



## **Sonoma County Public Health Recommendations for Safely Holding Public Meetings**

September 22, 2021

Each local government agency is authorized to determine whether to hold public meetings in person, online (teleconferencing only), or via a combination of methods. The following are recommendations from Sonoma County Public Health to minimize the risk of COVID-19 transmission during a public meeting of a legislative body held in compliance with Government Code section 54953(e):

1. Online meetings (teleconferencing meetings) are strongly recommended as those meetings present the lowest risk of transmission of SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19.
2. If a local agency determines to hold in-person meetings, offering the public the opportunity to attend via a call-in option or an internet-based service option is recommended, when possible, to give those at higher risk of and/or higher concern about COVID-19 an alternative to participating in person.
3. If a local agency holds in person meetings, a written safety protocol should be developed and followed. It is recommended that the protocol require social distancing – i.e., six feet of separation between attendees – and face masking of all attendees in compliance with [Order of the Health Officer of the County of Sonoma C19-25](#).
4. If a local agency holds in person meetings, seating arrangements should allow for staff and members of the public to easily maintain at least six-foot distance from one another at all practicable times.
5. Consider holding public meetings outdoors. Increasing scientific consensus is that outdoor airflow reduces the risk of COVID-19 transmission compared to indoor spaces. Hosting events outdoors also may make it easier to space staff and members of the public at least six feet apart.
6. Current evidence is unclear as to the added benefit of temperature checks in addition to symptom checks. We encourage focus on symptom checks as they may screen out individuals with symptoms but no fever and help reinforce the message to not go out in public if you are not feeling well.
7. Consider a voluntary attendance sheet with names and contact information to assist in contact tracing of any cases linked to a public meeting.

Dr. Sundari R. Mase, MD MPH  
Health Officer of the County of Sonoma

**Resolution No.**

111 Santa Rosa Avenue, Suite 240  
Santa Rosa, California 95404

**April 6, 2022**

**Resolution of the Local Agency Formation Commission of the County of Sonoma, State of California, Concerning Teleconferencing During The COVID-19 Pandemic Emergency**

**Whereas**, the Sonoma County Local Agency Formation Commission (Commissions) is committed to ensuring public access and participation in meetings; and

**Whereas**, all meetings of the Commission are open and public, as required by the Ralph M. Brown Act (Cal. Gov't Code sections 54950- 54963), so that any member of the public may attend, participate and watch the Commission conduct its business; and

**Whereas**, the Brown Act, Government Code section 54953(e), makes provisions for remote teleconferencing participation in meetings, without compliance with the requirements 54953(b)(3), under certain conditions; and

**Whereas**, a required condition is that a state of emergency is declared by the Governor pursuant to Government Code section 8625; and the Governor proclaimed a State of Emergency on March 4, 2020, which is still in effect, concerning the COVID-19 pandemic; and

**Whereas**, state or local officials have imposed or recommended measures to promote social distancing, and the Commission finds that meeting in person would present imminent risks to the health and safety of attendees.

**Now, Therefore, Be It Resolved:**

Section 1. Recitals. The Recitals set forth above are true and correct and are incorporated into this Resolution by this reference.

Section 2. Meeting via Teleconference. The Commission hereby determines that it shall conduct meetings without compliance with paragraph (3) of subdivision (b) of Government Code section 54953, as authorized by subdivision (e) of section 54953, and that the Commission shall instead comply with the requirements to provide the public with access to the meetings as prescribed in paragraphs (2) and (3) of subdivision (e) of section 54953

The foregoing resolution was introduced at a regular meeting of this Local Agency Formation Commission on the 7<sup>th</sup> day of September 022 and ordered adopted by the following vote:

**COMMISSIONERS:**

AYES:

NOES:

ABSTAIN:

Whereupon, the Chairman declared the foregoing resolution adopted, and

So Ordered

Attest:

BY: \_\_\_\_\_  
Mark Bramfitt, Executive Officer

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

The within instrument is a correct copy of the original on file in this office.

Attest:

BY: \_\_\_\_\_  
Clerk

Date: \_\_\_\_\_