



## Parish Council Election Procedures

### As Approved at the 2020 Archdiocese Clergy-Laity Congress: Addendum D

“Due to the limitations resulting from the Covid-19 virus, which may impede full compliance with Article 25 of these Regulations, 2020 elections for Parish Council memberships may be postponed for twelve months at the discretion of any Metropolitan for any parish within his jurisdiction. In 2021 elections, parishioners elected to positions so affected shall be entitled to a two year term of service.”

In accordance with the decision of the 2020 Clergy-Laity Congress, the decision to postpone Parish Council elections may vary from city to city and parish to parish. For this reason, it is imperative to follow these guidelines of the Greek Orthodox Metropolis of San Francisco. Regarding these guidelines for Parish Council elections, should a question in procedure arise, please contact your vicar.

1. **Election Plan.** Each Parish Council will need to determine the best course of action for the safe and inclusive conduct of its parish elections. However, as a “starting point” in the decision process, the Metropolis of San Francisco will be expecting each parish to hold their parish council elections in 2020, unless the Metropolis is otherwise notified.
2. **Metropolis Approval.** *On an exception basis*, should the parish determine that, in its best interest, to delay their elections one year, the parish must submit a request for postponement, along with an explanation as to their reasoning, to the office of the Chancellor for approval by the Metropolitan.
3. **Decision Process.** The decision regarding the best course of action for a parish’s election process should result from a joint discussion between the Proistamenos and the Parish Council. A recorded vote on the Parish Council’s decision should be reflected in the minutes. Should the Parish Council fail to agree on a course of action, the matter will be referred to the Office of the Chancellor. In this event, the Proistamenos, with the understanding of the Parish Council, will communicate in writing the rationales for holding or postponing the election. Both the Proistamenos and Parish Council President will sign this letter.
4. **Election Compliance.** Should a parish wish to hold elections during 2020 or 2021, it must comply with all election guidelines contained of the Uniform Parish Regulations of the Archdiocese and their Parish Bylaws.
5. **Vote Casting.** Elections are typically “in-person” unless Parish Bylaws allow for absentee balloting.
6. **Officer Selection.** Regardless if elections are held or postponed to next year, it is advised to maintain the protocol of officer selection and have the Parish Council elect new officers at its first Parish Council meeting in January.
7. **Vacancy.** Should a vacancy occur on the Parish Council, the vacancy should be filled according to the Uniform Parish Regulations and Parish Bylaws.
8. **Oath of Office.** Due to restrictions related to social distancing and in-person gatherings, the oath of office for Parish Council members may require a new protocol. It is still advised to hold the Oath of Office at the onset of 2021. However, the determination of how to do this will reside with each respective Parish.
9. **Conflict of Interest.** Each Parish Council member will be required to sign the existing “Conflicts and Related Party Transactions Disclosure Policy Statement.”
10. **Safety.** In all cases, “in-person” voting must comply with all local Health and Safety guidelines and ensure health checks, mask wearing, social distancing, hand sanitizing and restriction of shared use writing instruments.