

# CITY COUNCIL POLICY CITY OF NATIONAL CITY

<b>TITLE:</b> Disruption of Telephonic or Internet Service During Public Meetings	<b>POLICY # 103</b>
<b>ADOPTED:</b> April 7, 2026	<b>AMENDED:</b>

## I. Authority and Legal Basis

This policy is adopted pursuant to California Government Code Sections 54950-54963, known as the Ralph M. Brown Act; including Government Code Section 54953.4, as amended by SB707.

SB 707 prohibits a legislative body from requiring members of the public to provide identifying information as a condition of attending, observing, or participating in a public meeting and establishes requirements for addressing telephonic or internet service disruptions during teleconferenced meetings.

## II. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish uniform, legally compliant procedures governing:

1. Technological disruptions affecting remote public access to meetings;
2. Conduct occurring through telephonic or internet-based platforms that disrupts the orderly conduct of meetings; and
3. Administrative controls necessary to ensure compliance with state law while protecting public participation rights.

This policy applies to all regular and special meetings of the City Council and all legislative bodies subject to the Brown Act, including Boards, Commissions, and Committees.

## III. Definitions

For purposes of this policy:

- a. **“Remote Access Services”** means any two-way telephonic service and/or a two-way audiovisual platform used to provide real-time remote public attendance and observation of meetings.
- b. **“Service Disruption”** means a failure, outage, or interruption of Remote Access Services that prevents members of the public from attending or observing the meeting remotely.
- c. **“Technological Disruption”** means conduct occurring via electronic or teleconferenced means that materially interferes with the orderly conduct of a meeting, including but not limited to:
  1. Persistent background noise, feedback, or echo;
  2. Broadcast of obscenity, use of threatening language or unlawful content;
  3. Repeated interruptions after being warned;
  4. Use of video, screen sharing, chat or other features to display offensive or disruptive content;
  5. Coordinated misuse of the platform that impedes the people’s business.

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Expression of dissent, criticism of the legislative body, or unpopular opinions and viewpoints does **not** constitute a Technological Disruption.

**d. “City Council”** means the legislative body of the City of National City and shall also apply to any Board, Commission, or Committee appointed by the legislative body.

Consistent with the Brown Act and SB 707:

1. Members of the public shall not be required to register or provide identifying information to attend, observe, or provide public comment.
2. No personal identifying information shall be required to rejoin a meeting following a disruption.
3. Any optional name field shall clearly state that disclosure is voluntary.

## V. General Principles

1. Meetings shall be conducted in a manner that promotes transparency, accessibility, and orderly participation.
2. Enforcement actions under this Policy shall be content-neutral and viewpoint-neutral.
3. Corrective measures shall be narrowly tailored to address and shall not exceed what is reasonably necessary to restore order.

## VI. Response to Technological Disruptions (Participant Conduct)

If a Technological Disruption occurs, the presiding officer, or designee, shall proceed as follows:

### Step 1 - Warning

The individual causing the disruption shall be warned that the behavior is disruptive and advised of the steps necessary to continue participation (e.g., muting audio).

### Step 2 - Corrective Action

If the disruption continues, staff may:

- Mute the participant’s audio;
- Disable video or screen sharing;
- Restrict chat features; or
- Temporarily remove the participant from the meeting platform.

### Step 3 - Removal

Removal shall occur only if lesser corrective measures are ineffective. Removal shall be limited to the

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duration necessary to restore order.

## **VII. Response to Service Disruption (Platform Failure)**

If Remote Access Services are disrupted in a manner that prevents public observation or participation:

1. The presiding officer shall announce the disruption.
2. The legislative body shall recess the meeting while staff undertake good-faith restoration efforts.
3. The meeting shall remain in recess for at least one hour or until service is restored, whichever comes first.

If service is not restored after one hour, the legislative body may:

- Adjourn the meeting; or
- Reconvene and, by roll call vote, adopt a finding that:  
“The City has made good faith efforts to restore telephonic or internet service in accordance with its adopted policy, and the public interest in continuing the meeting outweighs the public interest in remote public access.”

## **VII. Administrative Authority:**

The presiding officer retains authority to enforce this Policy during meetings.

The City Clerk, in coordination with Information Technology staff, is authorized to implement administrative controls necessary to ensure compliance with this Policy and state law, including platform configuration settings consistent with SB 707.

## **IX. Implementation and Training**

The City Clerk shall ensure:

- Meeting agendas and public participation instructions comply with SB 707;
- Standard Operating Procedures are maintained;
- Staff and presiding officers receive periodic training regarding neutral enforcement and statutory requirements.

## **X. Recordkeeping**

If a participant is muted or removed due Technological Disruption, the minutes may reflect that enforcement action occurred pursuant to this Policy. No identifying information shall be recorded.

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In the event of a Service Disruption, the minutes shall reflect:

- The time and nature of the disruption;
- Restoration efforts undertaken;
- The time of reconvening;
- Any findings adopted.

## **XI. Amendments**

This policy may be amended at a duly noticed public meeting and shall not be adopted or amended on the consent calendar.

## **Standard Operating Procedures**

Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) attached to this policy reflect the administrative procedures to be followed in the event of a disruption and shall be distributed to all members of the legislative bodies and staff liaisons as necessary for implementation.

**Disagreement with Council action or criticism of City officials is not a disruption.**

## Related Policy References

California Government Code Sections 54950-54963 (Ralph M. Brown Act)  
SB 707

## Prior Policy Amendments:

See City website for examples of current [City Council Policies](#).

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## STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES (SOP)

### Disruption of Telephonic or Internet Service During Public Meetings

#### I. Purpose

This SOP establishes administrative procedures for implementing the City Council Policy No. 103 to ensure compliance with the Brown Act and SB 707 during in-person, teleconferenced, and hybrid public meetings.

This SOP governs:

1. Configuration of remote access platforms;
2. Enforcement procedures for technological disruptions;
3. Response procedures for service disruptions;
4. Documentation and recordkeeping requirements.

#### II. Scope

This SOP applies to all regular and special meetings of the City Council and all legislative bodies subject to the Brown Act, including Boards, Commissions, and Committees.

#### III. Roles and Responsibilities.

##### A. Presiding Officer (Mayor/Chair)

- Maintains order during meetings.
- Issue warnings for disruptive conduct;
- Directs staff to implement corrective measures when necessary.
- Announces service disruptions and calls recesses when required.

##### B. City Clerk (or Designee)

- Serves as meeting administrator or platform host/co-host.
- Ensures agenda language complies with SB 707
- Ensures no registration or identifying information is required for participation.
- Coordinates with IT staff during disruptions.
- Documents enforcement actions and service disruptions in meeting minutes.
- Ensures Policy No. 103 is linked on agendas and on the City website.

##### C. Information Technology (IT)

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- Configures teleconference platform (Zoom) settings consistent with SB 707 as follows:
  - Registration: Disabled
  - Authentication Required: Disabled
  - Screen Sharing: Host only
  - Chat: Enabled (host may restrict if needed)
  - Join from Browser: Enabled
  - Participant Renaming: Allowed (no requirement to provide legal name)
  - Optional name fields must include language such as: "Providing your name is voluntary and not required under state law."
- Provides technical support before and during meetings.
- Assists in diagnosing and restoring disrupted services.
- Implements corrective controls at the direction of the Clerk or presiding officer.

## V. Presiding Officer Script

At the beginning of each meeting, the presiding officer shall read or cause to be read the following statement:

*"Members of the public may participate in this meeting without providing identifying information. Disruptive conduct that materially interferes with the meeting may result in muting or removal following a warning, consistent with City Council Policy No. 103."*

## VI. Procedure – Technological Disruption (Participant Conduct)

### Step 1 – Warning

The presiding officer shall issue a clear verbal warning identifying the disruptive behavior and advising the participant how to correct it.

### Step 2 – Limited Corrective Action

If the conduct continues, the Clerk or IT staff may:

- Mute the participant's microphone;
- Disable video;
- Disable screen sharing;
- Restrict chat access;
- Temporarily remove the participant.

Corrective measures shall be narrowly tailored and viewpoint-neutral.

### Step 3 – Removal

If lesser corrective measures fail, the participant may be removed from the meeting platform.

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Removal shall be limited to the duration necessary to restore order.

No identifying information shall be requested or recorded in connection with the enforcement.

## **VII. Procedure – Service Disruption (Platform Failure)**

### **A. Identification of Disruption**

If remote access services fail or are materially degraded such that the public cannot attend or observe remotely:

1. The presiding officer or Clerk shall immediately announce the disruption.
2. The meeting shall recess.

### **B. Restoration Efforts**

IT staff shall initiate good faith restoration efforts, which may include:

- Restarting software or hardware;
- Resetting audiovisual systems;
- Switching internet connections;
- Engaging vendor technical support;
- Deploying backup equipment or alternative platforms.

Restoration efforts shall be documented.

### **C. Recess Period**

The meeting shall remain in recess for:

- At least one hour; or
- Until remote access service is restored, whichever occurs first.

The presiding officer may extend the recess if restoration efforts are ongoing.

### **D. Reconvening Without Restored Service**

If service is not restored after one hour, the legislative body may:

1. Adjourn the meeting; or
2. Reconvene and adopt, by roll call vote, a finding that:

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*“The City has made good faith efforts to restore telephonic or internet service in accordance with its adopted policy, and the public interest in continuing the meeting outweighs the public interest in remote public access.”*

## **VIII. Recordkeeping**

The City Clerk shall ensure that the minutes reflect:

- The nature and time of disruption;
- Restoration efforts undertaken;
- The time the meeting reconvened;
- Any findings adopted.

No identifying information shall be included.

## **IX. Training**

The City Clerk shall coordinate periodic training for:

- Presiding officers;
- Staff liaisons to Boards, Commissions and Committees
- IT personnel involved in meeting administration.

Training shall include:

- SB 707 requirements;
- Brown Act public participation rights;
- Viewpoint-neutral enforcement standards;
- Documentation requirements.

## **X. Review and Updates**

This SOP may be updated administratively by the City Clerk in consultation with the City Attorney and IT Director to maintain compliance with state laws and evolving technology standards.

Substantive policy changes shall require amendment of City Council Policy No. 103 at a duly noticed public meeting.