

**RULES OF PROCEDURE, CONDUCT AND DECORUM AT MEETINGS OF THE
MONTGOMERY COUNTY COMMISSIONERS COURT**

- I. All Regular, Special, and Emergency Meetings of the Montgomery County Commissioners Court will be called and conducted in accordance with the provisions of the Texas Open Meetings Act, Chapter 551, Government Code.
- II. Regular, Special and Emergency Meetings of the Montgomery County Commissioners Court are open to the public and to representatives of the press and media. Executive Sessions of the Commissioners Court are not open to the public, the press or the media, and only those individuals expressly requested or ordered to be present are allowed to attend Executive Sessions.
- III. The Montgomery County Commissioners Court meets in Regular Session on every other Tuesday of each month, or as set forth on the court date calendar adopted by the Commissioners Court. In order for a matter or issue to appear as an agenda item on the Agenda of any Regular Meeting of the Commissioners Court, a request must be filed with and approved by at least one member of the Commissioners Court by 10:00 a.m. on the Wednesday immediately preceding the next Regular Meeting of the Commissioners Court.
- IV. The business of Montgomery County is conducted by and between the members of the Montgomery County Commissioners Court and by those members of the county staff, elected officials, appointed officials, department heads, consultants, experts and/or members of the public requested to be present and participate. While the public is invited to attend all meetings of the Commissioners Court (except Executive Sessions) the public's participation therein is limited to that of observers unless a member (or members) of the public is requested to address the Commissioners Court on a particular issue (or issues) or unless the member (or members) of the public either signs up on a Public Comment list just prior to the Commissioners Court meeting, or completes a Public Comment Form and submits same to the County Judge by 9:15 a.m. or at least 15 minutes prior to the beginning of the meeting at which the agenda item will be discussed. A sample of the Montgomery County Commissioners Court Public Comment Form is attached hereto as Exhibit A.
 - A. Each member of the public who appears before the Commissioners Court on a specific agenda item or items shall be limited to a cumulative maximum of three (3) minutes to make his/her remarks. Time for each speaker shall be maintained by the County Judge or such other designated representative of the Commissioners Court. No speaker is permitted to accumulate speaking time from another person. Each member of the public who appears before the Commissioners Court for the general Public Comment portion of the agenda for

an item or items not on the agenda shall be limited to a cumulative maximum of three (3) minutes to make his/her remarks.

- B. Maximum discussion on any agenda item, regardless of the number of members of the public wishing to address the Commissioners Court on such agenda item (or items) shall be limited to thirty (30) minutes. In the event that more than ten (10) members of the public wish to address a particular agenda item, only the first ten (10) members of the public who have completed and submitted a Public Comment Form will be permitted to speak. The Court, through the County Judge, reserves the right to limit speakers if in the Court's judgment an issue has been sufficiently discussed and additional speakers are repetitive. A speaker who is not present at the time his or her name is called will forfeit their opportunity to speak, except at the general Public Comment period at the end of Commissioners Court.
- C. In matters of exceptional interest, the Court may, by the majority vote of the members of the Court in attendance at the meeting, either shorten or lengthen the time allocated for a particular member of the public, all members of the public and/or the amount of time allocated for all agenda items and/or a specific agenda item.
- D. It is the intention of the Court to provide an open access to the citizens of Montgomery County to address the Commissioners Court and to express themselves on issues of county government. Members of the public are reminded that the Montgomery County Commissioners Court is a Constitutional Court, with both judicial and legislative powers, created under Article V, Section 1 and Section 18 of the Texas Constitution. As a Constitutional Court, the Montgomery County Commissioners Court also possesses the power to issue a Contempt of Court Citation under Section 81.023 of the Texas Local Government Code. Accordingly, all members of the public in attendance at any Regular, Special and/or Emergency meeting of the Court shall conduct themselves with proper respect and decorum in speaking to, and/or addressing the Court; in participating in public discussions before the Court; and in all actions in the presence of the Court. Proper attire is required for all individuals who appear in Court. Those members of the public who are inappropriately attired and/or who do not conduct themselves in an orderly and appropriate manner will be ordered to leave the meeting. Refusal to abide by the Court's order and/or continued disruption of the meeting may result in a Contempt of Court Citation.
- E. It is not the intention of the Montgomery County Commissioners Court to provide a public forum for the demeaning of any individual or group. Neither is it the intention of the Court to allow any speaker to insult the honesty and/or integrity of the Court, as a body, any member or members of the Court, individually or collectively, any elected or appointed official or county employee or a member or

members of the public in attendance. Accordingly, profane, insulting, demeaning or threatening language directed toward the Court, any person in the Court's presence, any elected or appointed official or county employee, and/or racial, ethnic, or gender slurs or epithets will not be tolerated. Violation of these rules may result in the following sanctions:

1. Cancellation of a speaker's remaining time;
2. Removal from the Commissioners Courtroom;
3. A Contempt Citation; and/or
4. Such other civil and/or criminal sanctions as may be authorized under the Constitution, Statutes and Codes of the State of Texas.

- V. The County Judge is the presiding officer of the Montgomery County Commissioners Court and is a fully participating member thereof. In the event of the absence of the County Judge, the senior member of the Commissioners Court (in terms of total number of years as an elected representative of the county) present at the Regular, Special, Emergency meeting or Executive Session, shall serve as the Judge Pro-Tem of the Court. However, nothing herein shall prevent the senior member of this Commissioners Court from delegating this duty to another member of the Commissioners Court.
- VI. The County Judge (or the designated Judge Pro-Tem of the Commissioners Court), as presiding officer of the Commissioners Court, is responsible for conducting all meetings, and members of the public who have properly completed a Public Comment Form and submitted same to the County Judge must wait to be recognized before they will be allowed to address the court.
- VII. Special rules for the press and media:
- A. No media personnel or equipment, including lights, cameras or microphones, will be located on the Commissioners Court bench nor closer than six (6') feet in front of the Commissioners Court bench.
 - B. Reporters and media technicians are required to structure their movements, equipment setup and takedown and adjustments, etc., in such a manner as to not disrupt the Commissioners Court deliberations or the ability of the public to see, hear, and participate in the proceedings.
 - C. Interviews shall not be conducted inside the Commissioners Courtroom during the time the Court is in session.
 - D. Media interviews which are conducted outside the Commissioners Courtroom should be conducted in such a manner that the interview does not disturb, impede or disrupt the proceedings of any regular, special, or emergency and/or executive session of the court.

- VIII. The Sheriff of Montgomery County, Texas, or his designated deputy, shall serve as the bailiff at all Regular, Special and Emergency meetings of the Court. However, in the event of the absence of the sheriff, or in the event that there exists a conflict of interest between the sheriff, any member of the sheriff's department, and the Commissioners Court, or in the event of an Executive Session of the Court in which the Sheriff is not an authorized participant, then in such event, the Court shall appoint such other commissioned peace officers to serve as bailiff as may be necessary.
- IX. From time to time, the Commissioners Court may conduct town meetings and public hearings. These Rules of Procedure, Conduct and Decorum shall also apply to such town meetings and public hearings; however, the Commissioners Court may adopt such additional and supplemental rules as may be necessary and appropriate to conduct such meetings in an orderly, efficient and proper manner.
- X. These Rules of Procedure, Conduct and Decorum shall be implemented at the next immediate meeting of the Commissioners Court following adoption, and shall remain in full force and effect until amended or repealed by a majority vote of the Commissioners Court.

PASSED AND APPROVED this the 26th day of June, 2018.

MONTGOMERY COUNTY, TEXAS

Craig Doyal, County Judge

Mike Meador, Commissioner Pct. 1

Charlie Riley, Commissioner Pct. 2

James Noack, Commissioner Pct. 3

Jim Clark, Commissioner Pct. 4

PUBLIC COMMENT FORM

Commissioners Court meetings and public hearings are recorded. They are a part of the permanent and public record of the Montgomery County Commissioners Court.

Completed forms and any documentation may be submitted in person on the day of Commissioners Court **prior to 9:15 a.m.**

Persons who have registered to speak shall be given three (3) minutes cumulative to speak before the Court for one or more agenda items, depending on the number of speakers. Persons who have registered to speak for the Public Comment period shall be given three (3) minutes to speak before the Court. Commissioners Court is restricted in discussing or taking action on items not posted on the agenda.

It is not the intention of the Montgomery County Commissioners Court to provide a public forum for the demeaning of any individual or group. Neither is it the intention of the Court to allow any speaker to insult the honesty and/or integrity of the Court, as a body, or members of the Court (individually or collectively) or a member or members of the public in attendance. Accordingly, profane, insulting or threatening language directed to the Court, members of this Court, or members of the public, will not be tolerated. If this occurs, it may result in the cancellation of a speaker's remaining time; AND/OR removal from the Commissioners Courtroom.

Date: _____ Name: _____

Address: _____ (optional)

Phone: _____ (optional) Commissioner Precinct you reside in: _____

Agenda item(s) you wish to speak on (if not listed on agenda please leave blank):

_____ *Example 9(H)(1)*

Optional: I do not wish to speak however please record my position:

Agenda Item: _____	For _____	Against _____
Agenda Item: _____	For _____	Against _____
Agenda Item: _____	For _____	Against _____

Other Comments: _____

*We appreciate your attendance and interest in Montgomery County.
Please be advised this form may be subject to a Public Information request.*

Exhibit A