



# PUBLIC COMMENT POLICY

<b>Policy Number:</b> BOE-003	<b>Board Adoption Date:</b> 9/12/2024
<b>Approved By:</b> Board of Elections	<b>Chair Signature:</b> <span style="border: 1px solid black; border-radius: 50%; padding: 2px;">Signed by: <i>Dawn U. Baxton</i> <small>5DABDC06A8EC475</small></span>

## I. Purpose

To establish a uniform public comment policy for meetings of the Durham County Board of Elections. Public comment is vital to the governing process as it provides administrators with community insight and perspective. The intention of this policy is to establish parameters for the public comment period to ensure efficient administration of Durham County Board of Elections meetings. This policy is issued under the authority of N.C. Gen. Stat. §163-33(1).

## II. Definitions

- A. Board of Elections: The Durham County Board of Elections is a five member quasi-judicial, policy-making entity charged with overseeing elections administration under its jurisdiction.
- B. Board Meetings: The Durham County Board of Elections holds meetings monthly to conduct business and act where necessary. As needed and/or when required by statute, the Durham County Board of Elections conducts special meetings for the same purpose.
- C. Public Comment: Public comment is a recurring agenda item for Durham County Board of Elections regular and special meetings. This period occurs prior to execution of business items. Meeting attendees are permitted to speak during this designated period to the Durham County Board of Elections.

## III. Policy

The Board of Elections formally adopts the following rules regarding the public comment period:

- (1) Each person desiring to speak during the public comment period is required to sign-up or be present and have someone sign-up on their behalf, prior to the start of the meeting on a form provided in the area immediately outside of the Board of Elections conference room. Speakers are required to provide their name and notate their request to speak. Any documentation that a commenter would like distributed to the Board, must be provided to the Director of Elections or designated liaison prior to the start of the meeting.
- (2) Each commenter is subject to a two (2) minute limit during the public comment period. All comments shall be made to the Board and not towards other participants or the audience.

Unused time may not be yielded to other commenters. Comments outside of the public comment period will be addressed at the discretion of the Board Chair.

- (3) Comments submitted through the Board of Elections Public Comment Portal must be submitted by 5:00 p.m. on the day prior to the scheduled meeting. Comments received by the deadline will be read aloud during the meeting and are subject to the two (2) minute limit. Comments that are not received by the deadline will not be read during the meeting.
- (4) Commenters will be acknowledged in the order in which their names appear on the designated sign-in sheet. Upon recognition by the Board Chair, the commenter will present to the podium or if unable, speak from their seated location and state their name prior to addressing the Board. Time will be clocked following introduction.
- (5) Commenters shall maintain dignity and deliver comments in a respectable manner. Personal attacks and/or defamatory language during the designated time will not be tolerated. The Board Chair reserves the right to end remaining time and/or have a commenter removed if established rules are not complied with.

#### **IV. Applicability**

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This policy applies to all individuals that desire to provide public comments to the Durham County Board of Elections.

#### **V. Review**

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The Durham County Board of Elections shall review this policy as needed.