

Village of Doylestown

Rules of Engagement Policy for Livestreaming Public Meetings to YouTube

Purpose: To establish clear expectations, procedures, and standards for livestreaming and posting recordings of public meetings of the Village Council, Boards, Committees, and Commissions to the Village's official YouTube channel, ensuring transparency, professionalism, and compliance with Ohio law.

1. Meetings Covered

- No meeting is *required* to be livestreamed. However, regular and special meetings of the Village Council, Boards, Committees, and Commissions will typically be livestreamed and/or recorded when feasible.

Executive Sessions will not be livestreamed or recorded.

2. Platform & Ownership

- Livestreaming will occur only through the official Village YouTube channel.
 - The Village retains full ownership of all livestreams and posted recordings.
 - No third-party recordings will be posted to the official channel.
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3. Public Record & Retention

- Livestreams and posted videos are considered supplementary records, not the official record.
 - The official record of any meeting remains the approved written minutes.
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4. Conduct & Content Management

- The livestream is designed for observation, not interaction. No public participation will occur through YouTube comments or chat.
 - Comments on videos will be disabled to avoid unmoderated public forums and potential First Amendment issues.
 - Recordings may only be edited for the following reasons:
 - Authorized Executive Session (ORC 121.22(G))
 - Technical or connectivity failures
 - Disruptive or unsafe audience behavior
 - Recesses or breaks
 - Necessary audio/video adjustments
 - Protection of legally confidential or personal information
 - Emergency, safety, or evacuation situations
 - Transition to non-public, ceremonial, or off-camera portions
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5. Camera, Audio, and Setup

- Cameras may capture the public body, presenters, and the public podium, while avoiding unnecessary close-ups of audience members.
- Signage will be posted at entrances stating:
“This meeting is being recorded and livestreamed to the public.”
- All speakers should use microphones to ensure audio clarity.
- If technical failure occurs, the meeting will continue in person and is not invalidated.

6. Privacy & Sensitive Information

- Speakers should be reminded that their comments will be publicly broadcast.
- **Minors** (e.g., Scouts or youth groups):
 - May be acknowledged without being required to speak on camera.
 - If speaking, their audio/video will be muted unless a parental/guardian media consent form is on file.
 - *Minor media consent forms shall be retained until the minor reaches age eighteen (18) plus four (4) years, or six (6) years from the date of creation, whichever is later.*
- Confidential, HR-related, attorney-client, safety, or otherwise protected information must not be discussed on camera.

7. Executive Session Rules

- Prior to entering Executive Session, staff will confirm that all cameras, microphones, and recording systems are disabled.

8. Meeting Decorum Expectations

- All participants—including officials, staff, and the public—are expected to conduct themselves with professionalism.
- Disruptive behavior, harassment, vulgarity, or personal attacks may result in removal under meeting rules and Ohio law.
- The Mayor or Chair may pause the livestream when necessary to restore order or during breaks.

9. Accessibility

- When feasible, the Village will enable closed captioning (auto-generated or uploaded) to support ADA accessibility.

10. Disclaimer

- A notice shall be displayed on the video or included in the description:

Disclaimer: *This livestream/recording is provided for public transparency and convenience. It is not the official record of the meeting. The approved minutes serve as the official record.*

11. Implementation & Review

- The Village Administrator is responsible for implementation, staff training, and coordinating setup and procedures.
- This policy shall be reviewed annually and updated as needed based on changes in law, technology, or best practices.