



## CITY OF SAN PABLO ADMINISTRATIVE POLICY

### Disruptions of the City's Telephone or Internet Services During City Council Meetings

EFFECTIVE: **DATE**

#### I. Purpose

Senate Bill 707 (2025) amended the Brown Act to require eligible legislative bodies to adopt, by July 1, 2026, a policy addressing disruptions to the City's telephone or internet services that prevent the public from remotely attending or observing City Council meetings.

This policy is adopted in compliance with Government Code section 54953.4 and establishes procedures for responding to such disruptions during meetings of the San Pablo City Council. The purpose of this policy is to promote transparency, preserve meaningful public access and participation in open meetings, and ensure the public's ability to observe, provide comment, and engage in the legislative process to the greatest extent possible when remote access technology is utilized. The policy also provides guidance on appropriate actions to maintain compliance with the Brown Act when technical interruptions impair or prevent remote public access.

#### II. Scope

This policy applies to all open and public meetings of the San Pablo City Council that provide real-time remote access to the public via telephone or Internet-based audiovisual platforms.

#### III. Definitions

- a. Disruption of service: Any interruption or failure of the City's telephone or Internet service that prevents the public from observing or participating in a meeting through the available remote access platform.
- b. Telephone or Internet service: Any technology selected by the City of San Pablo that allows the public to hear, view, and/or participate remotely in real time.

#### **IV. Roles and Responsibilities**

- a. The City Attorney (or designee) and/or Presiding Officer (Mayor) - Declares the start and end of the recess. Announces the disruption, calls for a recess, and announces when the meeting resumes or is adjourned.
- b. City Clerk - Oversees implementation of this policy, ensures the disruption response is carried out. Documents the nature and duration of the disruption in the official record.
- c. Information Technology (IT) Department - Provides technical support, platform redundancy, and ensures reliable remote access systems are in place.

#### **V. Procedures**

In the event of disruption, interruption or failure of the City's telephone or Internet service that prevents the public from observing or participating in a meeting through the available remote access platform:

##### a. Recess the Meeting

##### i. The City Attorney (or designee) and/or Presiding Officer (Mayor) will:

1. Immediately announce the disruption to the Public.
2. The Presiding Officer may then call for a recess of the open session or convene the legislative body in closed session, consistent with the Brown Act.
3. City IT staff shall begin good faith efforts to diagnose and restore disrupted service or implement a reasonable alternative. These efforts shall include, but are not limited to:
  - a. Troubleshooting platform or teleconferencing software;
  - b. Restarting or switching platforms;
  - c. Resetting or replacing audiovisual equipment;
  - d. Attempting alternative connection methods;
  - e. Contacting necessary support staff or service providers; and
  - f. Switching to back-up equipment or platforms, if available.

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1. If Service is Restored - The open session may be reconvened after at least one hour has elapsed from the time of disruption or as soon as service is restored, whichever occurs earlier.
2. If Service is Not Restored – If service is not restored after one hour, the San Pablo City Council may reconvene and:
  - a. Adjourn and reschedule the remaining items to a later date and time, giving notice consistent with the Brown Act; or
  - b. Continue the meeting in open session, provided the in-person location – City Hall Council Chambers at 1000 Gateway Avenue, San Pablo, Ca 94806 remains open and accessible to the public, and the body announces that remote participation is unavailable by adopting, by roll call vote, the following, or a substantially similar, finding:

“The San Pablo City Council and Staff have made good faith efforts to restore telephone or internet service in accordance with its adopted policy, and the public interest in continuing the meeting outweighs the public interest in remote public access.”
  - c. Upon adoption of the finding, the legislative body may continue the open session despite the fact that remote access services have not been restored.

**VI. Recordkeeping and Notice to the Public**

All meeting agendas for the San Pablo City Council shall include a standard statement substantially as follows: “In accordance with Government Code § 54953.4, if a disruption occurs that prevents the public from viewing or participating in this meeting through the telephone or Internet-based platform, the meeting will be recessed for at least one hour while the City attempts to restore service. If service cannot be restored, the legislative body may continue the meeting in person or reschedule remaining agenda items.”

- a. City Clerk shall document which restoration actions are performed.
  - i. The Clerk shall enter a brief statement into the meeting minutes, including the following:
  - ii. The nature and time of the disruption
  - iii. The restoration efforts undertaken
  - iv. The time the meeting was reconvened (if applicable)
  - v. Any finding adopted pursuant to the roll call vote related to the disruption.
- b. The City will make reasonable efforts to encourage participation and may utilize communication tools, including but not limited to:

- i. City website
- ii. Email notifications
- iii. Agenda subscription services
- iv. Social media platforms
- v. Newsletters
- vi. Public counters and facilities
- vii. Bulletin board
- viii. Community meetings
- ix. Other established communication methods

**VII. Review and Updates**

This policy may be amended by the **San Pablo City Council** at a noticed public meeting in open session, not on the consent calendar.