

WESTERN IOWA SYNOD-STANDING RULES for SYNOD ASSEMBLY 2026

1. **Decorum and Etiquette.** Respect, dignity, civility and courtesy shall be guidelines for the tone and content of all Assembly discussion. Behavior outside these guidelines shall be grounds for the assembly chair to restrict any further privilege of the floor.
2. **Governing Parliamentary Law.** *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised* shall govern the Assembly, except if inconsistent with Chapter 7 of the Constitution and Bylaws of the Western Iowa Synod, ELCA (WIS Constitution).
3. **Order of Business.** The adoption of the Synod Assembly agenda, with necessary changes, shall become the order of business for the Assembly. At the discretion of the chair, the chair shall have the authority to make adjustments to the approved agenda. In the event the Bishop is unable to preside over any portion of the Synod Assembly, the Vice President or the Bishop's designee shall assume the chair.
4. **Quorum.** 50% of the registered voting members of the Synod Assembly shall constitute a quorum.
5. **Assembly Voting Members.** Voting members of the synod assembly shall be designated by congregation/Synod Authorized Worshiping Community and otherwise determined in Chapter 7 of the WIS Constitution by the deadline indicated in the registration materials. Due to the electronic voting set ups involved, there will not be any late or "walk-in" registrations.
 - 5.1 **Voting Member Credentialing.** All voting members of the assembly must also present themselves to the check-in table and receive their registration info/packet before being seated at the assembly.
 - 5.2. SAMs (Synodically Authorized Ministers), TEEM (Theological Education for Emerging Ministries) candidates and full-communion partner rostered persons serving ELCA congregations shall be granted voice and vote privileges. As SAMs and TEEM candidates are laypersons, congregations with SAMs or TEEM candidates are granted an additional lay voting member.
 - 5.3. Voting members in the 2026 Synod Assembly are responsible to bring a personal smartphone, laptop, Kindle, etc; have a personal email address unique to them.
6. **Privilege of the Floor.** Voting member privileges include seat, voice and vote; non-voting members have seat only unless otherwise designated in Chapter 7 of the WIS Constitution. Privilege of the floor for voting members shall include seat, voice and vote. Privilege of the floor for non-voting assembly members shall include seat only, unless otherwise designated by the Synod Assembly or the Synod Council in accordance with S7.24. Churchwide representatives, registered representatives of institutions and agencies supported by this synod, synod staff, the parliamentarian and members of synod committees who are not voting members may, at the discretion of the chair, be granted voice to serve as a resource to the assembly.
 - 6.1. Each speaker shall self-identify by name, congregation or other affiliation and clearly state their purpose after recognition by the chair.

6.2. No speaker shall speak more than two times on the same question at the same plenary session, or longer than two minutes per speech. A second time to speak on one subject may be granted only after all other voting members desiring to speak on the subject have had the opportunity to do so.

6.3. A voting member must move to one of the authorized microphones to move to end debate.

6.4. Two (2) minutes will be allowed to receive each electronic vote.

7. **Motions and resolutions.** The following procedure applies to all motions or resolutions offered to the Assembly:

7.1 Any voting member of the Synod Assembly desiring to add an item of new business to the agenda of the Synod Assembly must present such an item to the Assembly Chair no later than one-half hour following the close of the first plenary session of the Assembly. The Assembly Chair shall immediately refer it to the Committee of Assembly Business and Counsel (ABC). (WIS Constitution, Section S7.40.04)

7.2 Any motion to amend a motion or resolution properly before the Assembly and recognized by the Assembly Chair as part of the order of business, is subject to an initial determination by the Assembly Chair as to whether said motion to amend is germane to the specific subject matter of the motion or resolution then under consideration by the Assembly, before any discussion of that motion to amend shall proceed after it is seconded. If the ruling of the Assembly Chair is that the motion to amend is germane, further discussion and action by the Assembly on that motion to amend shall proceed. If the ruling of the Assembly Chair is that the motion to amend is not germane, the motion to amend will be referred immediately and without further discussion to ABC, which shall take one of the actions described in WIS Constitution, Section S7.40.04 in connection with reporting the motion to amend back to the Assembly at a later time consistent with the order of business.

8. **Budget Amendment.** Any amendment to the budgets that would change a budget line item must also include a proposal for an offset by the same amount in another area so that the total budget remains unchanged. Such budget amendments require a 2/3 vote for adoption (WIS Constitution S10.04).

9. **Unfinished Business.** Any assembly business not completed by the Voting Members at the time of adjournment shall automatically be referred to Synod Council for disposition.

10. **Distribution of Materials.** Materials produced by the synod staff, networks and committees may be distributed to voting members as long as such materials are relevant to the overall work of the synod. Other organizations must receive advance approval from the Assembly Business and Counsel Committee.

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