

Transit Advisory Commission Working Rules

Adopted: 7/19/22

This set of informal working rules guides the way commission members work together in an environment of mutual respect and trust. Working rules should either be reviewed annually or as new members join the commission.

1. The Transit Advisory Commission serves in an advisory capacity to King County Metro's General Manager, the King County Council, the King County Executive, regional sub-area transportation forums and local jurisdictions on transit issues and policies, including matters of concern to the elderly and persons with disabilities.
2. Members do not formally represent a group, agency or council district, but share the perspectives of their diverse communities.
3. Members who are employees of jurisdictions within the service area serve as individuals, not as spokespersons for the jurisdictions.
4. King County employees are not allowed to be members of County community advisory committees.
5. Members who may have relevant contractual relationships with the County are asked to disclose that information to the other members of the Commission and to not participate in discussions or votes on related issues, consistent with King County Code 3.04.
6. Members who cannot fulfill their duties on the Commission should consider resigning. Attendance at meetings is an important part of fulfilling duties as a member. While strict attendance at all meetings is not a requirement, demonstrating good faith effort to participate in commission business is. Members should communicate to commission staff if they cannot attend a meeting. This constitutes an excused absence. If a member does not attend a meeting and has not communicated with staff that they won't be attending, this constitutes an unexcused absence.

Members who have three unexcused absences in one calendar year can expect to receive a phone call from commission staff to discuss their ability to continue to serve on the commission and fulfill their duties. Members who have 50% or more excused or unexcused absences during their term will not be nominated to serve a second term.

In addition to meeting attendance, other ways a commission member might demonstrate their commitment to fulfilling their duties could include participating in commission work that happens in between monthly meetings or contributing to meeting discussion in advance of a meeting they cannot attend.

7. Members who resign from the Transit Advisory Commission are asked to provide a formal letter of resignation.
8. Members who are not able to attend a Commission meeting cannot designate substitutes on their behalf.
9. Staff liaison provides materials and information to the whole group, not to individual members.
10. Meeting documents will be delivered in a timely manner via email. Members are expected to review materials and prepare for each meeting.

11. Members of the Commission should not represent themselves as speaking for the group unless directed by the group to do so. This working rule in no way restricts individual members, in their capacity as residents, from interacting with elected officials, the media or community organizations. The chair and vice-chair may act as spokespersons as directed by the Commission.
12. Persons who are not members of the Commission may attend advisory group meetings as guests but may not participate in group discussions and consensus deliberations. Non-members may provide brief comments or questions, at the discretion of the chair.
13. Members of the Transit Advisory Commission have the right to be treated in a civil and respectful manner. "We can disagree without being disagreeable."
14. The chair shall endeavor to provide time for every member to speak on each agenda item. A talking order will be established for each meeting, allowing every member an equal opportunity to speak in the order they are listed. Members will agree to share talking time by limiting their questions and comments to 1 minute. After each TAC member has had a chance to speak, the talking order will be repeated.
15. The commission uses agreement-seeking consensus with fallback voting as its decision-making model. If consensus cannot be reached after a few tries, the group can come to consensus to vote on an issue. If a member is not in attendance at a meeting when a decision is made, they can ask to express their opinion on the matter at a future meeting but accepts that the decision is final. Members will be made aware in advance of a meeting if a decision-making process will take place on any agenda item. If they have opinions about the decision, they are advised to express them to commission staff and the chair so they can be represented in the discussion in the commission member's absence.
16. Members are encouraged to direct questions or concerns about other Commission members, Commission rulings or Commission decisions to the staff member assigned to the Commission for resolution with the chair.
17. Commission discussions on substantive issues conducted via e-mail are a violation of Washington State's Open Meetings Act. Members should exercise care and discretion with the use of the e-mail distribution list. Staff liaison shall coordinate all e-mail distributions. These rules do not prohibit an individual member from conducting e-mail discussions with another individual member.
18. Commission members are required by King County Ordinance to use a county email address for communication related to their service on the commission. The use of email to advance work program items in between meetings must be chartered at a regular monthly meeting of the commission. This communication must be reported to the full commission at a regular monthly meeting for the purposes of decision-making and to charter any action by the commission as a whole.
19. Members of the Transit Advisory Commission who wish to place an item on the agenda should contact both the chair and the staff liaison by e-mail. The e-mail should 1) give the agenda topic, 2) explain why it is important for the commission to take it up and 3) provide an action item for the discussion. Placement on the agenda is at the discretion of the chair and vice-chair during the agenda-setting meeting. Either the chair or the staff liaison will contact the member following the agenda-setting meeting to inform them of the outcome of the discussion.