly.sk.ca.
2. Procedural Services will send an RPM a Zoom meeting link.
3. The moderator will open the Zoom meeting 15 minutes prior to the start of the committee meeting. This will allow any RPM ample time to access the meeting, test their audio and video, and resolve any other technical issues that may arise prior to proceedings.
4. To ensure consistency with Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan television guidelines, RPMs should ensure their screen name appears in the following format:

First name Last name, party

(i.e., New Democratic Party or Saskatchewan Party — no acronyms or abbreviations)

A moderator may reformat names that do not conform to the broadcast production guidelines.

5. An RPM's video should be on at all times unless otherwise directed by the Chair/moderator.
6. An RPM's microphone should be muted at all times except while speaking.
7. When an RPM wishes to speak, a private message should be sent over the Zoom chat function to the moderator, who will notify the Chair. Once recognized by the Chair, the RPM may unmute their microphone to speak. When the RPM is finished commenting, the microphone should be muted until recognized to speak by the Chair.

All comments must go through the Chair. The Chair must recognize the member or witness requesting to speak each time. No back-and-forth dialogue between RPMs and witnesses is permitted. This ensures that the Hansard operators and Broadcast Services have the proper microphone and broadcast feed enabled for the best audio for the video feed and for the record.

8. The moderator may mute an RPM's microphone in the following instances:
 - to maintain an orderly exchange through the Chair if the RPM forgets to re-mute their microphone while questioning witnesses;
 - in cases of extraneous background noise caused by virtual participation;
 - to facilitate the resolution of technical difficulties;
 - as directed by the Chair.

At the Chair's direction, the moderator may terminate an RPM's video feed or remove them from the meeting to facilitate resolution of technical difficulties or to restore order.

If an RPM is not able to connect at an agreed-upon time during proceedings or experiences technical difficulties during deliberations, the Chair has the authority to suspend the meeting for up to 10 minutes to allow them time to resolve the issue. If, after that time, an RPM is still unable to virtually participate, the Chair has the authority to recognize another member.

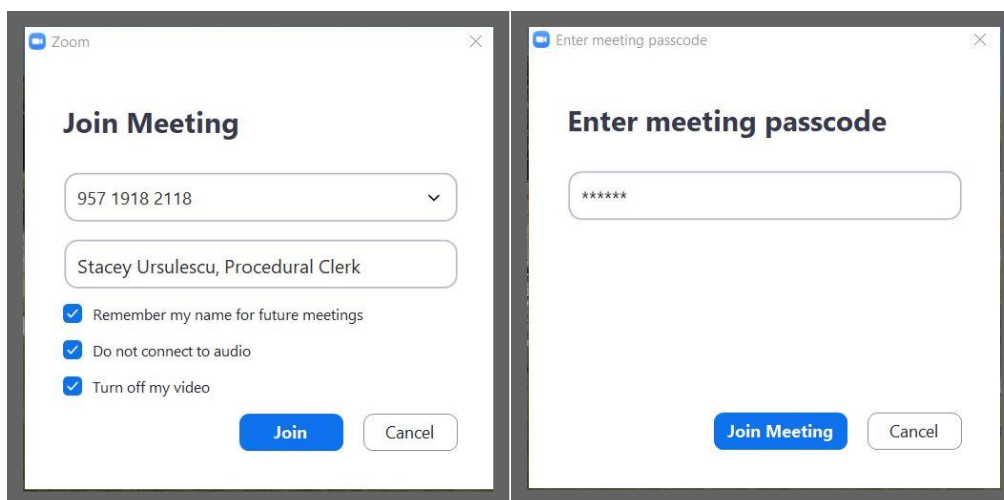
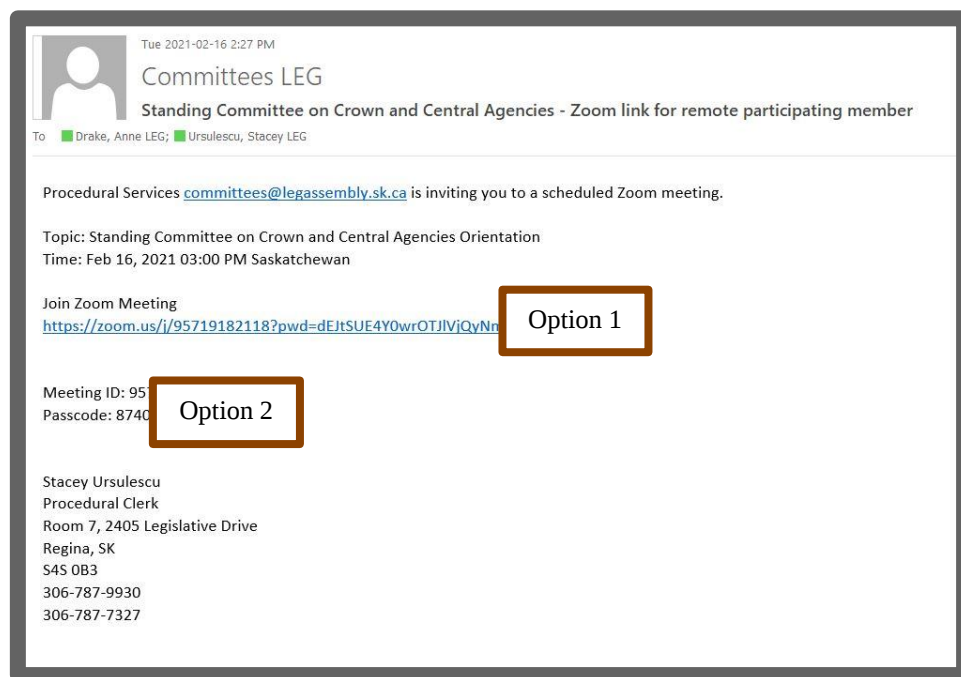
Using Zoom

Joining the Meeting

After providing notice of intention to participate virtually during a policy field committee meeting, the RPM will be sent an email inviting them to a scheduled Zoom meeting which will be linked to committee proceedings. The RPM may join the Zoom meeting as early as 15 minutes prior to the start of the committee meeting or at any other previously agreed-upon time.

Meetings may be joined in one of two ways:

- 1) Using the link provided in the email is the easiest way to join.
- 2) Join the meeting by entering the meeting ID and Passcode.

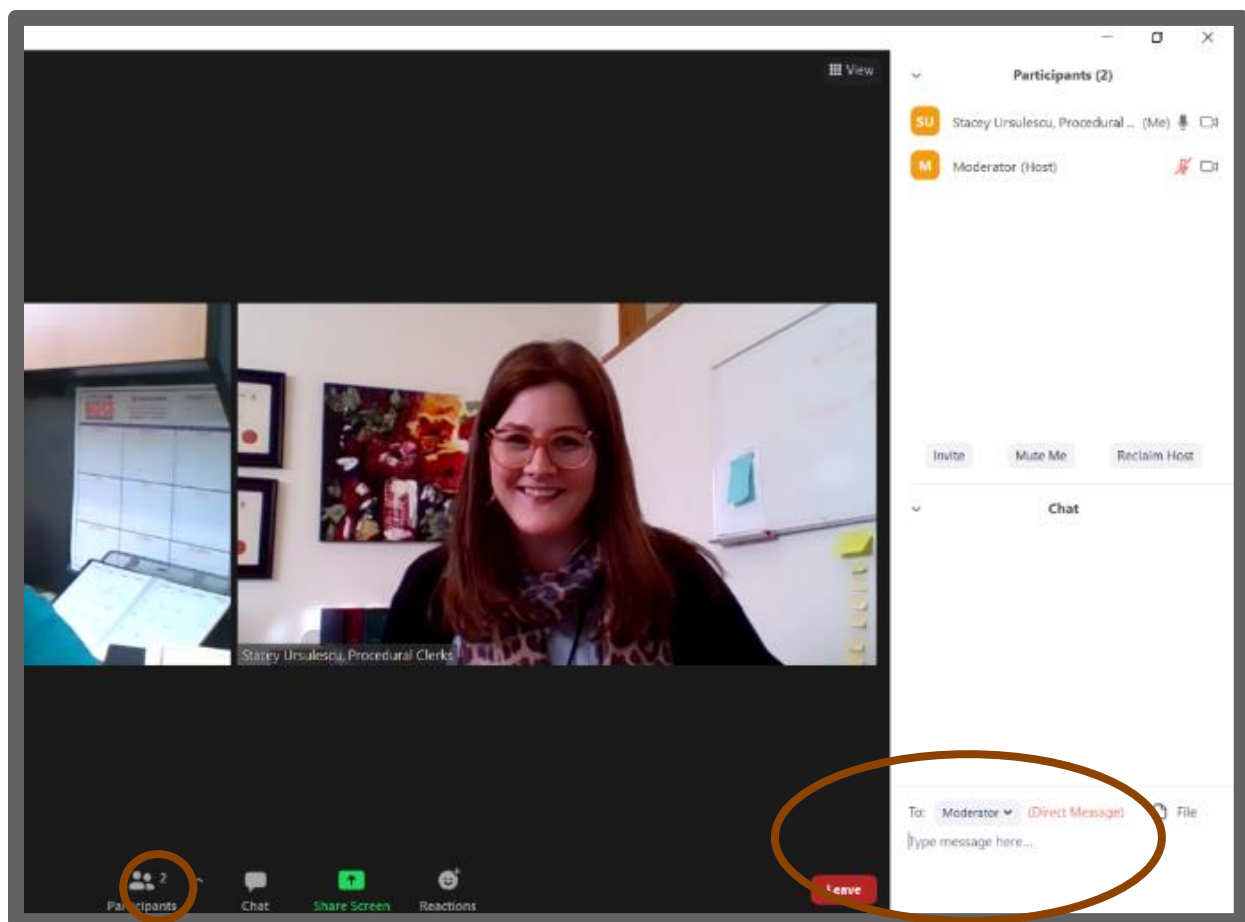


Sending a Private Message

An RPM should send a private message to the moderator, who will advise the Chair of the request. An RPM may also need to send private messages to the moderator to advise of any technical difficulty being experienced.

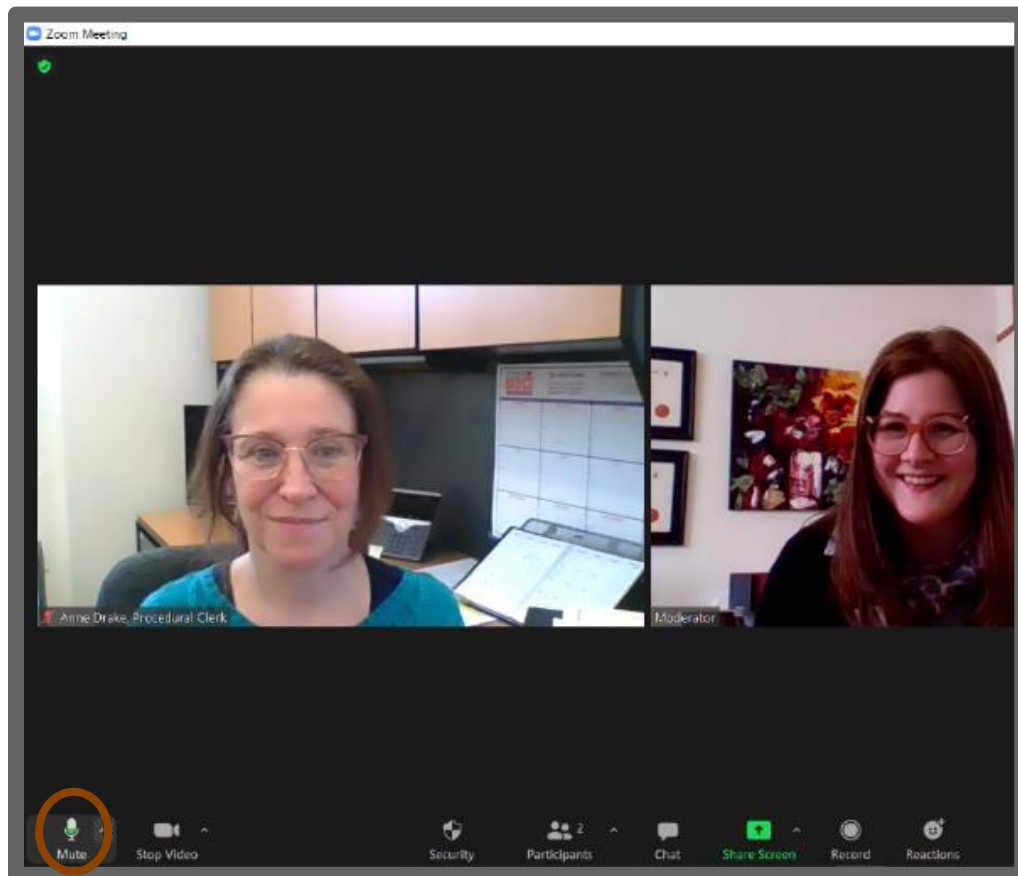
To send a direct message:

- Ensure the chat feature is on by selecting Chat at the bottom centre of the monitor. A chat box will open on the right-hand side of the screen.
- In the To: field, select Moderator from the drop down menu as the person to receive the direct message. (To: Moderator (Direct Message)) **If Everyone is selected from the drop-down menu, the chat function will appear in the broadcast of the proceedings.**
- Type a private message to the moderator and press the Return or Enter key on the computer keyboard.



Muting and Unmuting the Microphone

RPMs are required to manage their own mute buttons. After being recognized by the Chair, an RPM should click the Mute button in the bottom left-hand corner of their screen to turn their microphone on prior to speaking. When an RPM is done speaking, they should click on the Mute button again to re-mute their microphone. The moderator cannot unmute an RPM to allow them to be heard. An RPM can also press Alt + A to mute and unmute quickly.

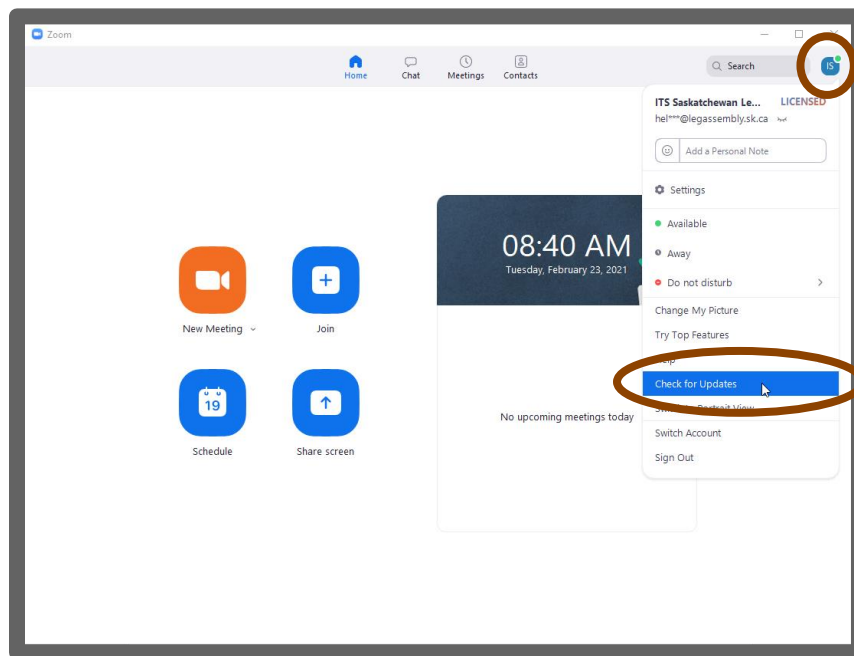


Troubleshooting Tips

Devices connected to the internet should have operating systems up to date to ensure the devices are protected from known security exploits and have the most current software drivers for its hardware.

Zoom calls are dropping

- Ensure the Zoom application is the latest version
- Zoom should notify their users of any updates when the user opens the application, but it is always good to manually check if you are experiencing technical issues.
- To manually check for updates, click the profile picture in the top right corner, then select check for updates. If an update is available, it will download. The user will then need to click update to install it. Zoom will automatically restart when it is done.



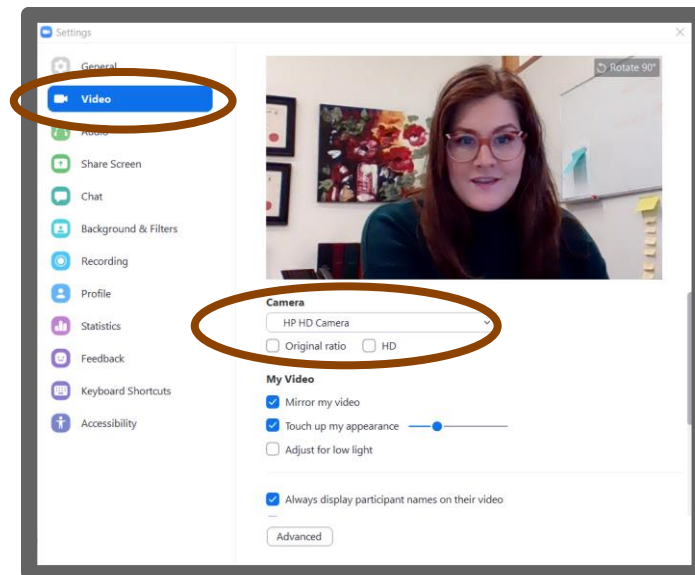
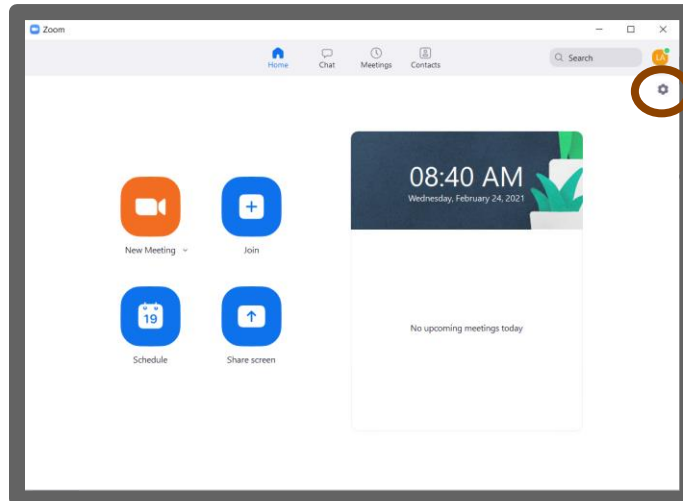
Echoing audio

Echoing audio usually occurs because a participant has their microphone too close to their speakers. Alternatively, it might be that multiple people have joined the Zoom conference from the same room.

- Consider using a headset or ear buds so that the audio and microphone are contained to a single device.
- The best way to overcome echoes or background noise is by participants muting their microphone when not speaking.

Webcam not working

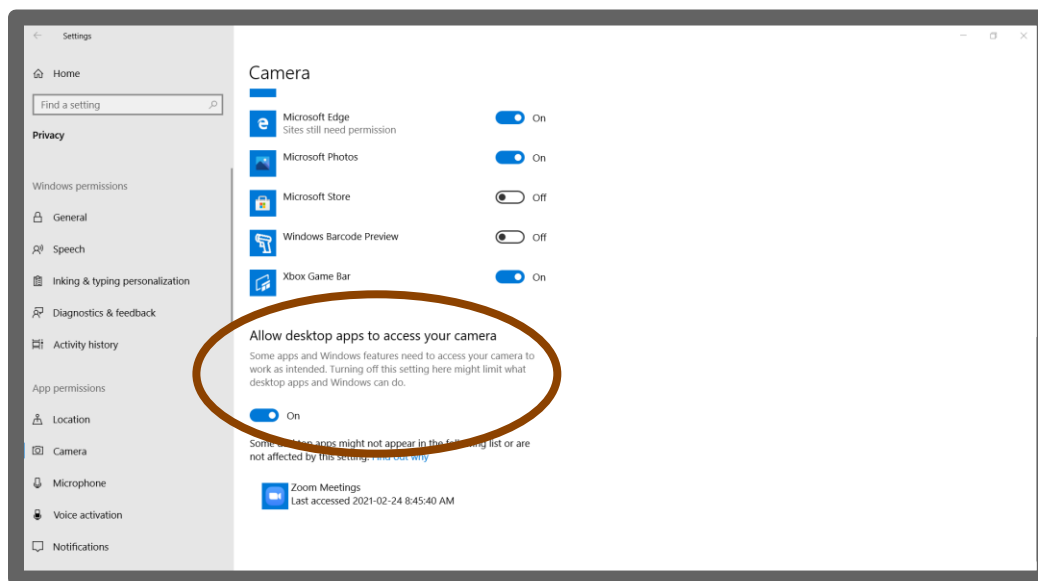
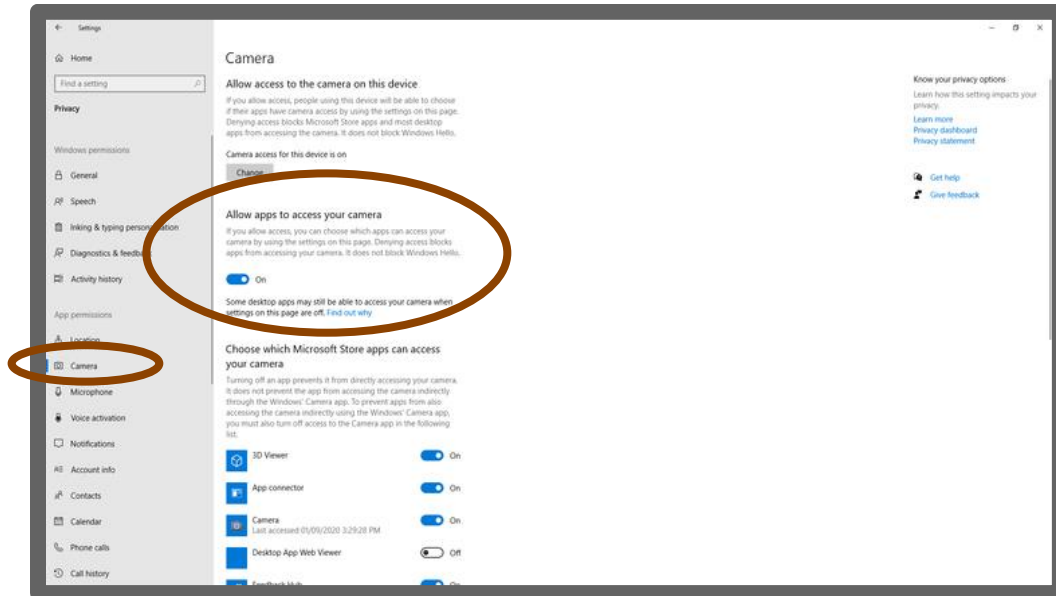
Open Zoom application. From the landing page, click the settings cog and then go to the video tab. Use the camera dropdown menu to select the webcam that you want to use.



If the webcam preview remains empty, it indicates a problem outside of Zoom. See next page for troubleshooting webcam problems outside of Zoom.

Webcam problems outside of Zoom application

Press Windows key + I to open settings. Select privacy and then choose camera from the menu on the left. Slide the allow apps to access your camera to on. Then, scroll down to allow desktop apps to access your camera. Ensure that this is selected to on.



Zoom lags or freezes during meetings

Lagging and freezing usually indicates a problem with the internet connection.

- Ensure all devices connected to the internet are not consuming too much bandwidth. (i.e. Netflix streaming, downloads, on-line games)
- Restart the device
- Restart the internet modem (unplug the power on it, wait 10 seconds, plug it back in). Users may need to restart their device after the internet modem starts up again.
- Adjust Zoom settings
 - Try unchecking the Enable HD and Touch Up My Appearance options on the Video panel in Settings (the cog icon). This will decrease the amount of bandwidth the video connection requires and may help fix problems with lag.

