

Regulations of the President of the Senate pursuant to Section 2-2-404, C.R.S., and Senate Rule 44

Regulations for Remote Testimony During the First Regular Session of the 73rd General Assembly

Section 1 – Limited Remote Testimony Permitted

These regulations are issued pursuant to Senate Rule 44, which permits the President of the Senate, after consulting with the Majority Leader and the Minority Leader, to invoke regulations for remote testimony if the conditions concerning a declared public health disaster emergency, as described in Joint Rule 44 (a) of the Joint Rules of the Senate and the House of Representatives, are met and the President finds that holding in-person Senate Committee hearings poses an increased health risk to the members of the Senate or to the public.

These regulations permit limited remote testimony in Senate committees of reference and remain in effect only so long as the declared public health disaster emergency continues. While these regulations are in effect, members of the public may testify remotely in Senate committees of reference by registering in advance of the hearing. Remote witnesses may provide:

- video testimony through the video conferencing software Webex; or
- telephone testimony by calling the Webex call-in option.

Registered witnesses may provide remote testimony from any location in the state.

Section 2 – Registration Process

Applicability to the 2021 regular legislative session. The remote testimony procedures and timelines outlined in these regulations are applicable only to the 2021 regular legislative session and may be modified for future sessions.

Advance registration required. Witnesses may not offer remote testimony unless they have registered in advance of the hearing at which the bill on which they wish to testify will be considered. Registration will be available at the earliest of the following two points in time:

- at the time the bill is scheduled for a committee hearing; or
- if a bill's prime sponsor waives confidentiality and allows the bill to be posted on the General Assembly's website prior to introduction, at the time the bill is posted on the website.

During the 2021 regular legislative session, remote testimony registration will close when the hearing at which the bill is scheduled to be considered begins.

Registration website and required information. Witnesses may register for remote testimony by visiting:

<https://www2.leg.state.co.us/CLICS/CLICS2021A/commsumm.nsf/signIn.xsp>

To register, witnesses must provide their name, preferred pronouns, email address, phone number, zip code, position on the bill, and the name of the organization they represent, if any. Witnesses who wish to testify via phone must provide the same phone number that they will use to call in to the committee hearing. This is to ensure that staff can match the witnesses' registration records with the correct phone numbers during the hearing.

Confirmation of registration. After submitting the required information, witnesses will receive an email confirming registration and providing the Webex meeting link and call-in phone number they can use to connect to the committee hearing. Witnesses who do not receive a confirmation email may contact lcs.committees.ga@state.co.us or call 303-866-3521 for assistance.

Registered witnesses only. Only registered witnesses will be allowed into the Webex meeting. Witnesses who connect through a link or phone number shared by another witness will not be permitted to testify. Registered witnesses are encouraged to setup Webex and test audio video settings on their computer before the committee hearing.

Section 3 – Committee Process

Committee schedule and schedule changes. Committee schedules will be published in the House and Senate calendars on a daily basis. Bill hearings are often delayed or rescheduled and there is no guarantee the bill will be heard when originally scheduled. For committee changes that occur on the day of a committee hearing, please visit the General Assembly's committee Twitter feed for updates - [@COLCSCcommittees](https://twitter.com/COLCSCcommittees).

Chair's authority regarding testimony. Nothing in these regulations limits or modifies the ability of a committee chair to limit in-person and remote public testimony. For both in-person and remote testimony, the chair may limit testimony to that which, in the chair's opinion, is sufficient for the committee to consider the bill on its merits. The committee chair may limit the total time allotted for testimony, and may limit the amount of time each witness may testify, regardless of whether the witness is in-person or remote. Remote and in-person witnesses may be called to testify at any point in the bill hearing. Registering to testify remotely or in-person does not guarantee that all registrants will be permitted to testify if the committee chair determines that public testimony must be limited.

Committee decorum. At all times, witnesses will be required to maintain proper committee protocol, which includes being acknowledged by the committee chair before speaking and following the rules for testimony established by the committee chair. Witnesses who fail to follow the rules for testimony established by the committee chair forfeit their opportunity to testify and will be disconnected from the Webex meeting.

Technical issues. Witnesses may not be able to testify if there are technical issues with the remote testimony software or issues with the witnesses' computer or internet or telephone connection.

Remote witness decorum. Remote testimony witnesses will automatically be muted when they enter the Webex meeting. Legislative staff will unmute witnesses as they are recognized by the committee chair to speak. Witnesses who are connecting via video should ensure that they are testifying from a location that appears to be professional on camera. Chairs may end the testimony of witnesses engaged in inappropriate or distracting behavior and disconnect the witnesses from the Webex meeting.