



VIRTUAL ATTENDANCE AT CHAPTER MEETINGS GUIDELINES

Life circumstances, from time to time, prohibit in-person meetings. Under the following circumstances, sisters may meet virtually.

- Individual members who face geographical barriers, illness (personal or family member for whom they serve as a caretaker), inclement weather conditions, or other unforeseen circumstances. Chapter presidents should check in personally with sisters who attend a meeting virtually.
- In case of widespread local, state, or federal emergency, inclement weather conditions, or other unforeseen circumstances, chapters may choose to meet virtually.

Those members attending virtually have the same rights and responsibilities as members attending face-to-face meetings. Meetings with some or all members in attendance virtually should follow protocol for face-to-face meetings (ie. agenda, roll call taken, minutes taken, all active members may vote). Planning should include the following best practices.

- Establish meeting norms. These may be developed collaboratively. Consider the following for all members in attendance, virtually or in person.
 - Use a phone line with audio clarity and stability as much as possible; wearing headphones improves sound quality.
 - Find a quiet space to participate.
 - Do not multi-task (do other work) during the meeting; be an active participant.
 - Use the mute button at your site to prevent transmitting background noise.
 - Be courteous and have a positive attitude.
 - Turn on your video whenever possible and be camera-ready; be aware of lighting (light should come from behind the camera; overhead lighting is not desirable).
- Use the technology that is most accessible for all.
- Create a backup communication plan in case you have trouble connecting with remote participants. A backup plan can include using a mobile or speakerphone and/or collaborating through an online collaboration tool (e.g., Google docs).
- Designate a Technology Chairman and committee or resource person within the chapter to assist members with hardware and software issues related to virtual meeting attendance.
- Each participant should test technology before the meeting and resolve any technical issues; join the meeting a few minutes early to avoid troubleshooting technical issues during the meeting.
- Begin with introductions or an icebreaker, or have each participant check in.
- Follow an organized line-up to ensure each person has a chance to respond; establish a protocol for being recognized when a participant wishes to speak (some apps have a 'Raise your hand' function in the chat window).
- Send copies of any documents that will be referenced during the meeting to all attendees in advance.
- Be respectful of attendees' time.
- Consider, for better engagement, identifying different people to assume different roles on a rotating basis. Roles may include:
 - Facilitator: Designs and facilitates meeting
 - Note taker: Takes action notes/takeaways and emails them to everyone right after meeting

- Technical support: Helps with technical troubleshooting (there WILL be issues).
- Bridge moderator: Someone who can assist remote participants in a face-to-face meeting; may also facilitate the chat
- Time keeper: Keeps time
- Recap all agreed upon actions prior to adjournment.
- Make accommodations for those attending virtually to contribute to chapter altruistic projects or where donations are solicited.
- Have minutes of the meeting distributed in a timely manner; many apps have the capability of recording the meeting.

Resources:

Free options for virtual attendance (across all platforms): freeconferencecall.com, Zoom, Google Hangouts, Webex, Jitsi Meet

- <https://blog.lucidmeetings.com/blog/25-tools-for-online-brainstorming-and-decision-making-in-meetings>
- <https://www.nten.org/article/9-best-practices-engagement-virtual-meetings/>
- <https://focustelecom.eu/blog/8-rules-of-effective-teleconferencing/>
- <https://biz30.timedoctor.com/productive-teleconference-tips/>
- <http://www.hiscall.com/dos-donts-of-video-conferencing-guidelines-for-proper-use/>
- <https://uit.stanford.edu/videoconferencing/best-practices>