



# WATER RESOURCE DEPARTMENT RULES ADVISORY COMMITTEE

## General Operation Principles

### I. PURPOSE AND ROLES

The Water Resource Department (Department) organizes a Rules Advisory Committee (RAC) to seek input and advice on rules from stakeholders before the agency gives notice of the Water Resources Commission's intent to adopt, amend or repeal a rule. As a RAC member, you provide input that will help the Department consider various perspectives to develop rules that are fair, workable, and consistent with the intent of the statutes and the State's policy goals. The RAC will also help the Department develop informative rulemaking notices and better understand the fiscal impact and cost of compliance of proposed rule changes.

#### a. Duties and Responsibilities

An individual that commits to serving on the RAC, agrees to fulfill his or her responsibilities through attending and participating in meetings, studying available information, and providing recommendations and information to the Department.

Members will provide feedback and input on the draft rules, as well as review the Statement of Fiscal Impact and Cost of Compliance.

Members acknowledge that the group's role is to provide information and recommendations to the Director via Department staff, and that rulemaking authority rests with Department and the Water Resource Commission (Commission). RAC members provide information and advice to the Director, but do not make final decisions on rules that will be presented to the Commission.

#### b. Membership

Membership is solely at the Department's and/or Commission's discretion. Membership is intended to represent a diversity of expertise, skill sets, and viewpoints.

#### c. WRD'S Role

In addition to facilitating meetings, the Department staff will provide technical support, subject-matter expertise, and administrative assistance. Staff will strive to conduct meetings in a manner that fosters collaboration and consensus building, and to ensure that all opinions are heard and considered by the group. Staff will also seek to identify policy options that the Department has authority to implement.

Members are strongly encouraged to speak with staff about concerns about the process, as well as any recommendations the Department can implement to improve the rulemaking process.

### II. OPERATING PROCEDURES

#### a. Protocols

All members agree to act in good faith in all aspects of the RAC process. This includes being honest and refraining from undertaking actions that will undermine the process, as well as behavior and communication outside of meetings.

Expectations include:

- Members should try to attend all meetings. If a meeting is missed, the member is encouraged to contact Department staff for a briefing. Members may be represented by alternates with a minimum of 24-hours' notice to the Department staff contact below. Members are expected to ensure that the alternate is up to speed on information and any previous conversations, so that they can fully participate. Members should minimize the use of alternates.
- Members will participate fully in letting the group know their perspective on issues, their concerns, and their differing points of view. At the same time, members will respect time constraints and will share the speaking time with others.
- Members agree to be respectful at all times of other representatives, staff, and audience members. They agree to listen to each other to seek to understand the perspectives of others, even if they disagree, and help to find ways to address concerns.
- Members agree that, while sharing opinions is welcomed, the intent is to listen to a variety of viewpoints that they may or may not agree with.
- Members agree to refrain from personal attacks, intentionally undermining the process, or publicly criticizing or misrepresenting positions taken by other participants during the process. Any reporting to constituents, the media, or other parties will focus on issues and not individuals. While not precluded from communicating with the media, participants should defer to Department for all media communications related to the process and recommendations.
- Any written communications, including e-mails, blogs, and other social networking media, must be mindful of these procedural ground rules, and must maintain a respectful tone even if highlighting different perspectives.
- E-mails and other electronic communications, such as social networking messages, meant for the entire group should be sent to Department staff for distribution to the group.
- Requests for information made outside of meetings must be directed to the staff contact.
- All participation in the process is voluntary and may be withdrawn. However, members agree that before withdrawing they will discuss the reason for their withdrawal with the staff and, if appropriate, the other members to provide an opportunity to understand the reasons for withdrawal and to encourage continued participation.

## **b. Meetings and Records**

Meetings are open to the public.

RAC records are public records. Communications of the RAC are not confidential.

“Communications” refers to all statements made during meetings, memoranda, work projects, records, documents, or materials developed, including social media and electronic mail correspondence (ORS 192.410(4)).