

Melissa Hortman
Speaker of the House

District 36B
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Minnesota House of Representatives

TO: House Members and Staff
FROM: Representative Melissa Hortman, Speaker of the House
RE: House 2022 Session Operations
DATE: January 28, 2022

During these unprecedented times, we have adjusted the operations of the Minnesota House of Representatives to ensure the safety of members and staff given the unpredictable nature of the COVID-19 pandemic. Just like private and public employers have had to postpone plans for a return to in-person work, the House will continue remote and hybrid operations through the 2022 legislative Session. As Session begins next week, I wanted to again outline House operations:

Committee Hearings

- House Committee hearings will be conducted remotely. Limited exceptions will be made for hybrid meetings in Capitol 120, which is now outfitted with the appropriate technology. Requests to use Capitol 120 will be considered by the Speaker's office on a case-by-case basis. Masks will be required for the public and media attending hybrid committees as long as the House mask requirement is in effect.

House Floor Sessions

- Given the robust nature of our remote voting system, House floor sessions will continue to be conducted with a remote participant option. Members may choose to attend floor sessions in person at their permanently assigned desks. Members wishing to participate remotely will contact their designated caucus leadership staff at least one hour prior to the start of Session who will relay their attendance information to the Chief Clerk's office.
- Only elected members of the House and House staff essential to daily proceedings will be allowed on the House floor during Session. The House retiring room is reserved for the exclusive use of designated leadership and non-partisan staff during Session. Family members or other member guests may utilize the caucus rooms or other public spaces in the Capitol.
- Limited seating will be available to the public and the press in the House gallery during a House floor session. The press may approach members on the floor once Session concludes. Please direct inquiries on the use of the gallery to the Sergeants Office.

Mask requirements

- Masks are required to be properly worn by all persons, regardless of vaccination status, in all spaces under House control in the Capitol and the State Office Building, unless members or staff are in their own office with the doors closed. Staff may attend in-person meetings when required, only if all

persons present are masked. In addition, masks are required to be worn while attending off site meetings while on House time. Given the nature of the highly transmissible omicron COVID-19 variant, it is strongly encouraged that N95 and KN95 masks be used. If you need one of these masks, please contact the Sergeants Office. I am asking the House Rules Committee to reinstitute a policy that complies with these requirements.

State Office Building Status

The State Office Building will remain closed to the public, and any others who are not building tenants due to the pandemic and ongoing building security concerns. The House telecommuting policy remains in effect. Staff may continue to receive permission from their caucus or non-partisan department directors to come into the office to perform duties that cannot be performed remotely. Meeting space in the Capitol can be reserved for in-person meetings with constituents and stakeholders. Please follow this link to reserve space: <https://fmd-inquiry.state.mn.us/>