

## **Town Meeting Weather or Public Safety Emergency Protocol**

For Concord, Massachusetts 01742

This protocol, which follows the requirements of Mass. Gen. Laws ch. 39, sec. 10A, is intended to be used in the event that a Weather or Public Safety Emergency may prevent voters from being able to attend an Annual or Special Town Meeting called by Warrant for the Town of Concord. It is adopted by agreement of the Select Board, Town Manager and Moderator.

1. Moderator Consultation with Town Officials. If the Moderator determines that voters may be unable to attend an Annual or Special Town Meeting because of a weather or public safety emergency, the Moderator will consult with the Town Manager, Police Chief, Fire Chief, Public Works Director, and Select Board Chair (and, if the public safety emergency involves public health, with the Director of Public Health) (together, the "Consulted Officials"). The consultation will include:
  - a. Level of risk to which the weather or public safety emergency would expose voters in gathering at the town meeting venue;
  - b. Cost and effectiveness of measures available to mitigate the risk to voters;
  - c. Expected duration of the weather or public safety emergency;
  - d. Such other factors as the Consulted Officials recommend be considered by the Moderator in the circumstances;
  - e. The recommendation of each of the Consulted Officials whether to recess the Town Meeting and, if so, to what time, date and place the town meeting should be continued.
2. Moderator's Declaration of Recess and Continuance. Following the consultation, the Moderator will determine whether to declare a recess and continuance of the town meeting and, if so, will announce the declaration of recess and continuance as far in advance of the town meeting being continued as is practicable.
3. Content and Filing of Moderator's Declaration. The Moderator's notice of declaration of recess and continuance of a town meeting shall be clearly presented in writing and shall include:
  - a. The date, time and place of the meeting being recessed and continued;
  - b. The reason for the recess and continuance;
  - c. The date, time and place to which the meeting is continued which date shall be within thirty (30) days of the Moderator's Declaration; however, if the Moderator is unable to identify a location for the continued meeting at the time of the declaration, the Moderator shall issue an amended notice of declaration.

The Moderator shall file the notice of declaration, and any amended notice of declaration, as soon as is practicable, with the Town Clerk for publication.

4. Publication of Notice of Moderator's Declaration of Recess and Continuance. The Town Clerk shall post a paper copy of the Moderator's Declaration at the Town House and an electronic copy on the Town's website. In addition, the Select Board may consider the following additional means of publication:
  - a. Electronic mail publication to the Town's "News and Notices" subscribers;
  - b. Social media publication through the Town's Facebook and Twitter accounts;
  - c. Television publication on MMN's Community Event Bulletin Board;
  - d. Newspaper and electronic news publication through press release to the Concord Journal and the Concord Patch;
  - e. Telephone publication through the Town's reverse 911 capability;
  - f. Publication through announcements by Town Boards and Committees at their public meetings.
  
5. Notice to the Massachusetts Attorney General. The Select Board shall designate a Town public safety official to submit a report to the Attorney General setting forth the reasons for the Moderator's Declaration, which report shall be submitted within ten days of the Moderator's Declaration.
  
6. Establishment of Communication Plan for Town Meeting Weather or Public Safety Emergencies. To facilitate the implementation of this Protocol, a Town Meeting Weather & Public Safety Emergencies Communication Contact List shall be created by the Town Manager, updated on March 1<sup>st</sup> of each year, and provided to each individual included on the Contact List. The Contact List shall include email, office telephone, mobile telephone, and home telephone numbers for:
  - a. Moderator
  - b. Select Board Chair
  - c. Town Manager
  - d. Deputy Town Manager
  - e. Town Clerk
  - f. Police Chief
  - g. Fire Chief
  - h. Director of Public Works
  - i. Director of Public Health

Adopted: March 19, 2020