

# Rules of procedure of the WHO Regional Committee for the Eastern Mediterranean



**World Health  
Organization**

Regional Office for the Eastern Mediterranean



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## **Contents**

I. Membership and attendance .....	<b>5</b>
II. Credentials.....	<b>6</b>
III. Sessions .....	<b>7</b>
IV. Agenda .....	<b>8</b>
V. Officers of the committee .....	<b>9</b>
VI. Reports of sessions.....	<b>10</b>
VII. Subcommittees of the committee.....	<b>11</b>
VIII. Secretariat .....	<b>12</b>
IX. Languages .....	<b>13</b>
X. Conduct of business.....	<b>14</b>
XI. Voting.....	<b>18</b>
XII. Suspension and amendment of rules of procedure .....	<b>23</b>



### Preamble

These Rules of Procedure are adopted under the authority of Chapter XI of the Constitution of the World Health Organization.

## I. Membership and attendance

### Rule 1

The Regional Committee (hereinafter referred to as “the Committee”) shall consist of representatives (hereinafter referred to as “the representatives”), one each from the Member States forming the Eastern Mediterranean Region (hereinafter referred to as “the Region”) of the World Health Organization (hereinafter referred to as “the Organization”). The representatives may be accompanied by alternates and advisers.

### Rule 2

Subject to the terms of any existing agreements, the Committee may arrange for consultation outside the Organization with the respective regional bodies of the United Nations and with those of other specialized agencies and with other international regional organizations having interests in common with the World Health Organization and for their participation, without vote, in its discussions. The Regional Director, in consultation with the Regional Committee, may invite States not members of the Committee to participate without vote in the sessions of the Committee. The Regional Director, in consultation with the Regional Committee, may also invite nongovernmental organizations to participate in the deliberations of the Committee as provided in section 5 of the “Principles governing relations between the World Health Organization and nongovernmental organizations.”

### II. Credentials

#### Rule 3

The Member States shall communicate to the Regional Director, not less than fifteen days before the date fixed for the opening of the session of the Committee, the name of their representatives, including all alternates and advisers. Similarly, the organizations and States referred to in Rule 2 invited to be represented at the session shall communicate the names of the persons by whom they will be represented. The credentials of representatives and names of alternates, advisers and observers shall be submitted to the Regional Director if possible not less than two days before the opening of the session of the Regional Committee. Such credentials shall be issued by the Head of State or Government, the Minister for Foreign Affairs, the Minister of Health or any other competent authority.

#### Rule 3 bis

The officers of the Regional Committee shall examine the credentials of representatives and report thereon to the Regional Committee. Any representative to whose admission a Member has made objection shall be seated provisionally with the same rights as other representatives, until the officers have reported and the Regional Committee has given its decision.

### **III. Sessions**

#### **Rule 4**

The Committee shall meet in regular annual session. It shall determine at each regular session the date and place of the next session. Notices convening the Committee shall be sent by the Regional Director at least six weeks before the commencement of the session to the Member States, to the Director-General of the Organization (hereinafter referred to as “the Director-General”), and to the organizations referred to in Rule 2 invited to be represented at the session.

#### **Rule 5**

The Committee may meet in such special sessions as may be necessary. The Regional Director, in consultation with the Chairperson of the Committee (hereinafter referred to as “the Chair”) shall also convene the Committee in special session following a decision of the Committee or at the joint request of any five Member States, addressed to him or her in writing and stating the reason for the request. In this case, the Committee shall be convened within thirty days following receipt of the request, and the session shall be held at the Regional Office unless the Regional Director, in consultation with the Chair, determines otherwise. The agenda of such a special session shall be limited to the questions having necessitated that session.

#### **Rule 6**

The meetings of the Committee shall be held in public, unless the Committee decides otherwise.

### IV. Agenda

#### Rule 7

The provisional agenda of each regular session shall be drawn up by the Regional Director in consultation with the Chair. It shall be dispatched by the Regional Director to the Member States and the Director-General at least six weeks before the commencement of the session together with the notice of convocation.

#### Rule 8

The provisional agenda of each regular session of the Committee shall include, *inter alia*:

- a) all items the inclusion of which has been prescribed by the World Health Assembly (hereinafter referred to as “the Health Assembly”);
- b) all items the inclusion of which has been prescribed by the Executive Board of the Organization;
- c) all items the inclusion of which has been prescribed by the Committee;
- d) any item proposed by the Director-General or Regional Director;
- e) any item proposed by a Member State in the Region.

Proposals under item (e) above should be received by the Regional Director at least eight weeks prior to the commencement of the session.

#### Rule 9

Subject to the provisions of Rule 5, the Regional Director may, in consultation with the Chair include any question suitable for the agenda which may arise between the dispatch of the provisional agenda and the opening day of the session in supplementary agenda, which the Committee shall examine together with the provisional agenda.

## V. Officers of the committee

### Rule 10

The Committee shall elect its officers, a Chair and two Vice-Chairs from among the representatives each year at its first session held during that year. The officers shall hold office until their successors are elected. The Chair shall not become eligible for re-election as Chair until two years have elapsed since he or she ceased to hold office.

### Rule 11

In addition to exercising the powers which are conferred upon him or her elsewhere by these Rules, the Chair shall declare the opening and closing of each meeting of the Committee, shall direct the discussions, ensure observance of these Rules, accord the right to speak, put questions and announce decisions. He or she shall rule on points of order and, subject to these Rules, shall control the proceedings at any meeting and shall maintain order thereat.

### Rule 12

If the Chair is absent from a session or a meeting or any part thereof he or she shall designate one of the Vice-Chairs to preside. If the Chair is unable to make this designation, the Committee shall appoint one of the Vice-Chairs to preside during the session or meeting. If neither the Chair nor the Vice-Chairs are available to preside at a session or a meeting, the Committee shall have the power to elect a Deputy-Chairperson to preside for such portion as is necessary.

### Rule 13

If the Chair for any reason is unable to complete his or her term of office, one of the Vice-Chairs shall act in his or her place. The order in which the Vice-Chairs shall be requested to serve shall be determined by lot at the session at which the election takes place.

### Rule 14

The Chair or Vice-Chair acting as Chair, shall not vote but may, if necessary, appoint an alternate from his or her delegation to act as representative of his or her government.

## **VI. Reports of sessions**

### **Rule 15**

The drafting committee, supported by the Secretariat, shall prepare a draft report of the Committee for consideration and adoption before the end of each session. The final report of each session in the working languages, including resolutions, recommendations and other important decisions, with details of voting, if any, shall be communicated by the Regional Director to the Member States and to the Director-General.

## **VII. Subcommittees of the committee**

### **Rule 16**

The Committee may establish such subcommittees as it may deem necessary for the study of, and to report on, any item on its agenda. The Committee shall review from time to time, and in any case at its regular session, the need to maintain any subcommittees established under its authority.

### **VIII. Secretariat**

#### **Rule 17**

The Regional Director, by virtue of the authority delegated to him or her by the Director-General pursuant to Article 32 of the Constitution, shall act as the Secretary of the Committee and of any committees or subcommittees thereof. The Regional Director may delegate these functions.

#### **Rule 18**

The Regional Director shall report to the Committee on the technical, administrative and financial implications, if any, of all agenda items submitted to the Committee.

#### **Rule 19**

The Director-General or the Regional Director, or a member of the Secretariat designated by either of them as his or her representative, may at any time make either oral or written statements concerning any question under consideration.

#### **Rule 20**

The Secretariat shall furnish support to the Committee by providing information, text processing and secretarial services as may be required for the work of the Committee.

## **IX. Languages**

### **Rule 21**

Arabic, English and French shall be official and working languages.

### **Rule 22**

Speeches made in one of the official languages shall be interpreted into the other official languages unless, in consultation with the Chair, all Member States agree otherwise in advance of the session.

### **Rule 23**

Any representative may speak in a language other than an official language. In this case he or she shall provide for interpretation into one of the official languages, from which the interpretation into the other official languages may be derived.

### **Rule 24**

All resolutions, recommendations and other important decisions of the Committee shall be drawn up in the working languages.

### **X. Conduct of business**

#### **Rule 25**

A majority of the Member States represented at any session shall constitute a quorum for the conduct of business at meetings of the Committee.

#### **Rule 26**

No representative may address the Committee without having previously obtained the permission of the Chair. The Chair shall call upon speakers in the order in which they signify their desire to speak. The Chair may call a speaker to order if the speaker's remarks are not relevant to the subject under discussion.

#### **Rule 27**

Any representative may at any time request his or her alternate designated in accordance with Rule 3 to speak and vote on his or her behalf on any question. Moreover, upon the request of the representative or his or her alternate, the Chair may allow an adviser to speak on any particular point without the right to vote.

#### **Rule 28**

During the discussion of any matter a representative may rise to a point of order and the point of order shall be decided by the Chair before continuing with the other business of the session. A representative may appeal against the ruling of the Chair in which case the appeal shall immediately be put to the vote. A representative rising to a point of order may not speak on the substance of the matter under discussion but on the point of order only.

#### **Rule 29**

During the course of discussion of any item, the Chair may propose to the Committee a limitation of the time allowed to each speaker. The Chair may announce a list of speakers and, with the consent of the Committee, declare the list closed. He or she may, however, accord the right of reply to any representative if in the Chair's opinion a speech delivered after the Chair has declared the list closed makes a reply desirable.

### Rule 30

During the discussion of any matter, a representative may move the suspension or the adjournment of the meeting. Such motions shall not be debated but shall immediately be put to the vote. For the purpose of these Rules “suspension of the meeting” means the temporary postponement of the business of the meeting and “adjournment of the meeting” the termination of all business until another meeting is called.

### Rule 31

During the discussion of any matter, a representative may move the adjournment of the debate on the item under discussion. In addition to the proposer of the motion, one speaker may speak in favour of, and one against, the motion, after which the motion to adjourn debate shall immediately be put to the vote.

### Rule 32

A representative may at any time move the closure of the debate on the item under discussion whether or not any other representative had signified his or her wish to speak. If a request is made for permission to speak against closure, it may be accorded to not more than one representative, after which the motion shall immediately be put to the vote. If the Committee is in favour of the motion, the Chair shall declare the closure of the debate. The Committee shall thereafter vote only on the one or more proposals moved before the closure.

### Rule 33

The following motions shall have precedence in the following order over all other proposals or motions before the meeting, except a point of order:

- a) to suspend the meeting;
- b) to adjourn the meeting;
- c) to adjourn the debate on the item under discussion; and
- d) for the closure of the debate on the item under discussion.

### Rule 34

Subject to Rule 33, any motion calling for a decision on the competence of the Committee to adopt a proposal submitted to it shall be put to the vote before a vote is taken on the proposal in question.

### Rule 35

A representative may move that parts of a proposal or of an amendment shall be voted on separately. If objection is made to the request for division the motion for division shall be voted upon. Permission to speak on the motion for division shall be given only to two speakers in favour and two speakers against. If the motion for division is carried, those parts of the proposal or of the amendment which are subsequently approved shall be put to the vote as a whole. If all operative parts of the proposal or the amendment have been rejected, the proposal or the amendment shall be considered to have been rejected as a whole.

### Rule 36

When an amendment to a proposal is moved, the amendment shall be voted on first. When two or more amendments to a proposal are moved the Committee shall first vote on the amendment deemed by the Chair to be the furthest removed in substance from the original proposal and then on the amendment next removed therefrom, and so on, until all the amendments have been put to the vote. Where, however, the adoption of one amendment necessarily implies the rejection of another amendment, the latter amendment shall not be put to the vote. If one or more amendments are adopted, the amended proposal shall then be voted upon. If an amendment to a proposal has been accepted by the original proposer, such an amendment shall be deemed to be an integral part of the original proposal and no separate vote shall be required thereon. A motion is considered an amendment to a proposal if it merely adds to, deletes from, or revises part of that proposal. A motion which constitutes a substitution for a proposal shall be considered as a proposal.

### Rule 37

If two or more proposals are moved, the Committee shall, unless it decides otherwise, vote on the proposals in the order in which they have been circulated to all Member States, unless the result of a vote on a proposal makes unnecessary any other voting on the proposal or proposals still outstanding.

### Rule 38

A motion may be withdrawn by its proposer at any time before voting on it has commenced, provided that the motion has not been amended or, if amended, that the proposer of the amendment agrees to the withdrawal. A motion thus withdrawn may be reintroduced by any representative.

### Rule 39

When a proposal has been adopted or rejected it may not be reconsidered at the same session of the Committee unless the Committee, by a two-thirds majority of the representatives present and voting, so decides. Permission to speak on a motion to reconsider shall be accorded only to two speakers opposing the motion, after which it shall immediately be put to the vote.

### Rule 40

The Chair may at any time require any proposal, motion, resolution or amendment to be seconded.

### **XI. Voting**

#### **Rule 41**

Each representative entitled to vote shall have one vote. For the purpose of these Rules, the phrase “representatives present and voting” means representatives casting an affirmative or negative vote. Representatives abstaining from voting are considered as not voting.

#### **Rule 42**

Except as otherwise provided by the Constitution of the Organization or by these Rules, or as decided by the Health Assembly, the decisions of the Committee shall be made by a majority of the representatives present and voting.

#### **Rule 43**

If the votes are equally divided on a matter other than an election, the proposal shall be regarded as not adopted.

#### **Rule 44**

The Committee shall normally vote by show of hands, unless a representative requests a roll-call vote, or a decision is taken to vote by secret ballot.

#### **Rule 45**

A roll-call vote shall be taken in the English alphabetical order of the names of the Member States. The name of the Member State to vote first shall be determined by lot. The vote or abstention of each representative participating in any roll-call shall be inserted in the records.

#### **Rule 46**

After the Chair has announced the beginning of voting, no representative shall interrupt the voting except on a point of order in connection with the actual conduct of voting.

#### **Rule 47**

In addition to the cases provided for elsewhere by these Rules, the Committee may, upon the motion of a representative, vote by secret ballot

on any matter except a budgetary question, provided (a) it has previously so decided by the majority of the representatives present and voting, and (b) this decision was taken only by a show of hands. A motion for a secret ballot takes precedence over other motions for a vote.

### Rule 48

Elections shall normally be held by secret ballot. However, except as concerns the nomination of the Regional Director, if the number of candidates for elective office does not exceed the number of the offices to be filled, no ballot shall be required and such candidates shall be declared elected. Where ballots are required, two tellers appointed by the Chair from among the representatives shall assist in the counting of votes. Only ballot papers on which there are the same number of names as there are elective places to be filled shall be considered as valid votes. The nomination of the Regional Director shall be decided by secret ballot in accordance with these rules.

### Rule 49

Except as concerns the vote required for the nomination of the Regional Director, when only one elective place is to be filled and no candidate obtains in the first ballot a majority of votes cast by those entitled to vote, a second ballot shall be taken which shall be restricted to the two candidates obtaining the largest number of votes; if in the second ballot the votes are equally divided, the Chair shall decide between the candidates by drawing lots.

### Rule 50

When two or more elective places are to be filled at one time under the same conditions, those candidates obtaining in the first ballot a majority of votes cast by those entitled to vote shall be elected. If the number of candidates obtaining such majority is less than the number of places to be filled there shall be as many additional ballots as are necessary to fill the remaining places, the ballots being restricted to the candidates obtaining the greatest number of votes in the previous ballot to a number not more than twice the places remaining to be filled.

### Rule 51

- a) Not less than six months before the date fixed for the opening of a session of the Committee at which a person is due to be nominated as Regional Director, the Director General shall inform each Member State of the Region that he or she will receive proposals of names of candidates for nomination by the Committee as Regional Director.
- b) Any Member State of the Region may propose the name of one or more persons from within the Region who has indicated willingness to act as Regional Director, submitting with the proposal particulars of the person's qualifications and experience. Member States shall be mindful of the Code of Conduct adopted by the Regional Committee and shall bring it to the attention of such persons. Such proposals shall be sent to the Director-General so as to reach him or her not less than twelve weeks before the date fixed for the opening of the session.
- c) A person holding office as Regional Director for the Region shall be a candidate for nomination without being proposed under the preceding paragraph if he or she has indicated to the Director-General a willingness to be nominated.
- d) The Director-General shall, not less than ten weeks before the date fixed for the opening of the session, cause copies of all proposals for nomination as Regional Director (with particulars of qualifications and experience) received by him or her within the period specified to be sent to each Member State whether or not the person holding the office is a candidate for nomination.
- e) If no proposals have been received by the Director-General in time for transmission to Member State in accordance with this Rule, they shall be informed accordingly not less than ten weeks before the opening of the session of the Committee. The Committee shall itself establish a list of candidates composed of the names proposed in secret by the representatives present and entitled to vote.
- f) If the Regional Director is unable to perform the functions of his or her office or if his or her office becomes vacant before his or her term of office is completed, the Committee shall nominate a person for the post of Regional Director at its next session, provided that the

other provisions of this Rule are met. If the other provisions of this Rule cannot be met, the Committee shall take a decision at its next session or in a special session with a view to nominating a person and submitting his or her name to the Executive Board as soon as possible. In the interim, the Director-General shall designate an acting Regional Director until the appointment of the new incumbent.

- f bis)** If the Director-General receives more than five proposals within the period specified in paragraph (b) of this Rule, the Committee shall draw up a shortlist of five candidates at a private meeting at the commencement of its session. For this purpose, the Committee shall hold a secret ballot, and the five candidates obtaining the highest number of votes shall make up the shortlist. In the event of a tie between two or more candidates such that there are more than five candidates identified for inclusion on the shortlist, there shall be additional ballots between the candidates receiving the tie votes, with those receiving the highest number of votes filling the remaining place or places on the shortlist.
- f ter)** The persons proposed in accordance with paragraph (b) of this Rule, or – in case of the preceding paragraph (f bis) being applicable – those persons on the shortlist, shall be interviewed by the Committee as soon as possible at a private meeting. The interview shall consist of a presentation by each candidate in addition to answers to questions from members. The Committee shall determine, as appropriate, modalities for the interviews.
- g)** The nomination of the Regional Director shall take place at a private meeting of the Committee. The Committee shall make a selection from among the persons who are candidates under this Rule. The nomination of the Regional Director shall be decided by secret ballot.
- h)** For this purpose each representative entitled to vote shall write on his or her ballot paper the name of a single candidate chosen from the above-mentioned list. If no candidate obtains the majority required, the candidate who obtains the least number of votes shall be eliminated at each ballot. If the number of the candidates is reduced to two, there shall be not more than three further ballots. In the event of a tie after the third such ballot, the whole voting procedure

## Regional Committee for the Eastern Mediterranean

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established by this Rule shall be recommended based on the shortlist of candidates.

- i) The name of the person so nominated shall be announced at a public meeting of the Regional Committee and submitted to the Executive Board.
- j) The appointment of the Regional Director shall be for five years and he or she shall be eligible for reappointment once only.

## **XII. Suspension and amendment of rules of procedure**

### **Rule 52**

Subject to the provisions of the Constitution of the Organization, any of these Rules may be suspended by the Committee provided that at least forty-eight hours' notice of the proposal for such suspension has been given to the Chair and communicated by him or her to the representatives twenty four hours before the meeting at which the proposal is to be submitted. If, however, on the advice of the Chair, and after twelve hours notice, the Committee is unanimously in favour of a proposal, it may implement it immediately.

### **Rule 53**

Amendment of, or addition to, these Rules may be adopted by the Committee by a two-thirds majority, provided that the Committee had received and considered a report thereon by the Regional Director or an appropriate subcommittee.

### **Rule 54**

Notwithstanding the above, the Committee may at its discretion apply such Rules of Procedure of the Health Assembly or of the Executive Board of the Organization as it may deem appropriate to particular circumstances.



