

Guidelines for Submitting Resolutions for the Episcopal Church in Minnesota Convention

When preparing a resolution, please use these guidelines and the Standing Rules of Order.

Resolution

Resolutions call on the Episcopal Church in Minnesota to take specific action; commend or commemorate a person, event, or other matter; take up legislative action on a particular topic but do not have specific steps to do this; or take a stance on a particular issue. A diocese can also adopt a resolution asking the General Convention, the governing body of The Episcopal Church, to take action, study a matter, or do any of the other things listed in this paragraph.

About Explanations

A common point of confusion when writing a resolution is that an additional section can be included with the text of the resolution itself – the explanation. The explanation is not part of the resolution. An explanation is optional but is to assist in the deliberation and decision-making process.

ECMN Canon on Resolutions

ECMN Canon 214.2 provides, in part, that:

Any resolution that concerns finances; international, national, or social matters; changes in the Constitution or Canons; or major changes in or commitments as to policy shall be prepared in writing, signed by the sponsor(s), and submitted to the Secretary of Convention **not fewer than ninety (90) days prior to Convention.**

Standing Rules of Order

Rule #15 of the Standing Rules of Order that govern ECMN Conventions:

Resolutions that have not been submitted to the Secretary of Convention and the Committee on Constitution, Canons, and Resolutions for consideration may not be introduced at Convention. However, the Chair may, at his or her discretion, make an exception and entertain any resolution of the nature described above and recommend its introduction at Convention. If such recommendation is approved by a majority vote of the Convention, the resolution shall be received and considered by Convention.

Resources for Preparing Resolutions

The Archives of The Episcopal Church

<https://www.episcopalarchives.org/>

The Archives of the Episcopal Church are an excellent tool for researching your resolution's topic. Some particularly helpful areas to search under the Digital Archives section of the Archives website include:

- Acts of Convention
- Episcopal News Service (ENS) articles

Helpful Questions to Consider

Some helpful questions to ask while researching to prepare your resolution include:

- 1) Has this been proposed before? If so, was it ECMN or was it the governing body of

The Episcopal Church, the General Convention, that did so? If either has already acted, what are you asking that is different?

- 2) Are other people or groups working on this issue or topic? Are they planning to submit resolutions? While only voting delegates (lay or ordained) are eligible to submit a resolution, it is a good practice to have the wider support of a congregation, a mission area, or a partnering entity to endorse the resolution.
- 3) What other resolutions have been passed by previous Conventions of the Episcopal Church in Minnesota or the General Conventions that relate to this topic?
- 4) Which governing body, person or office of ECMN would be responsible for acting on a resolution of this kind?
- 5) What kind of language does this resolution require? Would the work called for be best explained by a broad statement or a more detailed outline? (Specificity is helpful but can unnecessarily limit the scope of a resolution.)

Writing Resolutions

There are the two components you may include when crafting legislation:

1. Resolution

This is the act or actions being proposed and to be voted upon.

2. Explanation (*optional*)

This provides any additional details and information to support the resolution.

General guidelines – applies to all resolutions

For resolutions that amend the Constitution or Canons, please use the following and see additional instructions further below.

- A resolution should have **one topic**.
- A resolution **may require specific action**. Resolutions don't have to say how to achieve that action. To put it another way, resolutions must be *descriptive* of the action(s) to be taken by the Church, but it does not have to be *prescriptive* of every step of the process.
- Use the **subjunctive** verb tense. *Examples*: "That the Convention *adopt* the following statement . . ." (instead of 'adopts'); "That the Convention *confirm*" (instead of 'confirms').
- If a resolution contains more than one resolved clause, the clauses should be joined with a semicolon followed by the words "and be it further" and then a line break. For example:

Resolved, That the 80th Convention {text of first resolve} ; and be it further

Resolved, {text of the second resolve}

Ideally, resolutions should not contain more than three resolve clauses for reasons of clarity and execution.

- Resolutions **cannot** be submitted if the passage of one is dependent on the passage of another, separate resolution. *No conditional language about the passage will be accepted*. The two must be submitted together as different resolved clauses of the same resolution so Convention can discuss them as one unit. For example, a resolution that calls for changing the Canons in one section but can only occur if another section of the Canons is changed must be submitted as one resolution.
- Things you **cannot** use in the text of the resolution itself (but you can use in the explanation):
 - o Preambles or "whereas" clauses. Use the explanation section for further information, context, and rationale for the resolution.

- o Links to websites. Those can be included in the explanation.
- o Refer to or attach proposed local, state, or national legislation or bills. They often change and may have “riders” attached that do not refer to the intent of the resolution being proposed.

Title

Include a brief descriptive title to highlight the area of legislation. Titles should address the *subject* of the resolution, not its proposed outcome. *Example:* Support for Seminarians. For resolutions that propose amendments to the Constitution or Canons, the title should consist of the article or canon and a brief description. *Example:* “Amend Canon 1.17.1.c To Clarify Full Communion.”

Explanation

The purpose, intentions, and justifications for a resolution should be included in the explanation which immediately follows the text of the resolution. After the text of the resolution, include a line break and then **Explanation** in bold to indicate the new section. Since the explanation is not part of the official text of the resolution, it can include links, references to other documents, and historical context for the resolution. *Please limit explanations to a few paragraphs.*

Editing and Review

ECMN Canon 213 provides that the Constitution, Canons, and Resolutions Committee of Convention “reviews, recommends, and drafts proposed amendments and new provisions to the Constitution and Canons of the Episcopal Church in Minnesota, as well as reviews resolutions that have been submitted in accordance with Canon 214.2.”

Canon 214.2 provides that the Constitution, Canons, and Resolutions Committee considers all resolutions submitted “and prepare[s] written reports thereon referencing any changes thereto recommended by the Committee.”

Amending the Constitution and Canons

- A. Begin your resolve clause with the article or canon reference. *Example:* “That Canon 1.17.1.c is hereby amended to read as follows . . .”
- B. The Constitution and Canons **must be quoted exactly—do not paraphrase anything**. To minimize errors, we recommend that you copy and paste the text you are amending from the electronic version of the ECMN Constitution and Canons, which can be found at:
 Constitution:
<https://episcopalmn.org/sites/default/files/resource/ECMN%20CONSTITUTION-2019.pdf>
 Canons:
<https://episcopalmn.org/sites/default/files/resource/ECMN%20Canons%20as%20of%202019.pdf>
- C. Include the **entire section or paragraph** that you are amending. Do not omit any sections or use an ellipse [. . .] to skip over parts. This provides clarity when the resolution is being discussed. You **do not** need to include sections or paragraphs that are not being amended. *Example:* If only Canon IV.17.2(e) is under discussion, do not include paragraphs (d) or (f) or the entire section. Provide only the entirety of paragraph (e).
- D. Text to be **deleted** is indicated by a ~~strike-through~~ mark.
- E. Text to be **inserted** is indicated by *italics*.

- F. You may amend different sections of the Constitution and Canons in the same resolution, if:
- All of the changes address a single issue (like changing all instances of the Phrase “Provincial Court of Review” to “Court of Review”).
- or
- If the changes are dependent upon on one another. For example, if a paragraph needs to be deleted from one section and added to another.

If you are amending more than one section of the Constitution and Canons in a single resolution, each section being changed should be a separate resolved clause.

- G. When referring to the formal orders and members of them, the words Bishop, Priest, Deacon, and Lay Person and their plurals are capitalized. Outside of this context, the words are not capitalized.

Example of a resolution amending the Constitution or Canons:

Title: Amend Canon I.1.1.c to update process

Resolved, That Canon I.1.1.c is hereby amended to read as follows:

Sec. 1 .c In order to aid the Secretary of the House of Deputies in preparing the record specified in Clause (a), it shall be the duty of the Secretary of the Convention of every Diocese to forward to the Secretary of the House of Deputies, as soon as may be practicable, *an electronic* copy of the latest Journal of the Diocesan Convention, together with a certified copy of the testimonials of members aforesaid. ~~and a duplicate copy of such testimonials.~~ Where testimonials are received for persons from jurisdictions which have not previously been represented in General Convention, the Secretary of the House of Deputies shall ascertain that the applicable provisions of Article V, Section 1, of the Constitution have been complied with prior to such persons being permitted to take their seats in the House.

Deadline for Resolution Submission

The **final deadline** for submitting resolutions for the 2022 ECMN Convention is **5:00 p.m. on August 10, 2023**.

How to Submit Resolution

Please send your proposed resolution **to Karen Olson, Secretary of Convention:** at karen.o@episcopalmn.org (Subject Line: Convention Resolution)

For Questions, please contact:

Karen Olson, Secretary of Convention, 612-870-3312, karen.o@episcopalmn.org