



HOUSE OF COMMONS
CHAMBRE DES COMMUNES
CANADA

FACT SHEET

Recorded divisions in hybrid sittings

A motion governing proceedings of the House, which included provisions about hybrid sittings and virtual recorded divisions, was adopted by the House of Commons on [September 23, 2020](#). Until Friday, December 11, 2020, the House will take recorded divisions in a hybrid fashion—in the Chamber and by videoconference—until a secure remote voting application developed by the House Administration is ready. The House Leaders of all recognized parties must inform the Speaker that they are satisfied with the state of readiness of the remote voting app before it can be used.

How will Members be notified of votes?

When the House is ready to proceed to a recorded division, the Chair Occupant will say, “Call in the Members.” The division bells in the Parliamentary Precinct will be sounded; a countdown clock will appear on the broadcast of the Chamber, which can also be seen once logged into the videoconferencing system; and an email notification of the vote with a reminder of the connection information will also be sent to each Member’s personal parliamentary email address.

How will Members vote?

After the division bells have rung for the required time and the Government and Opposition Whips have signalled their readiness to proceed, the Chair Occupant will read the motion to be voted on.

- For Members present in the Chamber, the vote will be a standing vote. The Chair Occupant will first call for those **in favour** of the motion, then those **opposed**. Members are to stand, when required, to indicate their vote.
- Once the names of those in the Chamber have been called, the names of Members participating virtually will be called by party and in alphabetical order based on the list at the Table. Members must ensure that their video is on for the duration of the vote and that their microphone is unmuted when voting.
 - When a Member’s name is called, they should unmute their microphone and clearly state, “I vote for the motion” or “I vote against the motion.”
- The Chair Occupant will then ask any Members who are participating virtually and who have not had their votes recorded, perhaps due to earlier technical difficulties, to use the “Raise Hand” function. They will be recognized by the Chair Occupant to indicate their voting intention.

- Once all the votes have been counted by the Table Officers, the Clerk will report the results to the Chair Occupant, who will then declare the motion carried or defeated. The results will be reported in the Journals in the usual fashion.

How will votes be validated?

Members participating in person will cast their vote as they would usually do (namely, standing up) and will have their name called by a Table Officer. All Members participating remotely will be required to have their video turned on when they announce their vote to enable Table Officers to validate their identity. Members will have to clearly state their voting preference so it can be accurately recorded.

Where will the Speaker be for the hybrid sittings?

The Speaker will be in the West Block Chamber.

What technology will the House of Commons be using for virtual recorded decisions?

The House of Commons has existing solutions for simultaneous interpretation, closed captioning in both official languages, as well as streaming and broadcasting of the proceedings. To accommodate the videoconferencing requirement of House sittings, the House Administration has adapted available technologies and integrated them with a Zoom platform. This enterprise version of Zoom differs from the free and paid consumer versions in that it enables the House Administration to manage and configure the technology and impose robust security controls.

The House Administration has close working relationships with other legislatures and is continuing to liaise with its counterparts throughout this time of transition. It is also working closely with national and international security partners and leaders in the technology industry to ensure that all appropriate security measures are in place, in keeping with existing threat-management protocols.

Can the media and the public attend House sittings in person?

Members of the Parliamentary Press Gallery can watch the proceedings via the House of Commons website or attend the sittings in person; if they choose to do the latter, they must follow public health guidance and physical distancing directives. The House of Commons precinct is currently [closed to the public](#).

The public is encouraged to watch the sittings of the House via the House of Commons website.

For updates, please follow [@HoCChamber](#) and [@HoCSpeaker](#).

For more information:

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