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## **Guidelines for Public Comment at Public Meetings of the Northeast Delta Human Services Authority**

### **PURPOSE**

It is the policy of the Northeast Delta Human Services Authority (NEDHSA) Board of Directors to provide an opportunity for visitors to address the Board during the public comment section of the posted agenda or during discussion of particular agenda items, as applicable, for all public meetings of the NEDHSA Board of Directors.

To ensure fair and orderly meetings, the NEDHSA Board of Directors has adopted meeting guidelines which govern the conduct of citizens, news media and visitors.

Failure to comply with the adopted guidelines could result in removal from the board meeting if so directed by the NEDHSA Chair.

### **SCOPE**

These guidelines apply to all public meetings of the NEDHSA Board of Directors.

In these guidelines, the "NEDHSA Chair" is defined as the presiding officer at a Board meeting or Board committee meeting, as applicable.

### **SPEAKER REGISTRATION**

Individuals wishing to speak before the Board must register with the Board Secretary by completing and submitting a speaker's form prior to the beginning of the Board Meeting.

The following information is required on all speaker cards:

Meeting date the speaker plans to address the Board

Name

Address

Organization being represented (if applicable)

Daytime telephone number

Email address

The agenda item to be commented on - or - another matter during the "public comment" period of the agenda.

### **PUBLIC COMMENT – NON-AGENDA ITEMS**

Audience participation at a Board meeting is limited to the public comment portion of the meeting designated for non-agenda items and to public comments on a listed agenda item. At all other times during a Board meeting, the audience shall not enter into discussion or debate on matters being considered by the Board, unless requested by the presiding officer.

At regular meetings, the Board shall allot no more than 20 minutes to hear persons who desire to make comments to the Board regarding items not listed as agenda items.

No presentation shall exceed five minutes. When multiple speakers indicate a desire to speak on the same issue, the presiding officer shall relate the Board's desire that the speakers designate two or three people to speak for the group. Time for each presentation may be reduced if an unusually large number of people sign up to speak on the same topic. The presiding officer shall have the authority to extend the amount of time for public comment on non-agenda items.

Any person planning to address the Board on a non-agenda item shall complete the appropriate speaker participation form, available in the foyer, and submit it to the presiding officer prior to the beginning of the meeting.

#### **PUBLIC COMMENT – AGENDA ITEMS**

At regular meetings, the Board shall allot no more than 20 minutes to hear persons who desire to make comments to the Board regarding an item listed on the agenda for the meeting.

No presentation shall exceed five minutes. When multiple speakers indicate a desire to speak on the same issue, the presiding officer shall relate the Board's desire that the speakers designate two or three people to speak for the group. Time for each presentation may be reduced if an unusually large number of people sign up to speak on the same topic. The presiding officer shall have the authority to extend the amount of time for public comment on agenda items.

Any person planning to address the Board on an item listed on the agenda shall complete the appropriate speaker participation form, available in the foyer, and submit it to the presiding officer at least ten minutes prior to the beginning of the meeting.

The following statement shall be read by the presiding officer at the beginning of the public comment portion of the meeting.

We are now at the scheduled time on our agenda for public comment. The Board wishes to hear your thoughts and concerns. As per Board policy, all speakers must have submitted a speaker participation form to the presiding officer at least ten minutes prior to the start of the meeting. All registered speakers should have received a copy of the policy regarding public comment including procedures for your presentation. The Board asks the audience to refrain from responding to the speaker's comments, including cheering and applauding, so that all Board members can focus their attention entirely on the speaker.

Although the Board may ask clarifying questions, please be reminded that the Board cannot respond directly to any comments made this evening.



If we have individuals signed up to speak, each person will have five minutes for his or her public presentation.

### **PUBLIC COMMENT PROCEDURES**

A speaker who signs up to address the Board, either on a non-agenda item or on an item listed on the agenda, shall:

1. Be acknowledged by the presiding officer before publicly speaking;
2. State his or her first and last name and the intended topic;
3. Address the Board only on matters relating to the District and be limited to the topic as indicated on the speaker participation form;
4. Be limited to speaking for no more than five minutes;
5. Have allotted time reduced if the presiding officer deems it necessary to accommodate a large number of speakers wishing to address the Board on the same topic;
6. Not accrue time from another speaker;
7. Not use profane or vulgar language during his or her presentation;
8. Not refrain from making personal attacks against any person;
9. Remain in the area designated for speaking during his or her presentation; and
10. Address the presiding officer and refrain from directing questions to individual Board members, the Superintendent, District staff, or members of the audience.

The presiding officer shall have the authority to suspend the speaker's time if he or she does not comply with the listed procedures.

### **BOARD'S RESPONSE**

Specific information or recitation of existing policy may be furnished in response to inquiries, but the Board shall not deliberate or decide regarding any subject that is not included on the agenda posted with notice of the meeting.

The presiding officer shall have the authority to request that the Executive Director ensure that the appropriate NEDHSA staff member follow up with the individual regarding the information or concern presented during public comment.

The presiding officer or designee shall determine whether a person addressing the Board has attempted to solve a matter administratively through resolution channels established by policy.

### **DISRUPTION**

The Board shall not tolerate disruption of the meeting by members of the audience. If, after at least one warning from the presiding officer, any person continues to disrupt the meeting by his or her words or actions, the presiding officer may request assistance from law enforcement officials to have the person removed from the meeting.