

Management Council Policy 18-03

Subject: **Decorum and Civility During Legislative Meetings**

(Source Notes: MC Minutes 12/5/18)

The following rules and standards of decorum and civility shall apply to all committee meetings conducted during legislative sessions or during the interim between sessions of the Wyoming Legislature.

These rules are intended to supplement the general standards for decorum in the House and Senate committee rooms of the Wyoming Legislature contained in Management Council Policy 12-04.

The purposes for adopting rules of decorum are as follows:

- To ensure that meetings of legislative committees are efficiently conducted.
- To ensure that members of the public who attend meetings of legislative committees can be heard in a fair, impartial and respectful manner.
- To ensure that meetings of a legislative meeting are conducted in a way that is open to all viewpoints, free from abusive, distracting or intimidating behavior.
- To ensure that the rules governing decorum at meetings of legislative committees are understood in advance by everyone attending the meeting.

General Decorum Guideline

- Committee members, speakers and audience members will conduct themselves in a civil and respectful manner at all times during a legislative meeting.

Rules for Speakers:

- Speakers will address all comments and questions to the Chairman.
- Speakers will refrain from the use of individual names.
- Comments will be directed to the issue under consideration. Testimony that strays far from the topic is out of order.
- Speakers will refrain from making comments of a personal nature that reflect upon the character or conduct of a committee member or another speaker. Personal criticism, ridicule and name calling is forbidden.
- Speakers will refrain from the use of indecent or obscene language, “fighting words” or other language which is disruptive to the orderly discussion at the meeting.
- Time limits for addressing the committee may be imposed depending on the committee’s agenda and the number of presenters.

Rules for Members of the Public:

- Audience members will refrain from distracting side conversations or speaking out when another person is talking.
- Audience members will refrain from shouting, booing or other similar unruly behavior that impedes or disrupts the orderly conduct of the meeting.

Enforcement of Decorum Rules:

- The Chairman will request that a person who is violating a rule of decorum cease the violation.
- If the violation continues, the Chairman will warn the person that he or she will be requested to leave the meeting room if the violation continues.
- If the violation continues, the Chairman will order the person to leave the meeting room.
- Notwithstanding the foregoing, in the case of a serious or violent disruption of a committee meeting the Chairman will immediately order the person to leave the meeting room and may request any peace officer in attendance to remove the person.
- Serious disorderly conduct may result in criminal prosecution pursuant to W.S. 28-1-110(b) and W.S. 28-1-111.