

STRICKEN AS OF 07/02/2020

Intro. Res. No. 1020-2020
Introduced by Legislator Berland

Laid on Table 1/2/2020

**RESOLUTION NO. -2020, AMENDING THE RULES OF THE
LEGISLATURE TO ENSURE ATTENDANCE OF MEMBERS AT
COMMITTEE MEETINGS**

WHEREAS, the Suffolk County Legislature was established to set policy for the County, an essential function of governing which requires the active participation of its membership; and

WHEREAS, the Legislature currently allows for members to receive unlimited excused absences from committee meetings for any reason; and

WHEREAS, the standing committees of the Legislature serve an important function in the vetting of legislation and operate best when all members are present; and

WHEREAS, legislators should only be permitted to have an excused absence from attendance at committees for significant and emergent conflicts, such as personal illness or caring for an ill relative; and

WHEREAS, similarly, members who are chronically absent from committees without excuse should be removed from that position to allow more engaged legislators to have membership on the committee and ensure the proper functioning of committees; and

WHEREAS, Rule 4 of the Rules of the Legislature governs the rights and responsibilities of members of the Legislature; and

WHEREAS, Rule 4 should be amended to limit the number of excused absences from a committee meeting to two (2) per member and provide a procedure to remove committee members from the committee who are chronically absent without valid excuses; now, therefore be it

1st RESOLVED, that Rule 4 of the Rules of the Suffolk County Legislature is hereby amended by the addition of a new paragraph H to read as follows:

RULES OF THE LEGISLATURE

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RULE 4. RIGHTS AND DUTIES OF MEMBERS

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H.) Attendance at Committee Meetings.

- 1) A member of the Legislature shall be limited to no more than two (2) excused absences from each committee on which they serve. Members must request an excused absence in writing, detailing the reason for the absence, to the Committee Chair and the Presiding Officer. Acceptable reasons for excused**

absences are: personal illness, recovery from surgical procedures, caring for an ill relative or death of a family member or friend. Members are entitled to one (1) of their two (2) excused absences to be personal, outside of the parameters of the enumerated excused absences. Requests for absences associated with prolonged illness or recovery shall count as a single absence even when multiple committee meetings are missed. The Chair of the committee for which an excused absence is requested shall determine if the request shall be granted. When a member's request for an excused absence in committee is denied, they shall have the right to appeal the determination to the Presiding Officer, who shall have the ability to sustain or overturn the Committee Chair's determination. Any final determination must be made prior to the completion of the Committee meeting for which an absence is requested.

- 2) A member of the Legislature who has two (2) or more unexcused absences from a committee they are assigned to shall be subject to removal from the membership of that committee at the discretion of the Presiding Officer.

DATED:

___ Underlining denotes addition of new language

EFFECTIVE IMMEDIATELY PURSUANT TO SECTION A2-2 of the SUFFOLK COUNTY ADMINISTRATIVE CODE AND SECTIONS C2-15(A) AND C2-7 OF THE SUFFOLK COUNTY CHARTER