

APPENDIX B: Rules Governing Meetings and Code of Conduct

ARTICLE I: Purpose and Scope

Section 1: This Appendix establishes binding procedures, standards, and expectations governing the conduct, participation, and administration of all meetings and events of the Rio Grande Valley Central Labor Council, AFL-CIO (hereinafter “the Council”).

Section 2: This Appendix shall apply to all meetings of the Council, including but not limited to:

- A. Regular and special delegate meetings
- B. Executive Board meetings
- C. Committee meetings
- D. Meetings conducted in person, virtually, or in a hybrid format

Section 3: This Appendix shall apply to all persons present at Council meetings, including delegates, officers, alternates, committee members, guests, staff, and observers.

ARTICLE II: Authority and Parliamentary Governance

Section 1: This Appendix is adopted pursuant to Article XV, Section 3 of the Council Constitution and shall constitute a special rule of order governing Council proceedings.

Section 2: The following hierarchy shall govern all meetings and proceedings of the Council:

- A. The Constitution of the AFL-CIO and the AFL-CIO Rules Governing Central Labor Councils
- B. The Constitution of the Rio Grande Valley Central Labor Council
- C. This Appendix
- D. *Robert’s Rules of Order, Revised*

Section 3: In the event of any inconsistency, the higher authority shall prevail. Where permitted, this Appendix shall govern over Robert’s Rules of Order, Revised.

Section 4: The presiding officer shall have the authority to interpret and enforce this Appendix during meetings, subject only to appeal as provided herein.

ARTICLE III: Agenda Preparation and Distribution

Section 1: The agenda for each regular meeting shall be prepared jointly by the President and the Secretary-Treasurer and distributed to delegates in advance of the meeting.

Section 2: Requests for agenda items shall be submitted to the Secretary-Treasurer by a deadline established by the officers or the Executive Board.

- A. Failure to submit an item by the established deadline shall constitute a waiver of the right to have the item considered at that meeting.

Section 3: Agenda items submitted by elected officers, or standing committees duly established by the Council or Executive Board, acting within the scope of their official duties shall be presumed to be properly submitted and in order for consideration.

Section 4: The Secretary-Treasurer shall have primary authority over the receipt, verification, and placement of agenda submissions for compliance with procedural requirements.

ARTICLE IV: Agenda Status and Effect

Section 1: The agenda, once properly prepared and distributed in accordance with this Appendix, shall be the official order of business for the meeting and shall take effect automatically without the need for a motion or vote, consistent with Robert's Rules of Order, Revised, unless amended as provided herein.

Section 2: Use of the agenda constitutes agreement only as to the order of business and the matters to be considered, and shall not constitute approval or disapproval of the substance of any agenda item.

ARTICLE V: Motions to Amend or Remove Agenda Items

Section 1: Motions to amend or remove agenda items shall be in order only prior to consideration of the affected item.

Section 2: A motion to amend or remove an agenda item shall be ruled in order only if based on procedural grounds, including:

- A. Inadequate notice to delegates
- B. Conflict with the Council Constitution or AFL-CIO governing rules
- C. Insufficient time to reasonably consider the item
- D. Improper placement of the item on the agenda

Section 3: Disagreement with the substance of an agenda item, belief that an item is unnecessary or duplicative, or opposition to the proposal itself shall not constitute valid grounds for removal and shall be addressed during debate on the item.

Section 4: If the agenda has been distributed in advance, removal of an agenda item shall require a two-thirds ($\frac{2}{3}$) vote of delegates present and voting.

Section 5: A failed motion to amend, or remove an item from, the agenda shall not be reconsidered.

Section 6: No substantially similar motion to amend or remove an agenda item shall be in order during the same meeting if a prior such motion has been defeated.

ARTICLE VI: Meeting Norms and Participation

Section 1: All participants shall conduct themselves in a manner that supports orderly deliberation and respectful discussion.

Section 2: No person shall speak without recognition by the presiding officer. Participants shall address remarks to the chair and shall not engage in personal exchanges.

Section 3: Interruptions, speaking over others, side conversations, or conduct that disrupts proceedings shall be ruled out of order.

Section 4: Debate on the agenda or on motions affecting the agenda shall be limited strictly to procedural considerations and shall not include discussion of the merits, desirability, or political implications of any agenda item.

Section 5: The presiding officer may impose reasonable time limits on debate and procedural motions related to agenda management to ensure timely consideration of noticed business.

ARTICLE VII: Virtual and Hybrid Meeting Rules

Section 1: Virtual and hybrid meetings shall be conducted with the same authority and formality as in-person meetings.

Section 2: Delegates must be properly credentialed and clearly identified to be recognized.

- A. Passive presence, including being logged in but unresponsive, shall not constitute participation for recognition or voting purposes.

Section 3: The presiding officer may require use of platform tools, including “raise hand” functions, to manage recognition.

Section 4: The presiding officer shall have sole authority over:

- A. Muting and unmuting participants
- B. Enabling or disabling chat functions
- C. Removing disruptive participants
- D. Determining quorum and voting eligibility

Section 5: Failure to cast an affirmative or negative vote when called shall be recorded as not voting. Silence, technical difficulties, or being muted shall not be recorded as abstentions.

ARTICLE VIII: Code of Conduct

Section 1: The Council is committed to providing an environment free from discrimination, harassment, intimidation, and disruptive conduct.

Section 2: All participants shall conduct themselves in a manner consistent with the Council’s values of equity, equality, and mutual respect.

Section 3: The Council’s Code of Conduct applies to all meetings and events of the Council, including virtual meetings and all forms of communication, including spoken remarks and chat functions.

Section 4: At each meeting or event, the President shall designate a Code of Conduct designee to serve as the initial point of contact for concerns or reports.

ARTICLE IX: Enforcement and Corrective Action

Section 1: To preserve order and ensure compliance with this Appendix, the presiding officer may take immediate administrative and corrective action, including:

- A. Issuing warnings
- B. Directing participants to cease improper conduct
- C. Muting or removing participants
- D. Recessing the meeting

Section 2: The presiding officer’s authority to take immediate corrective action shall not require a prior warning where conduct materially disrupts the meeting or undermines orderly deliberation.

Section 3: Serious or repeated violations may be referred to the Executive Board, the Ethical Practices Committee, or processed as formal charges pursuant to the Council Constitution.

ARTICLE X: Appeals

Section 1: Any appeal of a ruling by the presiding officer shall be handled in accordance with *Robert's Rules of Order, Revised*.

Section 2: An appeal shall not suspend corrective action or disrupt the continuation of the meeting.

Section 3: Appeals of the ruling of the presiding officer shall be limited to one statement by the appellant and one response by the presiding officer, after which the appeal shall be immediately put to a vote without further debate.

ARTICLE XI: Effect

Section 1: This Appendix shall take effect immediately upon adoption and shall remain in force unless amended in accordance with Article XV of the Council Constitution.

Section 2: If any provision of this Appendix is held invalid or unenforceable, the remaining provisions shall remain in full force and effect.