



Remote Participation Guide

Introduction

In an effort to make our events open, inclusive, and accessible to all members, the 43rd District Democrats allows members and guests to remotely attend and participate in meetings by telephone, smartphone, or computer, through [Cisco Webex Meetings](#). This guide explains how to attend remotely, how things like voting and making motions works for remote participants, limitations members may encounter, and what members should expect when participating remotely.

Requirements

Members who wish to participate remotely must have the following:

1. An active email address associated with their membership
2. Access to one of:
 - a. A Mac or Windows computer
 - b. A computer with an up-to-date web browser (e.g., Google Chrome, Microsoft Edge, Firefox, Safari)
 - c. An iPhone, iPad, or Android phone or tablet
 - d. A standard telephone

We use [Cisco Webex Meetings](#) to provide tele- and video-conference support for our meetings. For the smoothest remote participation experience, we recommend members use the Webex Meetings app or website to attend, as it will allow you to see speakers and shared content, and vote using the app's built-in polling feature. In order to use Webex Meetings, members will have to have access to a smartphone or computer for the duration of their attendance.

Members have several options for how to use Webex Meetings, and can choose the one that works best for them:

- Via web browser on your computer (e.g., Google Chrome, Microsoft Edge, Firefox, Safari)
- Via the [Webex Meetings app](#) for Windows or MacOS
- Join via the Webex Meetings app for [iOS](#) or [Android](#)

Note 1: If joining from your web browser, please make sure that your web browser is up-to-date, as older versions may not be supported by Webex Meetings.



Note 2: Video conferences typically use a lot of data. We recommend connecting to WiFi when attending on a smartphone or tablet.

Members that cannot or do not wish to use Webex Meetings can still participate remotely by dialing into the conference call by telephone. Note however that this provides audio only, so members attending in this way will not be able to see speakers or content that is being shared, and may be required to vote via roll call.

Note 3: The conference call phone number is **not** toll-free.

Attending a Meeting

Registration

About a week before the meeting, we will email members a link to a web page where they can register to attend the meeting remotely. The registration form is short, and will only require you to provide minimal information (e.g., your name and email address).

After registering, you will be taken to a page that provides the connection details for the meeting. This consists of the following:

- A link to use to join via app or web browser
- A telephone number to use to join via telephone
- An “access code” required when joining by telephone
- A “password” required when joining by app or web browser

The connection details will also be emailed to you after registration.

Additionally, on the day of the meeting voting members who have registered to attend remotely will receive an email providing them with a “Voter Code”. This is a unique code that serves as the member’s voting credential – the proof that they are a registered voting member – during credentialed votes (see below).

Joining a Meeting

Follow [the instructions provided by Cisco Webex](#) to join the meeting. These instructions include steps for connecting by web browser, app, and telephone.



We will open the meeting video conference at least 15 minutes prior to the meeting's official start time. We recommend members join early, so that they have time to resolve any technical issues or any other problems they encounter.

Speaking at Meetings

We require all attendees to mute their microphones and turn off their webcams (if applicable) unless they are speaking or presenting. This keeps the meeting free of background noise, and reduces the amount of network bandwidth required for remote participants, which helps provide everyone with as smooth of an experience as possible.

The Chair will appoint one or more facilitators to manage communication from remote participants. Facilitators will inform the Chair when a remote participant is seeking the floor (see below), and perform moderation tasks (e.g., muting someone's microphone) if and when necessary.

Seeking the Floor

Remote participants are required to "seek the floor" in order to make a motion, ask a question, etc. Participants can do so by using the "Raise Hand" feature in the Webex Meetings app, or by pressing *3 on their phone when connected to the meeting by telephone. When you seek the floor in this way, the Chair will recognize you and ask you to ask your question or make your motion.

Asking Questions and Making Motions

Once you have the floor (i.e., they have been recognized by the Chair), you can either speak or type out your entire motion, e.g., "I move to adopt the resolution by unanimous consent."

If the motion or request is in order the Chair will recognize it and proceed with business accordingly. If the motion was typed, the Chair or a facilitator will read it so that those attending in person or by telephone are able to hear it.

Voting

One of the biggest challenges with remote participation and voting is protecting against voter fraud. While there are a variety of electronic substitutes for the check-in process that in-person attendees go through, they generally involve making some kind of trade off between speed, effectiveness, complexity, and cost.



Thankfully, not all votes carry the same risk, or have the same impact. For example, a vote to approve the meeting agenda that passes unanimously, a vote on a resolution that passes 50-10, and a candidate endorsement vote that crosses the 60% threshold by only a few votes all have significantly different levels of susceptibility to voter fraud. Given this, we provide multiple voting mechanisms for remote participants, that we will use in different circumstances.

Voter Codes

All members who register to attend a meeting remotely will receive a Voter Code by email on the day of the meeting. The Voter Code serves as the member's credential – the proof that they are permitted to vote – for the meeting. Some voting methods will require the voter to provide their Voter Code in order for their vote to be counted.

Voter Codes are sequences of letters and numbers that are unique per member, are valid only for a single meeting, and are used for all votes within that meeting. They are long and random enough that it is exceedingly unlikely that someone could guess or find a valid code within the course of the meeting.

Voter Codes will be associated with individual members only for long enough to generate and send out codes over email, after which this association will be removed, allowing votes to be anonymous.

Voting Methods

Webex Polling

Webex Meetings provides a built-in polling feature that is a relatively quick and easy way for remote participants to cast votes. We may use Webex Meetings polling to take votes that are expected to be relatively non-controversial, such as routine procedural votes (e.g., approval of minutes and agendas), or other votes that we expect will pass or fail by a large margin.

When a poll is issued, Webex Meetings presents the remote participant with the question being voted on, and the options for the vote (e.g., “Yes”, “No”, or “Abstain”). The participant must select their choice and submit their vote within 30 seconds.

Note: You must click/tap on the submit button to actually cast your vote. If you do not do so, your vote will not be counted. There is an additional 20 second “grace period” after the 30 second voting window during which Webex Meetings will prompt you to submit your vote if you made a selection but failed to actually submit it.



All remote participants can participate in Webex Meetings polls. If only a subset of members should participate in a vote, the poll will include an option for members to indicate they are not eligible to vote (e.g., “I am not a PCO” if only PCOs are eligible to vote on the issue). We are operating under the “honor system” when using this method, and so will not use it for all votes.

Google Forms

In some cases, such as close votes where the legitimacy of a vote could be called into question, we will use Google Forms to conduct votes. Each voter will be required to include their Voter Code along with their vote.

Each vote will be a separate Google Form. The link to the form will be shared via Webex Meeting chat, and posted on a web page on the 43rd District Democrats’ website. The link to this page will be provided ahead of the meeting, so members can have it open in the background to get quick access to new form votes as they come up.

Members will have at least 3 minutes to cast a vote when voting via Google Forms.

Roll Call

In some cases, technical difficulties or accessibility issues may prevent some or all remote participants from voting via Webex Meetings polling or Google Forms. In this case, votes will be conducted by roll call. Only those members unable to vote by other means will participate in a roll call vote. Members who require roll call voting must notify the Chair or facilitator prior to the call for the vote, or immediately upon encountering a technical issue during the vote. Members may not request to vote by roll call after the voting window has closed.

During a Roll Call vote, the Chair, facilitator, or tally committee member will call the name of each eligible voter who has requested roll call voting until the voter responds, up to three times. They will also enter the voter’s name into chat. Each voter will have at least 10 seconds to respond with their vote. Voters may respond verbally, or via chat.

Selecting a Voting Method

Initial selection of the voting method for remote participants to use for any given vote is up to the Chair. Any member may move to override the Chair’s decision and require the vote be taken via Google Forms. Such a motion must be voted on using Webex Polling, and requires support from only 10% of voters to pass. All voting members are eligible to vote on this motion.