



# Harrison County Commissioner's Court

## Rules of Procedure, Conduct and Decorum

- I. All Regular, Special, Emergency and Executive Session Meetings of the Harrison County Commissioners Court will be called and conducted in accordance with the provisions of the Texas Open Meetings Act, Chapter 551, Government Code.
  
- II. Regular, Special and Emergency Meetings of the Harrison County Commissioners Court are open to the public and to representatives of the press and media. Executive Sessions of the Commissioners' Court are not open to the public, the press or the media and only those individuals expressly requested or ordered to be present are allowed to attend the Executive Session.
  
- III. The Harrison County Commissioners' Court meets in Regular Session every other Thursday. In order for a matter or issue to appear as an agenda item on the Agenda of any Regular Meeting of the Commissioners Court, an agenda request form Exhibit "A" must be filed with and approved by at least one member of the Commissioners Court and/ or the County Judge by 12: 00 p.m. noon on Wednesday, 8 days prior to the next Regular Meeting of the Commissioner's Court.
  
- IV. The business of Harrison County is conducted by and between the members of the Harrison County Commissioners' Court and by those members of the County staff, elected officials, department heads, consultants, experts and/or members of the public requested to be present and participate. While the public is invited to attend all meetings of the Commissioners Court (except Executive Sessions) the public's participation therein is limited to that of observers unless a member (or members) of the public is requested to address the Commissioners Court on a particular issue (or issues) or unless the member (or members) of the public completes a Public Participation Form and submits same to the County Judge's Administrative Assistant prior to the time of the Commissioners Court Meeting. A sample of the Harrison County Commissioners Court Public Participation Form is attached hereto as Exhibit" B".
  - A. Each member of the public who appears before the Commissioners' Court shall be limited to a maximum of three (3) minutes to make his/her remarks for non agenda-related items and (5) minutes for an agenda item. Comments may be made in the Public Comments section of the meeting or during discussion of the agenda item. Time for each speaker shall be maintained by the County Clerk, County Judge's

Administrative Assistant or such other such designated representatives of the Commissioners' Court.

- B. Maximum discussion on any agenda item listed, regardless of the number of members of the public wishing to address the Commissioners' Court on such agenda item (or items), shall be limited to 5 minutes per person, but not more than 20 minutes per item. Under the Public Comment Section, if a member of the public wishes to address the Commissioner's Court to express views on issues of Harrison County, they shall be limited to 3 minutes per person, but not more than 18 minutes for Public Comment Session. To the extent possible, members of the public recognized to speak on agenda items shall be divided equally between those members of the public wishing to speak for the agenda item (or items) and those members of the public wishing to speak against the agenda item (or items).
- C. In matters of exceptional interest, the Court may, by the majority vote of the members of the Court in attendance at the meeting, either shorten or lengthen the time allocated for a particular member of the public, all members of the public and/or the amount of time allocated for all agenda items and/or a specific item.
- D. It is the intention of the Court to provide open access to the citizens of Harrison County to address the Commissioners' Court and to express themselves on issues of County Government. Members of the public are reminded that the Harrison County Commissioners Court is a Constitutional Court, with both judicial and legislative powers, created under Article V, Section 1 and Section 18 of the Texas Constitution. As a Constitutional Court, the Harrison County Commissioners Court also possesses the power to issue a Contempt of Court Citation under Section 81.024 of the Texas Local Government Code. Accordingly, all members of the public in attendance at any Regular, Special and/or Emergency meeting of the Court shall conduct themselves with proper respect and decorum in speaking to, and/ or addressing the Court; in participating in public discussions before the Court. Proper attire for men, women and children is mandatory. Those members of the public who are inappropriately attired and/or who do not conduct themselves in an orderly and appropriate manner will be ordered to leave the meeting. Refusal to abide by the Court's order and/or continued disruption of the meeting may result in Contempt of Court Citation.
- E. It is not the intention of the Harrison County Commissioners' Court to provide a public forum for the purpose of any individual or group. Neither is it the intention of the Court to allow a member (or members) of the public to insult on the honesty and/or integrity of the Court, as a body, or any member or members of the Court, individually or collectively. Accordingly, profane or threatening language directed toward the Court and/or any person in the Court's presence and/or racial, ethnic, or

gender slurs or epithets will not be tolerated. Violation of these rules may result in the following sanctions:

1. cancellation of a speaker's remaining time.
2. removal from the Commissioners Courtroom.
3. a Contempt Citation; and/or
4. such other civil and/ or criminal sanctions as may be authorized under the Constitution, Statutes and Codes of the State of Texas.

F. Notwithstanding any other rule, in the event a member of the public chooses to make a public comment or to speak on an agenda item, and the individual does not speak English, at least twice the amount of time as a member of the public who does not require a translator shall be provided.

V. The County Judge is the presiding officer of the Harrison County Commissioners Court and is a fully participating member thereof. In the event of the absence of the County Judge, the senior member of the Commissioners' Court (in terms of total number of years as an elected representative) present at the Regular, Special, Emergency meeting or Executive Session, shall serve as the Judge Pro -Tem of the Court. However, nothing herein shall prevent the senior member of this Commissioners' Court from delegating this duty to another member of the Commissioners' Court.

VI. The County Judge (or the designated Judge Pro -Tem of the Commissioners Court), as presiding officer of the Commissioners Court, is responsible for conducting all meetings and members of the public who have properly completed a Public Participation Form and submitted same to the County Clerk must wait to be recognized before they will be allowed to address the Court.

VII. Special rules for the press and media:

A. No media personnel or equipment, including lights, cameras or microphones will be located on the Commissioners Court bench nor closer than five feet in front of the Commissioners Court bench.

B. Reporters and media technicians are required to structure their movements, equipment setup and take-down and adjustments, etc., in such a manner as to not disrupt the Commissioners' Court deliberations or the ability of the public to see, hear, and participate in the proceedings.

C. Interviews shall not be conducted inside the Commissioners' Courtroom during the time the Court is in session.

D. Media interviews which are conducted outside the Commissioners' Courtroom should be conducted in such a manner that the interview does not disturb, impede

or disrupt the proceedings of any Regular, Special or Emergency and/ or Executive Session Meeting of the Court.

- VIII. The Sheriff of Harrison County, Texas, or his designated deputy, shall serve as the Bailiff at all Regular, Special, and Emergency meetings of the Court. However, in the event of the absence of the Sheriff, or in the event that there exists a conflict of interest between the Sheriff, any member of the Sheriff's Department, and the Commissioners Court, or in the event of an Executive Session of the Court in which the Sheriff is not an authorized participant, then in such event, the Court shall appoint such other commissioned peace officers to serve as Bailiff as may be necessary.
- IX. From time to time, the Commissioners Court shall conduct town meetings and public hearings. These rules of procedure, conduct and decorum shall also apply to such town meetings and public hearings; however, the Commissioners Court may adopt such additional and supplemental rules for such meetings in an orderly, efficient and proper manner.
- X. These Rules of Procedure, Conduct and Decorum at Meetings of the Harrison County Commissioners Court shall be effective immediately upon adoption by the Court and shall remain in full force and effect until amended or repealed by a majority vote of the Commissioners Court.

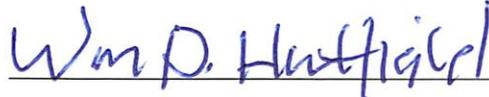
ADOPTED and PASSED this 26 day of February 2026 by the unanimous vote of the Harrison County Commissioner's Court.



Chad Sims, County Judge



William D. Hatfield, Commissioner Pct. 1



Zephaniah Timmins, Commissioner Pct. 2



Austin Koos, Commissioner Pct. 3



Jay Ebarb, Commissioner Pct. 4

EXHIBIT "A"

## AGENDA ITEM REQUEST FORM

Agenda Items that are requested to be placed on the Agenda for the meeting of the Harrison County Commissioners' Court to be held on \_\_\_\_\_ are attached.

**RETURN THIS REQUEST FORM IN TYPEWRITTEN FORMAT with ONE (1) HARDCOPY AND A COPY OF THE EXHIBITS AS WELL AS AN ELECTRONIC COPY to be delivered to the County Judge's Administrative Assistant no later than 12:00 NOON on the Wednesday before the Commissioner's Court Regular meeting on the Thursday of the next week of which the meeting dates are posted on the county website. If this request is not received in a timely manner, the request may not be posted as an agenda item.**

1. Exact title as you would like this request to appear on the Agenda:
  
2. Brief description of the subject to be discussed.
  
3. Has this been the subject of previous Commissioners' Court action?  
(YES)\_\_\_\_\_ (NO)\_\_\_\_\_

If so, give the approximate date of the meeting at which this matter was discussed or action taken thereon:

\_\_\_\_\_

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

E-MAIL ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_



**COMMISSIONERS COURT  
PUBLIC COMMENT Exhibit "B"**

Members of the public may address Commissioners Court during the Public Comment section or during any particular agenda item of the meeting. Any inquiries made by the public must be specific questions, which may be briefly answered with a statement of specific factual information.

The public may speak regarding an Agenda item or, pursuant to Texas Government Code Section 551.042, raise a subject that has not been included in the Agenda.

**Speaking time limits will be observed. During Public Comment, the speaking time limit is five (5) minutes. Speaking time limit on non-agenda related items is three (3) minutes per person. Time cannot be delegated from one speaker to another.**

Please fill out all appropriate fields and print legibly.

Name:

Do you represent any particular group or organization?

If so, please state the name, address and telephone number of such group or organization.

SELECT ONE:

I wish to address the following agenda item(s)  
at the time it's/they are discussed:

Agenda Item #

OR

I wish to address the following agenda item(s)  
during Public Comment:

Agenda Item #

OR

I wish to address Commissioners Court regarding the following subject not included in the Agenda:

Signature:

Date:

**Note: This Public Comment Form must be presented to the County Judge's Administrative Assistant prior to the commencement of the Commissioners Court meeting at 9:00 A.M. Failure to do so could result in Commissioners Court not recognizing you or allowing you to speak. This form must be given to the County Judge's Administrative Assistant in person on or before the day of Commissioners Court.**