

COUNCIL POLICY MANUAL

**Policy 7.3.33 Disruption of Telephonic or Internet Service During  
City Council Meetings**

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**POLICY PURPOSE:**

This policy establishes procedures for responding to a disruption in the telephonic or internet services that provide two-way remote public access to meetings of the City Council, as required by the Ralph M. Brown Act (Gov. Code § 54953.4).

**POLICY STATEMENT:**

This policy applies only to meetings of the City Council; it does not apply to City Council-appointed boards and commissions.

This policy pertains to telephonic or internet services that provide two-way remote public access to meetings of the City Council. This policy does not apply to one-way television broadcasts or one-way Internet streams of City Council meetings. The meeting may carry on if one or more one-way services are disrupted, so long as two-way remote public access is functioning.

**1. Procedures in the Event of a Service Disruption**

**A. Response to Service Disruption**

If the Presiding Officer or City Clerk becomes aware of a service disruption:

- (I) “Service disruption” means a disruption of telephonic or internet service that prevents members of the public from attending or observing the meeting via the two-way telephonic service or two-way audiovisual platform.
- (II) The Presiding Officer or Clerk shall immediately announce the disruption to the public.
- (III) The Presiding Officer shall then call for a recess of the open session. A service disruption does not preclude the City Council from meeting in a closed session that has been properly noticed and announced consistent with the Ralph M. Brown Act.
- (IV) Staff shall begin efforts to diagnose and restore the disrupted service.
- (V) The meeting shall remain in recess for at least one hour or until service is restored, whichever is sooner. The recess period may be extended if restoration efforts are ongoing.

**B. Efforts to Restore Service**

City staff shall make good faith efforts to restore remote access services, which may include:

- (I) Troubleshooting platform or teleconferencing software
- (II) Resetting or replacing audiovisual equipment
- (III) Attempting alternative connection methods
- (IV) Contacting necessary support staff or service providers
- (V) Switching to back-up equipment or platforms, if available
- (VI) The City Clerk shall document the restoration efforts undertaken

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### 2. Reconvening the Open Session

#### A. Timing

The open session may be reconvened after at least one hour has elapsed from the time of disruption or as soon as service is restored, whichever occurs earlier.

- (I) If the remote access service is restored before or at the time the meeting reconvenes, the meeting shall continue as normal.
- (II) If service has not been restored after one hour, the City Council may reconvene and:
  - (a) Adjourn the meeting; or
  - (b) Resume meeting in open session by adopting, by roll call vote, the following, or a substantially similar, finding:

“The City of Sunnyvale has made good faith efforts to restore telephonic or internet service in accordance with its adopted Council Policy 7.3.33 and the public interest in conducting this meeting outweighs the public interest in remote public access.

- (c) In making the above finding, the City Council should identify agenda items that are not time-sensitive and continue those items.
- (III) Upon adoption of this finding, the City Council may resume the open session despite the fact that two-way remote access services have not been restored.

### 3. Recordkeeping

- A. The Clerk shall enter a brief statement into the meeting minutes, including the following:
  - (I) The nature and start time of the disruption
  - (II) The time the meeting was reconvened (if applicable)
  - (III) A summary of restoration efforts undertaken
  - (IV) Any finding adopted pursuant to Section 2.A.(II)(b)

### 4. Review and Updates

This policy may be amended by the City Council at a noticed public meeting in open session, not on the Consent Calendar.

(Adopted: RTC 26-0421 (4/07/2026))

Lead Department: Office of the City Manager