

# Rights and Responsibilities of the Member



*Weldon L. Merritt, PRP, CPP, has graciously authorized Jurassic Parliament to publish this listing of the rights and responsibilities of ordinary members of an organization.*

Please note that neither the list of member rights nor the list of member responsibilities is intended to be exhaustive. In addition, neither the rights nor the responsibilities are necessarily absolute in every instance. For example, the right to debate may be cut off or limited by motions for the Previous Question or to Limit

Debate. And, while a member should not vote on a matter of direct personal interest, under Robert's Rules no member may be compelled to abstain on such a matter. Finally, as with all matters of parliamentary procedure, any right or responsibility established by RONR or any other parliamentary authority will yield to a contrary rule in the bylaws or in any applicable procedural statute.

All citations are from *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised*, 12th edition [RONR].

## **A MEMBER OF A DELIBERATIVE ASSEMBLY HAS THE RIGHT**

1. to attend meetings. [1:4]
2. to make motions. [1:4]
3. to speak in debate. [1:4]
4. to vote. [1:4]
5. to abstain from voting. [45:3]
6. to be given copies of the assembly's governing documents, including bylaws, special rules of order (if any), and standing rules. [2:13]
7. to unilaterally modify or withdraw a motion the member has made before it has been stated by the chair. [4:19]
8. to speak first in debate on a motion the member has made. [3:33(1)]
9. to insist on the enforcement of the rules of order, through the raising of a *Point of Order*. [23:1]
10. to require the assembly to adhere to its agenda, program, or order of business, by a *Call for the Orders of the Day*. [18:1]



11. to require a *Division of the Assembly* if the member doubts the result of a voice vote or a show of hands. [6:17(7)]
12. to change his or her vote up to the time the results are announced (except when the vote has been taken by ballot or another method providing secrecy). [45:8]
13. to demand a ballot vote on the question of guilt and on the imposition of a penalty in a disciplinary proceeding. [61:17]
14. to not have allegations against the member's good name made except by charges brought on reasonable ground. [63:5]
15. to have due process in any disciplinary proceedings. [63:5]
16. to require separate consideration of two or more unrelated questions offered in a single motion. [27:10-11]
17. to make a *Parliamentary Inquiry* or a *Request for Information* (also called *Point of Information*). [33:1]

#### **A MEMBER OF A DELIBERATIVE ASSEMBLY HAS THE RESPONSIBILITY**

18. to become familiar with the assembly's bylaws and procedural rules. [2:13]
19. to obtain the floor before making a motion or speaking in debate. [3:30]
20. to refrain from criticizing a ruling of the chair unless the member has appealed from the ruling. [24:2]
21. to refrain from debating a matter that is not pending. [43:4]
22. to confine remarks to the merits of the pending question. [43:20]
23. to refrain from attacking or questioning the motives of other members. [43:21]
24. to address all remarks to or through the chair. [43:22]
25. to refrain from referring to members by name. [43:23]
26. to refrain from speaking adversely on a prior action not pending. [43:24]
27. to refrain from speaking against the member's own motion. [43:25]
28. to read from reports, quotations, or other documents only with permission of the assembly. [43:26]
29. to be seated during any interruption by the chair. [43:27]
30. to refrain from disturbing the assembly. [43:28]
31. to refrain from explaining the member's vote during voting. [45:7]
32. to abstain from voting on a matter of direct personal interest. [45:4]

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