

## District Telephonic/Electronic Meetings Plan Template

Pursuant to COMDTINST M16790.1 (series), (the Auxiliary Manual), the U.S. Coast Guard District \_\_\_\_\_ adopts the following District Telephonic/Electronic Meeting Plan as an Appendix to its Standing Rules.

### Article I. Definitions

A. Telephonic Means: Participation by meeting attendees by telephone of any type (e.g., cell, landline) as to allow live full-time, full communication in a manner that does not interfere with the conduct of the meeting. It shall allow full participation in the meeting by all members, physically and electronically present, and shall meet all applicable requirements (with the exception of provision of all documents and materials referenced during the course of the meeting). If an attendee calls into a physical meeting, then an appropriate number of telephones with speaker capabilities shall be set in the meeting to allow all attendees at the meeting to hear anything the attendee calling in may say and for the attendee calling in to hear anything that those physically present may say.

B. Electronic Means: Participation by telecommuting via electronic audio or video or both using a system of a sophisticated nature to allow live full-time, full communication in a manner that does not interfere with the conduct of the meeting. It shall allow full participation in the meeting by all members, physically and electronically present, and shall meet all applicable requirements including secret votes on matters that may come before the District if such secret ballot is requested in accordance with the Auxiliary Manual or District Standing Rules.

C. Participation: The ability of an attendee appearing by telephonic/electronic means to communicate clearly on a live, full-time basis with all of the other meeting members and to have provided before the meeting, or electronically during the meeting, all documents and materials referenced during the course of the meeting and to participate in real time in any secret votes on matters that may come before the District if such secret ballot is requested in accordance with the Auxiliary Manual or District Standing Rules.

D. District: The Coast Guard Auxiliary District enacting this Appendix to its Standing Rules and all associated committees.

E. Division: Any Coast Guard Auxiliary Division within this District and all committees authorized by the Division.

F. Flotilla: Any Coast Guard Auxiliary Flotilla within this District including any Detachments or committees authorized by the Flotilla.

### Article II. Telephonic/Electronic Meetings for Units

A. The District Board authorizes **when special circumstances warrant** the District, all divisions, flotillas, and flotilla detachments within this District, and any committees appointed by them to conduct their meetings and associated business, including votes, using

telephonic/electronic means. The conduct of meetings using telephonic/electronic means shall only occur in conjunction with considerable planning and careful implementation.

*Paragraphs B and C are optional and should be added only if the district is authorizing its divisions and flotillas to conduct meetings telephonically or electronically.*

B. A division or flotilla that desires to conduct its meetings or the meetings of its committees or detachments using telephonic/electronic means shall first adopt an Electronic Meetings Plan that shall be consistent with the templates attached to this Plan as Exhibit I-“Division Telephonic/Electronic Meetings Plan Template,” or Exhibit II-“Flotilla Telephonic/Electronic Meetings Plan Template.”

C. The District Commodore shall consult with the cognizant Division or Flotilla Commander at the Division or Flotilla Commander’s request to determine whether such special circumstances exist so as to warrant authorization of a meeting of a division, flotilla, or flotilla detachment to be held by telephonic/electronic means.

D. The District Commodore, after consultation with the Director, shall determine whether such special circumstances exist as to warrant authorization of a District meeting to be held by telephonic/electronic means.

E. A regular or special election shall not be held by mail, telephone, or electronic means by any Auxiliary unit **unless such meeting is impractical due to special circumstances** and the Director specifically authorizes such means for the election.

F. The District Board has determined that the best means available in the region for holding telephonic/electronic meetings that will ensure meeting all provisions of the Auxiliary Manual and the Standing Rules for meetings, including the holding of a secret ballot if called for by a voting member of the Auxiliary unit, is\_\_\_\_\_. These means shall be utilized by all Auxiliary units within the District.

G. The District’s annual budget for electronic/telephonic meetings shall not exceed \$\_\_\_\_\_.

### **Article III. Attendance of Individual Auxiliarists at Telephonic/Electronic Meetings**

A. The District Commodore, after consultation with the Director, may authorize individual Board Members to attend and participate in meetings using telephonic/electronic means. Such authorization shall be given to Board members who live too far away to reasonably travel to the meeting or in cases in which the cost of travel is prohibitive. Such authorization shall also be given if the District Commodore, after consultation with the Director is reasonably satisfied that there are other compelling reasons to authorize such attendance and participation by telephonic/electronic means. A Board member who is denied such authorization may appeal the determination in writing (email is acceptable) in accordance with Article V. Section H of this Appendix.

B. Pursuant to Auxiliary Manual Chapter 4 subdivisions E.1. and E.5.b, District Board meetings are normally open and all Auxiliarists are welcome and invited to attend. In rare situations, a

closed meeting may be needed, but this action may be taken only when authorized by the Director. All reasonable efforts shall be made by the District Commodore to accommodate the attendance at telephonic/electronic meetings of members who give adequate written notice (email is acceptable) in advance of the meeting of their desire to attend. If the request is denied, the District Commodore shall include the reason for denial. If approved, the District Commodore shall ensure that the telephonic/electronic system is functional during the meeting in order to accommodate the member's attendance. The member shall initiate contact with the telephonic/electronic system. Failure to initiate such contact in a timely manner shall not be grounds for preventing the meeting from occurring as scheduled. If denied, the member may challenge the determination in accordance with Article V paragraph H of this Appendix.

#### **Article IV. Meeting Equipment and Capability**

A. If all Board members attend an Auxiliary unit meeting by telephonic/electronic means then the District Commodore shall provide the telephonic/electronic system to be used.

B. The District shall be responsible for acquiring at the District's expense all software, hardware, and other system requirements to facilitate participation in the meeting. The District may, if it so chooses, fund, in whole or in part, the purchase or licensing of any software or equipment necessary for any subordinate unit to hold electronic/telephonic meetings or elections.

C. Auxiliarists who attend a District meeting using telephonic/electronic means shall be responsible for acquiring, at their own expense, all telephonic/electronic system components (e.g., computer, speaker, headphones, etc.) to facilitate their participation in the meeting.

D. The District Commodore shall ensure that the telephonic/electronic system used will allow participating Board members to vote on any matter in full conformity with voting requirements of the Auxiliary Manual and District's Standing Rules, including requests for secret written ballots.

#### **Article V. Meeting Guidelines**

A. All meeting notice requirements shall be applicable to all District Board Members who attend a meeting using telephonic/electronic means.

B. The minutes of the District meeting shall record the time of attendance of any District Board Member who attends using telephonic/electronic means.

C. A District Board meeting using telephonic/electronic means may not be utilized for the purpose of interfering with a member's ability to participate in the meeting or to prevent a vote on any matter.

D. No member may purposely interfere with the telephonic/electronic system established to allow members to participate using telephonic/electronic means.

E. Any District Board Member authorized to attend a meeting using telephonic/electronic means shall be considered “present” for the meeting while in attendance. When a District meeting is held with some members physically present and other members present using telephonic/electronic means, then the District Commodore, District Chief of Staff, or Immediate Past District Commodore must be physically present at the meeting in order for the District’s business to be conducted.

F. If the telephonic/electronic system becomes inoperative during the meeting then the Chair shall be responsible for re-establishing contact with all District Board members participating using telephonic/electronic means. If good-faith attempts do not re-establish contact with such members within 10 minutes, then the meeting may continue without their telephonic/electronic participation. Quorum requirements shall be adhered to at all times dependent upon changes brought on by such inoperability.

G. If the telephonic/electronic means used by a District Board member participating in the meeting becomes inoperative during the meeting, then the member shall be responsible for re-establishing contact. The meeting may continue without the member’s participation. Quorum requirements shall be adhered to at all times dependent upon changes brought on by such inoperability.

H. In the event of any challenge or protest regarding any matter pertaining to participating in a meeting, including voting, using telephonic/electronic means, the challenge or protest shall be referred by the District Commodore to the appropriate DNACO. The DNACO shall consult with the ANACO-CC, the NACO, and the Chief Director and then render a final decision.

*The phrase in brackets is added if the district has added Article II paragraphs B and C to its Plan.*

The District Telephonic/Electronic Meetings Plan [and the Division and Flotilla Telephonic/Electronic Meetings Plan Templates (Exhibits I and II) was [were] approved by a 2/3 (two thirds) majority vote of the District Board \_\_\_\_\_ on the \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 201\_\_\_\_.

Approved:

\_\_\_\_\_  
District Commodore

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Director of Auxiliary

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date