

**Town of Alna Policy to Provide Remote Methods of Participation in
Public Proceedings**

October 13, 2021 (Amended April 20, 2023)

Section 1. Purpose. This policy is adopted under 1 MRSA §403-B to provide the members of the Alna Select Board and all subordinate Boards and Committees remote methods of participation in public proceedings under certain circumstances.

Section 2. Definitions. For the purposes of this section, "remote methods" means telephonic or video technology allowing simultaneous reception of information and may include other means when such means are necessary to provide reasonable accommodation to a person with a disability. Public proceedings may not be conducted by text-only means such as e-mail, text messages or chat functions.

Section 3. Requirements. Members of the Alna Select Board ~~members~~ and subordinate Boards and Committees may participate in a public proceeding using remote methods only under the following conditions:

- A. Board and Committee members are expected to be physically present for public proceedings except when being physically present is not practicable. Circumstances in which physical presence for one or more members is not practicable may include:
 - (1) The existence of an emergency or urgent issue that requires the public body to meet by remote methods; or
 - (2) Illness, other physical condition, or temporary absence from the jurisdiction of the body that causes a member of the body to face significant difficulties traveling to and attending in person at the location in the meeting notice; or
 - (3) Other matters of personal necessity or convenience.
- B. Members of the public must be provided a meaningful opportunity to attend by remote methods when Board or Committee members participate by remote methods; reasonable accommodations may be provided when necessary to provide access to individuals with disabilities.
- C. If the Board or Committee allows or is required to provide an opportunity for public input during the proceeding, an effective means of communication between the Board or Committee members and the public must be provided.
- D. The notice for the meeting must include the means by which members of the public may access the proceeding using remote methods. The notice for the meeting must also identify a location for members of the public to attend in person. The Board or Committee may limit public attendance at a proceeding solely to remote methods if there is an emergency or urgent situation that requires the body to meet only by remote methods.
- E. To be considered present for purposes of a quorum and voting, a member must establish a remote connection of sufficient quality to be heard and understood by other remote and in-person attendees.

- F. A Board or Committee member who participates in a public proceeding by remote methods is present for purposes of a quorum and voting.
- G. All votes taken during a public proceeding using remote methods must be taken by roll call vote that can be seen and heard if using video technology, and heard if using only audio technology, by the other members of the Board or Committee and the public; and
- H. The Board or Committee must make all documents and other materials considered by the Board or Committee available, electronically or otherwise, to the public who attend by remote methods to the same extent customarily available to members of the public who attend the proceedings of the Board or Committee in person, as long as additional costs are not incurred by the public body.