

IRONHOUSE SANITARY DISTRICT

BOARD MEMBER TELECONFERENCING POLICY

Board Policy 017

Adopted: March 17, 2026

Revised: _____

ARTICLE 1 PURPOSE

- 1.1 To set forth guidelines for Board Members to participate in District meetings via teleconference in accordance with the Ralph M. Brown Act, as amended by SB 707.

ARTICLE 2 DEFINITIONS

- 2.1 Teleconference: a meeting of a legislative body, the members of which are in different locations, connected by electronic means, through either audio or video, or both.
- 2.2 Remote Participation: participation in a meeting by teleconference at a location other than any physical meeting location designated in the notice of the meeting.

ARTICLE 3 POLICY

- 3.1 A Board Member may participate in a Board meeting via teleconferencing in accordance with the procedures in California Government Code Section 54953, when the Member is unable to resolve a scheduling conflict, has health issues or a disability preventing physical attendance, or in situations of family emergencies.
- 3.2 If a Member anticipates being absent from a Board meeting at which an item of significance is being discussed, he/she may ask that the matter be moved to a meeting at which he/she will be in attendance.
- 3.3 Staff will, to the extent practical, consider planned absences when scheduling matters for Board action if District business will not be hindered by any delay or advancement of schedule.

ARTICLE 4 PROCEDURES

- 4.1 **Traditional Teleconferencing Requirements:** Government Code Section 54953(b) of the Brown Act (California Government Code Sections 54950-54963) provides that in connection with a meeting, “the legislative body of a local agency may use teleconferencing for the benefit of the public and the legislative body.” Accordingly, the Board may opt to use teleconferencing for its meetings, so long as the following requirements are met:
 - A. A quorum of the members of the Board must participate from locations within the agency’s jurisdiction, even if participating remotely.
 - B. Agendas must be posted at all teleconference locations where members of the Board will be present during the meeting. Each such location shall be identified in the agenda and accessible to the public. The public must be given an opportunity to address the Board directly at all such locations.
 - C. All votes taken during a teleconferenced meeting shall be by rollcall.

4.2 **SB 707 Alternative Teleconferencing:** As an alternative to the traditional conferencing guidelines, Government Code Sections 54953.8 through 54953.8.7 of the Brown Act authorizes Board Member teleconferencing pursuant to the following rules and requirements:

- A. A quorum of the members of the legislative body must participate from locations within the agency's jurisdiction.
- B. A member may attend a meeting by teleconference under the following specific circumstances:
 - 1. The member has a disability, as defined in Section 12012 of Title 42 of the United States Code, that precludes the member's in-person attendance at the meeting and that is not otherwise reasonably accommodated pursuant to the federal Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. § 12101 *et seq.*).
 - i. A member attending a meeting via teleconferencing pursuant to this rule shall participate through both audio and visual technology and shall disclose at the meeting before any action is taken, whether any other individuals 18 years of age or older are present in the room at the remote location with the member, and the general nature of the member's relationship with any of those individuals.
 - 2. The member has just cause for the remote appearance.
 - i. The term "just cause" means:
 - A childcare or caregiving need of a child, parent, grandparent, grandchild, sibling, spouse, or domestic partner that requires the Board Member to participate remotely.
 - A contagious illness that prevents a member from attending in person.
 - A need related to a physical or mental condition that is not subject to subdivision (c) of Section 54953.
 - Travel while on official business of the District or another state or local agency.
 - An immunocompromised child, parent, grandparent, grandchild, sibling, spouse, or domestic partner of the member that requires the member to participate remotely.
 - A physical or family medical emergency that prevents a member from attending in person.
 - ii. A member may utilize the just cause provision no more than two times in a year.
 - iii. A member attending a meeting via teleconferencing pursuant to this rule shall participate through both audio and visual technology.

The member must also notify the Board at the earliest opportunity possible, including at the start of a regular meeting of their need to participate remotely for just cause, and provide a general description of the circumstances relating to their need to appear remotely at the given meeting.

3. There is a proclaimed State or Local Emergency.
 - i. A “State Emergency” is defined as a state of emergency proclaimed pursuant to Section 8625 of the California Emergency Services Act.
 - ii. A “Local Emergency” is defined as a condition of extreme peril to persons or property proclaimed by the governing body of Contra Costa County or a local health emergency (declared pursuant to Health and Safety Code Section 101080) within the boundaries of Contra Costa County.
- C. Any member who participates remotely in the meeting and the provision of law they relied on to participate shall be listed in the minutes of the meeting.
- D. For the purpose of counting a “meeting,” a “meeting” is defined as “any number of meetings of the legislative body of a local agency that begin on the same calendar day.”
- E. **Public Access:** When a Board meeting is held pursuant to the SB 707 Alternative Teleconferencing procedures:
 1. The District shall provide the public with remote access through a two-way telephonic service or a two-way audiovisual platform.
 2. The Board will not require public comments to be submitted in advance and will allow real-time public comment.
 3. The District shall give notice of the time of the teleconference meeting, as well as the means by which members of the public may access the meeting and offer public comment.
 4. The agenda for the meeting shall identify and include an opportunity for all persons to attend via a call-in option or an internet-based service option.
 5. In the event of a disruption that prevents the Board from broadcasting the meeting to members of the public using the call-in option or internet-based service option, or in the event of a disruption with the District’s control that prevents members of the public from offering public comments using the call-in option or internet-based service option, the legislative body shall take no further action on items appearing on the meeting agenda until public access to the meeting via the call-in option or internet-based service option is restored. Actions taken on agenda items during a disruption that prevents the legislative

body from broadcasting the meeting may be challenged pursuant to Government Code Section 54960.1.

- 4.3 **Teleconferencing Etiquette:** If any meeting of the Board is made available via teleconferencing, all participants should strive to respect virtual meeting etiquette to ensure accessibility and efficiency. The rules of etiquette for teleconferenced meetings include, but are not limited to:
- A. Each participant, including Board members, should identify themselves before starting comments to ensure that any listeners know who is speaking.
 - B. Participants should avoid speaking over one another.
 - C. A participant should be allowed to finish speaking in cases where a technical difficulty interrupts them.