

# Handling a Motion

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## A Motion and its Amendments



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# Parliamentary Workshop

Alta California Regional Center --- September 26, 2012



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## Six Steps to Handling a Motion

A motion is a formal proposal by a member during a meeting that the assembly take certain action. The basic form of the motion is the Main Motion.

### A Main Motion is brought before an assembly:

1. **Motion is moved:** While no motion is pending, a member rises and seeks recognition. Once she is recognized she has the exclusive right to be heard at that time. Member makes the motion, "*I move* we allocate \$300 to repair the computers."
2. **Motion is seconded:** Someone without needing to be recognized, seconds the motion. The seconder is not claiming to agree with motion. The seconder is stating that the motion should be discussed and voted by the organization.
3. **Motion is stated:** The chair states the question, "It is moved and seconded to allocate \$300 to repair the computers." As the chair turns to the maker of the motion, she states, "Are you ready for the question?" The motion no longer belongs to the mover; it belongs to the assembly.

### A Main Motion is considered by the assembly:

4. **Motion is debated:** All remarks by the members are made to the chair, never to or about another member. Debate can be closed only by a 2/3 vote by the assembly.
5. **Motion is put:** The chair says, "The motion is to allocate \$300 to repair the computers. All in favor of the motion indicate by saying, 'Aye'. All opposed to the motion indicate by saying, 'No'." The wording of the motion when the question is put is the way it goes into effect. A voice vote is the regular method when a majority vote is required for adoption. A rising vote is the normal method when a 2/3 vote is required for adoption. A 'show of hands' is intended for small assemblies or after an inconclusive voice vote.
6. **Vote is announced:** The chair makes the following 4 statements.
  - "The 'ayes' have it. Or, the 'Noes' have it."
  - "The motion is adopted. Or, the motion is lost."
  - The chair states the effect of the vote or orders its execution.
  - "The next item of business is ..."

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## Script A: Handling a Motion

**We join the regular monthly meeting during the 'New Business' part of the agenda.**

*[Six speaking roles – CH, A, B, C, D, Z]*

**CH:** The first item under New Business is vacant board seats.

*[Step 1]*

**A:** Madam Chair *[Rises and is recognized]*

I move that staff visit all the mayor hospitals in the counties which have no board representative to recruit individuals for the vacant board seats.

*[Step 2]*

**Z:** Second

*[Step 3]*

**CH:** It is moved and seconded that staff visit all the mayor hospitals in the counties which have no board representative to recruit individuals for the vacant board seats.

*[Step 4]*

Are you ready for the question? *[Or, - Is there any debate? Are you ready to vote?]*

**A: and B:** *[Simultaneously]* Madam Chair. *[Both rise seeking recognition]*

**A:** *[Is recognized and gives 2 sentences in support of her motion and then sits down.]*

**B:** Madam Chair *[Is recognized and gives 2 sentences in support of her motion and then sits down.]*

Are you ready for the question?

**A:** *[Is recognized and begins to speak for the second time.]*

**C:** Madam Chair, Point of Order.

**CH:** What is your Point of Order?

**C:** Member A has already spoken once and there are others seeking to speak. Member A should not be recognized again yet.

**CH:** Your point is well taken. Member A will please sit down.

**D:** Madam Chair, Request for Information.



**CH:** What is your question Member D?

**D:** Do we have the right to enter any hospital and request staff information, or to request access to their staff?

**CH:** I am sure that hospitals will be cooperative to our goals.  
Are you ready for the question?

*[Step 5]*

**CH:** The question before you is should staff visit all the mayor hospitals in the counties which have no board representative to recruit individuals for the vacant board seats?

All in favor of the motion indicate by saying, 'Aye'. *[All say, 'Aye'.]*

All opposed to the motion indicate by saying, 'No'. *[Silence.]*

*[Step 6]*

The 'Ayes' have it. The motion is adopted.

The staff is instructed to visit all the mayor hospitals in the counties which have no board representative to recruit individuals for the vacant board seats?

The next item under New Business is ...



## Amendments

### 1° Amendment (Form 1) – Insert or Add

✎ Original Main Motion

I move to create a president appointed committee to study the Clay Pigeon habitat.

✎ What you really wanted was ...

I want it to be a committee of three.

✎ You need to move to amend

I move to amend by inserting “**of 3 members**” after the word “committee”.

✎ If the amendment is adopted the main motion will read

I move to create a president appointed committee **of 3 members** to study the Clay Pigeon habitat.

### DRILL: Primary Amendment (Form 1)

**MOTION:** I move that staff visit all the mayor hospitals in the counties which have no board representative to recruit individuals for the vacant board seats.

**A:** Madam Chair, I move to amend the motion by inserting ...

**Z:** ...

**CH:** It is moved and seconded to ...

Are you ready for the question?

**CH:** The motion before you is to ...

All in favor ...

All opposed ...

The .... have it.

The motion is ...

The next item on the agenda is (STOP)

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## 1° Amendment (Form 2) – Strike

### Original Main Motion

I move to create a president appointed committee to study the Clay Pigeon habitat.

### What you really wanted was ...

I want the members to create the committee, not the president.

### You need to move to amend

I move to amend by striking “**president appointed**” before the word “committee”.

### If the amendment is adopted the main motion will read

I move to create a committee to study the Clay Pigeon habitat.

## DRILL: Primary Amendment (Form 2)

**MOTION:** I move that staff visit all the mayor hospitals in the counties which have no board representative to recruit individuals for the vacant board seats.

**A:** Madam Chair, I move to amend the motion by striking ...

**Z:** ...

**CH:** It is moved and seconded to ...

Are you ready for the question?

**CH:** The motion before you is to ...

All in favor ...

All opposed ...

The .... have it.

The motion is ...

The next item on the agenda is (STOP)

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## 1° Amendment (Form 3) – Strike and Insert

### Original Main Motion

I move to create a president appointed committee to study the Clay Pigeon habitat.

### What you really wanted was ...

I want to study Lawn Flamingos, not the Clay Pigeons.

### You need to move to amend

I move to amend by striking “**Clay Pigeon**” before the word “habitat” and inserting “**Lawn Flamingo**”.

### If the amendment is adopted the main motion will read

I move to create a president appointed committee to study the **Lawn Flamingo** habitat.

## DRILL: Primary Amendment (Form 3)

**MOTION:** I move that staff visit all the mayor hospitals in the counties which have no board representative to recruit individuals for the vacant board seats.

**A:** Madam Chair, I move to amend the motion by striking ... and inserting ...

**Z:** ...

**CH:** It is moved and seconded to ...

Are you ready for the question?

**CH:** The motion before you is to ...

All in favor ...

All opposed ...

The .... have it.

The motion is ...

The next item on the agenda is (STOP)



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## 2° Amendment – Any of the 3 Forms

### Original Main Motion

I move to create a committee to study the Clay Pigeon habitat.

### You want to move to amend (Primary Amendment)

I move to amend by inserting “**of 3 members**” after the word “committee”.

### You want to move to amend (Secondary Amendment)

I move to amend by striking “**3**” and inserting “**2**”.

### If the amendments are adopted, the main motion will read

I move to create a committee **of 2 members** to study the Clay Pigeon habitat.

## DRILL: Secondary Amendment (used on either of the 3 forms)

**MOTION:** I move that staff visit all the mayor hospitals in the counties which have no board representative to recruit individuals for the vacant board seats.

**A:** Madam Chair, I move to amend the motion by inserting ...

**Z:** ...

**CH:** It is moved and seconded to ...

Are you ready for the question?

**CH:** The motion before you is to ...

All in favor ...

All opposed ...

The .... have it.

The motion is ...

The next item on the agenda is (STOP)



## Purpose and Form for Each Motion

(Beware of Order of Precedence)

Purpose	The Motion and its Form
Propose some action	<b>Main Motion</b> I move to donate \$50 to preserve the habitat of the Clay Pigeon.
Improve a proposal	<b>Amend</b> I move to amend the motion by striking \$50 and inserting \$75.
Change the amount of time for discussion	<b>Limit or Extend Debate</b> I move to limit debate to 1 minute per speaker.
Stop discussion and vote now	<b>Close Debate</b> I call the previous question.
Delay a decision	<b>Refer</b> I move to refer the motion to the bylaws committee  <b>Postpone to a Certain Time</b> I move to postpone the motion until after the break.  <b>Recess</b> I move to recess for 5 minutes.
Kill a motion	<b>Postpone Indefinitely</b> I move to postpone the motion indefinitely.
Deal with an emergency	<b>Lay on the Table</b> I move to lay the motion on the table.  <b>Suspend the Rules (Not Suspend the Orders of the Day)</b> I move to suspend the rules that prohibit us from taking up the new business now.
Obtain information	<b>Parliamentary Inquiry</b> Mr. Chair, if we adopt this motion can we rescind it tomorrow?  <b>Request for Information</b> Mr. Chair, can the treasurer tell us if we have enough money for this motion?
Challenge the ruling of the chair	<b>Point of Order</b> Point of Order. We cannot vote on this motion. There is already another motion on the floor.  <b>Appeal</b> I appeal from the decision of the chair.
Assure the accuracy of the voice vote	<b>Division</b> Division. Division.
Close the meeting	<b>Adjourn</b> I move to adjourn.



## Strategy through Parliamentary Procedure

(Beware of Order of Precedence)

You support the motion	You oppose the motion
<b>Second</b> it promptly and enthusiastically.	Do not <b>second</b> it. Distract the seconder.
<b>Speak</b> in favor of it as soon as possible.	<b>Speak</b> against it as soon as possible. Ask questions that put the proponents on the defensive.
Move to <b>amend</b> it to make it more acceptable. Speak against any amendment that makes the motion less acceptable to you.	Move to <b>amend</b> it, to encumber it adversely. Move to amend it so as to remove what displeases you, or adds what pleases you.
Vote against <b>postponement</b> unless it will strengthen your motion.	Move to <b>postpone</b> to a time when your friends will be there or when others will forget about the motion.
Vote against <b>referring</b> to a committee unless you can vote your friends as committee members. Vote to refer to a committee if defeat appears likely.	Move to <b>refer</b> to a committee and fill the committee with your friends. Vote against referring to a committee if defeat is likely.
Vote against a <b>recess</b> unless you can use it to bring in more of your friends or more facts.	Move to <b>recess</b> so that you can convince some more voters or bring in more friends or more facts.
Make sure your friends do not leave to assure that you have a <b>quorum</b> .	Question the presence of a <b>quorum</b> .
On a <b>voice vote</b> , vote emphatically.	On a <b>voice vote</b> , vote emphatically.
Move to <b>divide the motion</b> if it will strengthen the motion.	Move to <b>divide the motion</b> if it will weaken the motion.
Review your <b>parliamentary authority</b> before the motion comes up.	Review your <b>parliamentary authority</b> before the motion comes up.
Use <b>Point of Order</b> as a shield.	Use <b>Point of Order</b> as a sword.
Beware of the timing on the <b>agenda</b> to assure that the motion is not abandoned.	Use the timing on the <b>agenda</b> to terminate consideration of the motion.
Vote against <b>adjournment</b> in order to continue discussing the motion and to reach a vote.	Move to <b>adjourn</b> to prevent further discussion or a vote.

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## Ranking of Selected Motions

	Interrupt	Second	Debate	Amend	Vote
<b>PRIVILEGED MOTIONS</b>					
13. Fix the Time to Which to Adjourn		S		A	M
12. Adjourn		S			M
11. Take a Recess		S		A	M
10. Raise a Question of Privilege	I				C
9. Call for the Orders of the Day	I				C**
<b>SUBSIDIARY MOTIONS</b>					
8. Lay on the Table		S			M
7. Previous Question		S			2/3
6. Limit or Extend Limits of Debate		S		A	2/3
5. Postpone to a Certain Time		S	D	A	M**
4. Commit (Refer)		S	D	A	M
3. Amend		S	D**	A	M
2. Postpone Indefinitely		S	D		M
1. MAIN MOTION		S	D	A	M
<b>INCIDENTAL MOTIONS (No Ranking)</b>					
Appeal	I	S	D		M
Division of Assembly	I				**
Point of Order	I				C**
Request for Information					C
Suspend the Orders that ...		S			2/3
<b>BRING AGAIN BEFORE ASSEMBLY</b>					
Rescind/Amend Something Prev Adopted		S	D**	A	**
Reconsider		S	D		M
Discharge a Committee		S	D**	A	**
Take from the Table		S			M

\*\* See Robert's Rules  
 C Chair Decides  
 I Can Interrupt

S  
 A, D  
 M or 2/3

Requires a Second  
 May be Amended, Debated  
 Vote Required to Adopt