

Senate Floor Conduct

✓ RULES FOR CONDUCTING BUSINESS IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

Module 1 — Senate Structure & Authority

- Purpose of Senate rules
- Historical foundation of procedural order
- Roles of President of the Senate and officers
- Importance of quorum & attendance rules

Rule 1. The President, having taken the chair and a quorum being present, the journal of the preceding day shall be read, so that any mistakes made in the entries may be corrected.

Rule 5. When two members rise at the same time, the President shall name the person to speak; but in all cases, the member who first rises and addresses the Chair shall speak first.

Rule 6. When a member shall be called to order by the President or by a Senator, he shall sit down; and every question of order shall be decided by the President without debate, subject to an appeal to the Senate; and the President may call for the sense of the Senate on any question of order.

Rule 7. If the member is called to order by a Senator for words spoken, the exceptionable words shall immediately be taken down in writing, so that the President may be better enabled to judge of the matter.

Rule 8. No member shall absent himself from the service of the Senate without leave of the Senate first obtained. If fewer than a quorum of the Senate shall convene, they are authorized to send the Sergeant-at-Arms, or any other person or persons authorized by them, for any or all absent members, as the majority present shall agree, at the expense of such absent members respectively—unless an excuse for non-attendance shall be judged sufficient by the Senate when a quorum is convened, in which case the expense shall be paid out of the contingent fund. This rule applies both to the first convention of the Senate at the legal time of meeting and to each day of the session after the hour has arrived to which the Senate stood adjourned.

Rule 21. When the Senate is equally divided, the Secretary shall take the decision of the President.

Rule 22. All questions shall be put by the President of the Senate, either in the presence or absence of the President of the United States; and the Senators shall signify their assent or dissent by answering “aye” or “no.”

Rule 23. The Vice President, or President of the Senate pro tempore, shall have the right to name a member to perform the duties of the chair; but such substitution shall not extend beyond an adjournment.

Rule 33. The following Standing Committees, consisting of five members each, shall be appointed at the commencement of each session, with leave to report by bill or otherwise:

A Committee on Foreign Relations

A Committee on Finance

A Committee on Commerce

A Committee on Manufactures

A Committee on Agriculture

A Committee on Military Affairs

A Committee on the Militia

A Committee on Naval Affairs

A Committee on Public Lands

A Committee on Private Land Claims

A Committee on Indian Affairs

A Committee of Claims

A Committee on Revolutionary Claims

A Committee on the Judiciary

A Committee on the Post Office and Post Roads

A Committee on Roads and Canals

A Committee on Pensions

A Committee on the District of Columbia

A Committee on Patents and the Patent Office

A Committee on the Public Buildings (3 members), to act jointly with the House Committee

A Committee of three members to audit and control the contingent expenses of the Senate

A Committee of three members to examine all bills, amendments, resolutions, or motions before they go out of possession of the Senate and deliver them to the Secretary, who shall enter on the journal that they have been correctly engrossed.

Rule 45. Messages shall be sent to the House of Representatives by the Secretary, who shall endorse the final determination of the Senate thereon.

Rule 46. Messengers shall be introduced at any time except when a question is being put, when the yeas and nays are being called, or when ballots are counting.

Rule 47. The following persons, and none others, shall be admitted on the floor of the Senate: members of the House of Representatives and their Clerk; the Secretary of State; the Secretaries of the Treasury, War, and Navy; the Attorney-General; the Postmaster-General; the private secretary of the President; Chaplains to Congress; Judges of the United States; Foreign Ministers and their secretaries; officers who have received the thanks of Congress or medals by vote; Governors of States and Territories; former Governors; former Heads of Departments; Members of State Legislatures; members of friendly foreign legislatures; two reporters from each daily paper and one from each tri-weekly paper in Washington, whose names are submitted to the Secretary; such reporters shall confine themselves to the seats provided.

Rule 48. The presiding officer shall regulate such parts of the Capitol and its passages as are set apart for the Senate and its officers.

Rule 49. The Secretary of the Senate, the Sergeant-at-Arms and Doorkeeper, and the assistant Doorkeeper shall be chosen on the second Monday of the first session of the 21st Congress and on the same day of the first session of every succeeding Congress.