

San Francisco Veterans Affairs Commission

Compliance and Meeting Procedure Guide

Reviewed at Veterans Affairs Commission Meeting of January 13, 2026

(References: SF City Attorney Good Government Guide, VAC Bylaws)

Meeting Requirements

- All meetings must be open to the public and held in San Francisco.
- A meeting occurs whenever a majority of members discuss matters within the body's jurisdiction.
- All deliberations and decisions must occur during properly noticed public meetings.
- Only items listed on a properly posted public agenda may be discussed during meetings. If a commissioner has a topic idea, they must follow the process to have the topic placed on an agenda; otherwise, the commission cannot discuss it.

Notice and Agenda

- An agenda must be posted 72 hours in advance of a meeting.
- Agenda must clearly describe each item and include date, time, and location.
- Post agenda on the commission's website and send it to SF Public Library.

Public Participation

- Allow public comment on each actionable agenda item and include a general public comment period.
- Members of the public have a right to attend and speak.

Quorum and Voting

- The Commission has 13 members: quorum = 7 members.
- If quorum is not achieved, the meeting cannot be held – no discussion or action may occur.
- Votes must be public, no secret ballots.
- Per 2023 update to SFVAC bylaws – voting outcomes at meetings are based on majority of commissioners present at a meeting, not majority of the commission. (Example: if seven (7) members are present at a meeting, four (4) is majority to approve an action.)

Attendance

- Commissioners must attend in person to count toward a quorum and vote.
- Remote attendance for commissioners is only allowed if an exemption is obtained through the SF City & County Human Resources process.

Ethical Standards (Advisory Commissions)

- Transparency in advocacy: If commissioners advocate for a policy or program, they should disclose any direct personal benefit or connection to the issue.
- Avoid misrepresentation: Commissioners must not present personal opinions as the official position of the Commission unless the Commission has formally taken that position in a public meeting.
- Impartiality: Recommendations should be based on the best interests of veterans in the San Francisco Bay Area, not solely on individual circumstances.
- Public Trust: Act in a manner that promotes integrity and confidence in the advisory process.
- Fairness and Respect: Treat all participants and members of the public with courtesy and fairness.

Representing the Commission

- Commissioners must not state or imply that the Commission supports or opposes a program, policy, legislation, etc., unless the Commission has formally voted to take that position during a regular public meeting.
- When an individual commissioner is expressing their own personal views, they should clearly state that they are speaking as an individual and not on behalf of the Veterans Affairs Commission.

Transparency Laws

- Comply with Sunshine Ordinance and Brown Act.
- Avoid serial meetings (e.g., email chains among a majority of commissioners).
- Provide public access to meeting documents through posting on commission website.