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# THE HOUSING AUTHORITY OF THE BOROUGH OF GLASSBORO

## REMOTE MEETING PROCEDURES POLICY

Adopted: 12/2020

In accordance with *N.J.A.C. 5:39-1(h), Emergency Remote Meeting Protocol for Local Public Bodies*, the Housing Authority of the Borough of Glassboro (the “Authority”) hereby adopts the following remote public meeting procedures.

### **I. MEETINGS OPEN TO THE PUBLIC**

The public shall be invited to attend all remote public meetings at no cost. Notice providing the date, place, and time of all remote public meetings shall be listed on the Authority’s website and shall include a link to access the remote public meeting.

The notice shall also provide that the public may participate in the remote public meeting during the “public comments” portion of the Agenda of the remote public meeting.

The Authority Board of Commissioners (the “Board”) shall provide the public with similar access to the remote public meeting as members of the Board, the Authority Staff, and any individuals seeking approval of the Board. If the remote public meeting is held by audio and video, the public must be permitted to attend via both audio and video. Electronic communication platforms and Internet-accessible technologies used for remote public meetings shall be in accordance with the requirements specified in *N.J.A.C. 5:39-1(h)*. Attendee capacity on the selected platform will be consistent with the reasonable expectations of the public body for public meetings, and shall not be limited to fewer than fifty (50) members of the public. An in-person meeting of the Board shall not exclude members of the public from attending in person, subject to applicable limitations on in-person gatherings in accordance with Federal, State, and/or local laws, regulations, mandates, and/or guidelines

### **II. AGENDA AND DOCUMENTS**

Forty-eight (48) hours prior to the remote public meeting, the Agenda of the remote public meeting shall be available for download on the Authority’s website through an internet link either on the remote public meeting notice or near the posting of the remote public meeting notice on the Authority’s website.

In addition, any presentation or documents that would otherwise be viewed or made available to members of the public at an in-person meeting shall be made visible on a video broadcast of the remote public meeting or made available on the Authority’s website for download in advance of the remote public meeting through an internet link appearing either on the remote public meeting notice, or near the posting of the remote public meeting notice both on the website and at the building where the in-peron meeting would otherwise be held.

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### **III. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

In addition to the foregoing, the notice of the remote public meeting shall also advise members of the public that they may submit written public comments to the Board by mail or email addressed to: [GHAPublicComments@hagc.org](mailto:GHAPublicComments@hagc.org).

All such written public comments must be submitted forty-eight (48) hours before the remote public meeting, in which event such comments shall be read aloud during the remote public meeting in a manner audible to all remote public meeting participants and the public. The reading of all written public comments shall be limited to five (5) minutes per person. Each written public comment shall be read from the beginning until the time limit is reached. The Board may pass over duplicate public comments; however, each duplicate public comment shall be noted for the record with the content summarized. If the Board elects to summarize duplicative public comments, it must not summarize certain duplicative public comments while reading others individually. The Authority will not accept text-based public comments.

The public shall also be permitted to make public comments remotely during the designated time on the remote public meeting Agenda. Public comments shall be limited to five (5) minutes per person..

### **IV. STANDARDS OF CONDUCT**

Members of the public shall address the Board only when recognized by the Board Chair or his/her designee. Members of the public shall not speak out of turn or disrupt the remote public meeting. Disruptive conduct includes sustained inappropriate behaviors, such as but not limited to, shouting, interruption and use of profanity. Members of the public shall abide by the time limitations imposed by the Authority.

In the event a member of the public becomes disruptive during the remote public meeting, the Board Chair, or his/her designee, shall mute or continue muting the disruptive member of the public and warn that continued disruption may result in their being unable to make public comment when permitted, or continue to attend the remote public meeting.

If a member of the public persists in disturbing the remote public meeting after being given a warning, then he or she may be muted while other members of the public make public comments. If time permits, the disruptive individual shall be permitted to speak after all other members of the public have been given an opportunity to make public comment. Should said person remain disruptive, he/she may be muted for the remainder of the remote public meeting or removed from the remote public meeting at the discretion of the Board Chair.

### **V. COMPLIANCE WITH OPEN PUBLIC MEETINGS ACT (“OPMA”)**

In addition to providing the date, time and place of the remote public meeting in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act, the remote meeting notice shall state:

- 1) How to access the meeting;
- 2) The means for making public comment (included in a link in the notice); and
- 3) Where relevant documents will be made available (included in a link in the notice).

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## **VI. ELECTRONIC NOTICE**

The Board shall also provide an electronic notice of the remote public meeting, the means for making public comment and where relevant documents may be made available.

The aforesaid electronic notice shall be:

- 1) Posted on the Authority's website; and
- 2) Posted on the main access door of the building where the in-person meeting was scheduled to be held. Notice must be visible from outside such building and also posted on any handicap entrance, visible from outside such building.

Where the Board expects to continue remote public meetings, the annual notice shall be revised at least seven (7) days before the next remote public meeting and contain clear and concise instructions for accessing the remote public meeting, the means for making public comment and where relevant documents will be made available. In addition to the notice required by OPMA, the annual notice shall be posted on the Authority's website and posted on the door where the in-person meeting is usually held and on any handicap accessible entrance. Notice shall be viewable from outside.

Where an in-person meeting has been changed to a remote public meeting, the Board shall issue adequate and electronic notice for the remote public meeting with access instructions and means for public comment as described above.

## **VII. STATEMENT OF ADEQUATE NOTICE**

At the commencement of every remote public meeting, the Board Chair, or his/her designee, shall cause to be entered into the minutes a statement to the effect that:

- 1) Both adequate notice and electronic notice of this remote public meeting has been provided, specifying the time, place and manner in which such notice was provided; or
- 2) That only electronic notice of the remote public meeting has been provided, specifying the time, place and manner in which such notice was provided and that discussion and effectuation of public business shall be limited only to those matters:
  - a. necessary for the continuing operation of government and which relate to the applicable emergency declaration; or
  - b. requiring decision during the remote public meeting due to imminent time constraints; or
- 3) That adequate notice and electronic notice was not provided, in which case such announcement shall state:
  - a. the reason or reasons why the matter or matters discussed are of such urgency and importance as contemplated under *N.J.S.A. 10:4-9(b)(1)*, and the nature of the substantial harm to the public interest likely to result from a delay in the holding of the remote public meeting;
  - b. that the remote public meeting will be limited to discussion of and acting with respect to such matters of urgency and importance;
  - c. the time, place, and manner in which notice of the remote public meeting was provided; and
  - d. either that the need for such meeting could not reasonably have been foreseen at a time when

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adequate notice and/or electronic notice could have been provided, in which event, such announcement shall specify the reason why such need could not reasonably have been foreseen; or that such need could reasonably have been foreseen at a time when adequate notice and/or electronic notice could have been provided, but such notice was not provided, in which event the announcement shall specify the reason why adequate notice and/or electronic notice was not provided.

#### **VIII. STATEMENT REGARDING PUBLIC COMMENT/AUDIO MUTING**

At the commencement of each remote public meeting, the Board Chair, or his/her designee, shall read the following statement:

Members of the public may make public comments remotely during a remote public meeting when permitted in accordance with the meeting agenda. Members of the public were given the opportunity to submit public comments in writing forty-eight hours in advance of a remote public meeting to be read aloud during public comment. All public comments, whether made remotely or in writing in advance of a remote public meeting, shall be limited to five (5) minutes per person. Members of the public attending the meeting shall be muted until public comments are permitted, at which time they may ask to be recognized. In the event that a member of the public becomes disruptive during a remote public meeting, including during public comment, the Board Chair, or his/her designee, shall mute or continue muting such disruptive member of the public. After receiving a warning, continued disruptive acts may result in such disruptive individual being muted, kept on mute for the remainder of the meeting, or removed from the meeting at the discretion of the Board Chair.

#### **EXECUTIVE OR CLOSED SESSION**

Upon adoption of a motion to enter into closed or executive session, the Board Chair, or his/her designee, shall temporarily suspend the attendance of all members of the public until conclusion of the closed or executive session. The Board may establish a separate nonpublic conference line or platform employed for this purpose.