

Continuity of Government Operations

Joint rule to invoke during an emergency should there be a need to allow members to participate in the legislature while observing safety protocols that require social distancing with a designated alternate location, and/or remote participation through electronic means.

CONTINUITY OF LEGISLATIVE BUSINESS DURING AN EMERGENCY – Procedures.

This Rule, of the Senate and House of Representatives, or any part thereof, governs procedures where an emergency makes convening in person: dangerous, unwise, or impractical, due to a public health emergency, an epidemic, natural or human caused disasters, enemy attacks, or any other public catastrophes of a scale to prevent the legislature from meeting in the Capitol Building.

For purposes of this rule, the following terms mean:

Designated alternate location: a location, within the seat of government, that has been determined by the President Pro Tempore and the Speaker of the House to provide a secure means of members participating in the legislative process in real time, whether floor sessions or committees. Such location shall safeguard the integrity of the legislative process, maintain the deliberative character of legislative proceedings, provide for secure voting, ensure a member's ability to debate on measures, and provide a means for public observation of the proceedings.

Remote participation: simultaneous, interactive participation in the legislative process by members not physically present at the location of the meeting. Participation shall occur through secure technological means that: safeguard the integrity of the legislative process, provide for secure voting, maintain the deliberative character of legislative proceedings and ensures a member's ability to speak on measures before them.

If the President Pro Tempore and the Speaker of the House determine that convening in person the legislature, or any part thereof, is dangerous, unwise, or impractical, due to a public health emergency, an epidemic, natural or human caused disaster, enemy attack, or other public catastrophe this rule may be invoked by Concurrent Resolution.

All Joint rules in conflict with this Rule shall be suspended for the duration of the term stated in an adopted Concurrent Resolution.

This Rule may be extended by adoption of a successive Concurrent Resolution.

As far as practicable, all other Joint rules shall remain operative.

1. A quorum of members for the purpose of convening the Legislature, or any part thereof, from day to day shall be inclusive of those members who are present in the chamber, recorded present at a designated alternate location, and through remote participation, while logged into their state provided electronic device and signed into their state provided account. Remote participants presence shall be authenticated by the Secretary or Chief Clerk.
2. All proceedings of the Legislature, or any part thereof, may be held at a designated alternate location to provide for the health, safety and welfare of legislators, staff and the public
3. All proceedings of the Legislature, or any part thereof, may be held remotely to provide for the health, safety and welfare of legislators, staff and the public.

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4. The President Pro Tempore and the Speaker of the House may close their respective floor, chamber, lobby, galleries, office spaces, galleries, committee rooms adjoining and connecting hallways and passages to protect the health, safety and welfare of all persons. Upon closure of the public gallery, there shall be alternate means of viewing floor proceedings for representatives of the news media and the public.
5. Broadcasting and recording of floor proceedings by the authorized designee shall continue, through means available to the legislature at the time of the invocation of this rule and in compliance with Article 3, Sec 12 of the Idaho Constitution.