



Loudoun County, Virginia

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NEWS RELEASE

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For Immediate Release
October 21, 2022

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Supervisors Adopt Public Input Procedures for Non-English Speakers

During its October 18, 2022, meeting, the Loudoun County Board of Supervisors adopted changes to the Rules of Order that formalized the procedures for the translation of public input by non-English speakers during board meetings. In addition, the Board authorized advance online sign-up for all public speakers.

In an effort to ensure each speaker who appears before the Board has equal time while also assuring that members of the Board and the public can understand input from non-English speakers, the Board opted to continue the practice of providing consecutive interpretation. The consecutive interpretation process relies on an interpreter who is either present in the meeting room or participating in the meeting virtually and translates spoken words into English in real time. The Board's updated rules indicate that the additional time required for translations will not count against a speaker's total allotted time for public input or count against the total time allowed for public input.

"I appreciated the input from the public; it is important that the Board of Supervisors hears the thoughts and concerns of every citizen—no matter the language they are speaking," said Chair Phyllis J. Randall. "We will revisit this issue when the Board Room receives its technological upgrade."

The Board [evaluated a number of translation options](#), how peer jurisdictions in the region manage public input by non-English speakers, and feedback from the public before choosing to maintain the existing practice of consecutive interpretation. Members of the public may provide input to the Board of Supervisors any time by email and phone, as well as in person or virtually during Board meetings.

Any member of the public who would like to request an interpreter to be present at a Board meeting to translate their public input may do so at least 48 hours in advance of a meeting. Procuring an interpreter for less frequently spoken languages may require additional time.

The Board of Supervisors encourages residents to sign up to speak in advance of meetings. On October 18, the Board also approved a new online method for advance sign-up. In the coming weeks, the county will post an online form for residents who wish to speak at an upcoming Board meeting. The form will be easily translated into more than 100 languages using the county's website tools. Residents may also call to sign up to speak. Everything residents need to know about providing input to the Board is posted on the county's website at loudoun.gov/SignUpToSpeak.

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