

GLOSSARY OF TERMS FOR GENERAL CONVENTION

Adopt

To approve a resolution, an amendment to a resolution, a substitute resolution, or a committee report.

Amend

To make a change to a proposed resolution by deleting or adding words or phrases.

Calendar

Prepared by the Committee on Dispatch of Business to set forth the resolutions which are proposed for consideration in a specific order. The Consent Calendar is used to bring matters to a vote in the House, without debate, by the appropriate legislative committee. A process exists for removing a matter from the Consent Calendar and placing it on the Calendar where debate is permitted.

Certification of Deputies

Required for admission to the House of Deputies, and indicated by a deputy name tag. When a Deputy wishes to exchange status with an alternate, a form must be completed and signed by the Chair of the Deputation.

Chair

The presiding officer of the House or of a committee.

Commission, Standing

Interim body of General Convention, which meets during the triennium to study and make recommendations to General Convention on major subjects of continuing concern to the Church.

Committee of Conference

May be appointed by the Presiding Officers if one House amends the action taken by the other House. In an effort to agree upon identical language, both Houses then consider adopting the report of the Committee of Conference.

Committee, Legislative

Each House's designated legislative committees meet and act during, and with permission from the presiding officers, before General Convention. Committees that operate within each House under the same mandate usually meet and hear testimony together, but sometimes deliberate separately. They always vote separately.

Committee, Joint Standing

The three Joint Standing Committees (Nominations; Planning & Arrangements; Program, Budget and Finance) mandated by the Joint Rules of Order, and the Joint Nominating Committee for the Election of the Presiding Bishop mandated in Canon I.2.1.a.

Committee Report

The means by which a legislative committee submits its recommendation for a resolution to the House. The committee can recommend that the resolution be Adopted, Adopted with amendment or substituted text, Rejected, or Referred to an Interim Body. See the Rules of Order for other possible actions.

Concur

For one House to approve a resolution with the same text as the other House, thereby making the text an Act of Convention.

Dispatch of Business

Each House's Committee on Dispatch of Business schedules that House's calendars.

Division of the House

A request for a count of "yes" and "no" votes.

Enacted

Legislation has been enacted when a resolution has been adopted in identical form by both Houses. Legislation amending the Constitution or Canons, unless otherwise expressly ordered, takes effect on the first day of January in the year after the General Convention. Other legislation becomes effective when enacted. See Constitution Article XII, Canon V.1.6.

Executive Council

Elected by General Convention and the Provinces, the Executive Council carries out the programs and policies adopted by General Convention between meetings of Convention. The Executive Council also serves as the Board of Directors of the Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society (DFMS), the New York corporation that serves as the legal entity of The Episcopal Church; operates The Episcopal Church Center (ECC) in New York City; and employs staff to implement the Church's programs. See Canon I.4.1.

Exhibits

Vendors and organizations offer services and goods for sale and provide information in the exhibit hall.

Failed

A resolution or motion fails when it has not received a majority of the votes cast.

Floor

That part of the House chambers occupied solely by bishops or elected and certified deputies.

Forums

Evening meetings at which general interest topics are presented and attendance is open to all.

Hearing

A time scheduled by the legislative committee to receive testimony on specific resolutions or memorials. Only registered bishops, deputies, alternates, or visitors may testify at a hearing.

Hearing Schedule

Posted daily by legislative committees to indicate times and places of hearings on specific resolutions.

Joint Session

The meeting of both Houses of the Convention. Two Joint Sessions are mandated: (1) the presentation of the nominees for Presiding Bishop by the Joint Nominating Committee for the Election of the Presiding Bishop, and (2) the budget presentation by PB&F.

Memorial

In the legislative context, a memorial is comparable to a petition: a statement about a matter of great importance that urges the General Convention to take action. A memorial should present arguments for the proposed action, and may provide evidence of widespread concern for the matter being memorialized.

Memorials are referred to a legislative committee to inform their deliberations. Although not a resolution itself, a memorial informs committees as they perfect legislation. Memorials to General Convention have often been the catalyst for major initiatives or changes in the mission and ministry of The Episcopal Church.

Mind of the House

A non-legislative expression of opinion by a majority of the members of one House.

Minority Report

A minority or dissenting report by legislative committee members, who constitute less than the majority, submitted with the report of the legislative committee.

Motion

A formal request by a member of the House that the House take a particular action. Usually commences with the words "I move that ..." A motion presented by a legislative committee does not require a second. A motion presented by an individual requires a second.

Passed

When a matter before the House has received the required majority of votes. A simple majority (50% + 1) is required on most matters, though some matters require a two-thirds majority (for example, to suspend the Rules of Order.)

Platform

The term used for those persons who manage the business of each House and who typically sit on a platform facing the membership on the floor.

Pre-filed Resolutions

Resolutions received by the Secretary of the General Convention prior to Convention, which are distributed to the appropriate legislative committees prior to Convention and to bishops and deputies online.

Rejection

A committee may recommend, with or without reasons, that a resolution be rejected.

Re-referred

The action of re-assigning a resolution from one legislative committee to another.

Resolution

The document, beginning with the word “Resolved,” which initiates legislation.

Resolution Number

The number that is assigned to a resolution as it moves through the legislative process. The letter attached to the number of a resolution (for example, the A in A005) identifies its source. A Resolutions are introduced by Interim Bodies and are published in *The Blue Book*; B Resolutions are introduced by bishops; C Resolutions are introduced by entities other than those reporting through *The Blue Book* (dioceses and provinces); and D Resolutions are introduced by deputies.

Rules of Order

The specific procedures the General Convention uses to organize or “order” its conduct and legislative business. There are three sets of Rules of Order: one for the House of Deputies, another for the House of Bishops, and the Joint Rules of Order pertaining to both Houses.

Secretariat

The administrative offices of the General Convention and each House of General Convention. Secretariat duties include processing and tracking legislation, creating minutes, and scheduling meetings.

Sine Die

Adjournment of the last legislative session; from the Latin, literally, “without date” for return.

Special Order of Business

An action taken to consider a resolution at a specific time and/or to consider it with special rules of debate — for example, reducing the duration of debate or the time for proposing amendments.

Substitute Resolution

Significant revisions of a resolution are sometimes proposed by re-writing the legislation, rather than changing the existing language.

Suspend the Rules

Action taken by a two-thirds majority vote of the House to temporarily alter the general or special Rules of Order that are otherwise applicable. Examples include continuing debate, considering a matter out of order, or permitting the introduction of a late resolution.

Vote by Orders

A vote taken in the House of Deputies, at the request of the clerical or lay representation from at least three dioceses, in which the vote of each order (clerical and lay) is counted separately. Each order in each diocese casts one vote, which is determined by the majority vote of the deputies present in that order. A divided vote occurs when the order's deputies vote in a tie. See [Constitution Article I.5](#).