

Procedures for Public Comment at Judicial Council Meetings

Public comment at Judicial Council meetings can provide valuable information for council members and enhance the council's understanding of the issues coming before it. Thus, it is the Chief Justice's and council's intention that the public comment period be more flexible and that public comments be heard before the council arrives at any decision. Requests can be provided in two ways: in writing before the meeting, as outlined on the Judicial Council agenda, or on the day of the meeting. The following procedures will be adopted to facilitate comments on the day of the meeting:

1. Members of the public who arrive at a Judicial Council meeting and who wish to address the council on either a specific agenda item or a more general topic of judicial administration will have an option to submit requests until the point during the meeting when the Executive and Planning (E&P) Committee Chair or a designee calls for public comment on the meeting agenda. After the comment period begins, later requests to speak will be accommodated subject to the discretion of the E&P Committee Chair or a designee.
2. A reception table will be set up at the beginning of each meeting to receive members of the public and their specific speaking requests. To facilitate an effective and informative public comment period, speakers are asked to print their first and last name at the sign-in table along with the specific agenda item to be addressed or, if the comment concerns something not on the agenda, the topic to be addressed.
3. Comments on judicial administration generally (that is, topics not on the meeting agenda) will be heard during the general public comment period at the beginning of the council meeting. The Judicial Council cannot receive comments on specific cases.
4. Comments on specific agenda items will be heard before the presentation of the agenda item. Anyone wishing to speak on a specific agenda item should arrive at the beginning of the meeting on which the agenda item will be heard, as agenda times are subject to change.
5. To accommodate the schedules of members of the public who prefer not to wait until the council hears a particular agenda item, speakers can choose to speak on a particular agenda item during the general public comment period at the beginning of the meeting.
6. Each speaker will have three minutes or less, depending on the number of requests, to address the council. Speakers representing the same organization or group may be grouped together to coordinate their speaking time.