

House resolution relating to the remote authority of the House Ethics Panel, the House Sexual Harassment Prevention Panel, and the House Discrimination Prevention Panel

Offered by: Committee on Rules

Resolved by the House of Representatives:

That Rule 90 of the Rules and Orders of the House of Representatives is amended to read:

90. It is the policy of the House to provide a professional work environment. All members and officers of the House are responsible for ensuring that each legislative employee and colleague enjoys a workplace free from discrimination and sexual harassment and that members conduct themselves in a manner that promotes public confidence through ethical behavior in accordance with the Vermont Constitution and the House Rules.

(a) Discrimination

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(4) The Panel shall elect a chair, adopt procedures to conduct its business to implement this ~~policy~~ rule, and shall provide copies of ~~the policy set forth in~~ this rule and the adopted procedures to all members of the House and employees of the Speaker's Office and the House Clerk's ~~offices~~ Office.

(5) The Panel shall receive and investigate complaints of alleged discrimination made against members of the House or an employee of the Speaker's Office or House Clerk's ~~office~~ Office. The Panel may meet

remotely during adjournment to consider complaints as set forth in the Panel's adopted procedures. However, if the Panel conducts a hearing at which arguments are presented, evidence is presented, or witnesses are questioned, at least a quorum of the members of the Panel shall be physically present at the hearing. The Panel, at the discretion of the Panel Chair, may allow members, witnesses, or other necessary participants to participate using contemporaneous video or audio conference transmission from one or more different remote locations.

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(b) Ethics

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(2) House Ethics Panel. The House Rules Committee shall, at the beginning of the biennium, appoint an Ethics Panel composed of five members of the House who shall serve until successors are appointed.

(A) The Panel shall elect a chair, adopt procedures to conduct its business to implement the provisions of this ethics rule, and provide copies of the adopted procedures to all members of the House and persons employed in the Speaker's Office and House Clerk's Office. The Panel may meet remotely during adjournment to consider complaints as set forth in the Panel Procedure for Handling Ethics Complaints. However, if the Panel conducts a hearing at which arguments are presented, evidence is presented, or witnesses are

questioned, at least a quorum of the members of the Panel shall be physically present at the hearing. The Panel, at the discretion of the Panel Chair, may allow members, witnesses, or other necessary participants to participate using contemporaneous video or audio conference transmission from one or more different remote locations.

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(c) Sexual Harassment

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(3) The Rules Committee shall, at the beginning of the biennium, appoint a Sexual Harassment Prevention Panel composed of five members of the House who shall serve until successors are appointed.

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(5) The Panel shall receive and investigate complaints of alleged sexual harassment made against members of the House or an employee of the Speaker's Office or the Office of the Clerk of the House. The Panel may meet remotely during adjournment to consider complaints as set forth in the Panel's adopted procedures. However, if the Panel conducts a hearing at which arguments are presented, evidence is presented, or witnesses are questioned, at least a quorum of the Panel members shall be physically present at the hearing. The Panel, at the discretion of the Panel Chair, may allow members, witnesses, or other necessary participants to participate using contemporaneous video or

audio conference transmission from one or more different remote locations.

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