

INCARCERATION PREVENTION AND REDUCTION TASK FORCE

MEETING RULES AND PROCEDURES

Adopted October 5, 2015
Amended February 5, 2015; October 18, 2021

Membership and Quorum

Task Force membership and terms are set by ordinance. A quorum of at least 51% of the entire membership shall be present to perform official business including decision-making, motions, recommendations and elections. The entire membership is defined by Robert's Rules of Order as the entire number of people currently appointed or assigned to the group, not including vacant positions.

Voting

Motions shall be approved if the number of votes in favor of the motion is more than one-half of the members present during the vote, or at least two-thirds of the members present during the vote if required by Robert's Rules of Order. See Attachment A for a list of actions requiring a two-thirds majority.

Proxy/Representatives

Task Force members are encouraged to designate proxies to attend and participate, with full voting rights, in any Task Force or committee meeting in their absence. Task Force members may also request Task Force approval to assign a representative to permanently represent them, with full voting rights, on any subcommittee to which they are not assigned.

Officers

Two Co-Chairs shall be elected by a simple majority of the Task Force to serve two-year terms.

Meeting Format

The meetings of the Task Force shall be open and accessible to the public and comply with the Open Public Meetings Act. Each meeting shall allow for public comment during a designated time. Unless otherwise stated in these Rules of Procedure, Robert's Rules of Order for the type of deliberative assembly known as The Board (§1) shall be followed for decision-making during meetings. The Co-Chairs shall submit a meeting agenda to the Task Force membership at least one week prior to the meeting.

Schedule of Meetings

The Task Force shall meet no less than quarterly.

Staffing

The staff support for the Task Force shall be supplied by the Whatcom County Council, County Executive's Office and Health Department as set by ordinance. Staff shall keep a written record of the Task Force meetings.

Ad-Hoc Committees

The Task Force may form and appoint ad hoc committees so long as at least two Task Force members serve on the ad hoc committee as required by ordinance.

Public Comment

The Task Force shall comply with the public comment requirements of the ordinance establishing this Task Force. In addition, the Task Force will establish public comment guidelines as an attachment (Attachment B) to its Meeting Rules and Procedures.

Other Business Rules

The Task Force shall comply with the requirements of the ordinance establishing this Task Force.

Attachment A

To the Rules of Procedure for the Incarceration Prevention and Reduction Task Force

An action requiring a two-thirds majority:

- a) suspends or modifies a rule of order previously adopted
- b) prevents the introduction of a question for consideration
- c) closes, limits, or extends the limits of debate
- d) closes nominations or the polls, or otherwise limits the freedom of nominating or voting
- e) takes away membership or office

Table of rules relating to common motions:

	In Order When Another Has Floor	Second Required	Debatable	Amendable	Vote Required to Adopt
Adjourn	No	Yes	No	No	Majority
Amend	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority
Appeal the Chair	Yes	Yes	1 Pro/1Con; Con is facilitator	No	Majority in negative
Commit or Refer to Committee	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority
Division of Question	No	Yes	No	Yes	Majority
Limit or Extend Debate	No	Yes	No	No	Majority
Main Motion	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority
Parliamentary Inquiry	Yes	No	No	No	No vote
Point of Information	Yes	No	No	No	No vote
Point of Order	Yes	No	No	No	No vote
Point of Privilege	Yes	No	No	No	No vote
Postpone	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority
Previous Question or Close Debate	No	Yes	No	No	Two-thirds
Recess	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority
Reconsider	No	Yes	Yes	No	Two-thirds
Suspend the Rules	No	Yes	No	No	Two-thirds

Attachment B

To the Rules of Procedure for the Incarceration Prevention and Reduction Task Force regarding Public Comment Guidelines

The following public comment guidelines will apply to all regular and special Task Force meetings and all regular committee meetings, unless a supermajority of the members vote to suspend the rules of procedure for public comment.

A public comment period may be adjusted or eliminated as necessary for special committee meetings and for limited-duration ad hoc work groups.

Time Considerations

1. **Public comment schedule on meeting agendas:** Public comment will be scheduled at the end of each meeting, unless Chair(s) adjusts the order of agenda items as necessary.
2. **Length of time allotted to public comment period:** Public comment will be scheduled for 15 minutes. The length of time for public comment may be adjusted at the discretion of the Chair(s) or upon a vote of the Task Force or committee, based on agenda and/or number of attendees.
3. **Time limit for each individual to speak:** Two (2) or three (3) minutes, at the discretion of the Chair(s) based on number of attendees.
4. **Speakers may not give their time to other people:** (Consistent with community expectations and customs.) When a large group of individuals supports the same position on an issue, they will be encouraged to select one or two representatives to speak on behalf of the entire group.

Written Guidelines

5. **Summary of guidelines and expectations printed on each agenda.** Yes
6. **Review guidelines at the beginning of each comment period if necessary.** Note on agenda (and explain, if necessary) that the public comment agenda item is the time for citizens and residents to express their views in order to inform the Task Force/Committee. The purpose of the public comment period is for members of the public to inform the governing body of their views. The Task Force/Committee will not engage in dialog with the public during this time, unless at the discretion of the Chair(s), according to item four, below.

During Public Comment

7. Name and address of speaker is not required, per State law.
8. Require all speakers to address their remarks to the Chair.

9. Require all speakers to keep to the time limits. Apply requirement consistently for the appearance of fairness.
10. Task Force members will not respond to public comments. However:
 - a. The Chair(s) may provide brief factual information if appropriate.
 - b. Individual Task Force or committee members may respond to a speaker following the meeting.
 - c. The Chair(s) will not enter into back-and-forth exchanges and debate with the public, lecture, or criticize.
11. Address speakers by their surnames, if given.
12. Offer speakers an opportunity to contact the Task Force/Committee via phone or email with their questions.
13. The Task Force/Committee retains the right to invite anyone to speak whom it wishes to hear from at other times than the public comment period.
14. Task Force/Committee members are expected to, whenever possible, remain at the meeting until after the public comment period ends.
15. Detailed public comment will not be included in the meeting summary.