

## **MARYLAND STATE LIBRARY AGENCY**

### **GUIDELINES AND PROCEDURES FOR PUBLIC COMMENT**

The public comment segment of the State Board meeting is an opportunity and a courtesy extended to members of the public to provide the State Board with views on issues pertaining to public libraries policy and the administration of the public libraries of the State. The State Board welcomes individuals who are sufficiently concerned to make the effort to comment publicly at a State Board meeting.

All speakers shall conduct themselves in a non-disruptive manner. Although State Board members do not respond to the comments during this segment of the Board meeting, State Board members do listen and may take follow-up action within the scope of the Board's authority and jurisdiction.

In order to have an orderly presentation of comments by the public, the following procedures apply:

1. In order to allow the State Board sufficient time for its other business, the total time allotted to public comment will generally be limited to thirty (30) minutes.
2. Persons desiring to speak to the State Board, must call (667-219-4787) or e-mail (timothy.pratt@maryland.gov) no earlier than one week prior to the meeting at which they wish to speak. Registration will be accepted on a first-come, first-served basis. Required registration information shall include the speaker's name, email and phone contact, the name of the organization represented (if any), and the topic to be discussed. In order to make the limited time available most effective, speakers are urged to provide multiple written copies of their comments or other material amplifying their views. Those comments and materials can be submitted in person, or provided via email in advance of the meeting at md.statelibrary@maryland.gov.
3. Comments are limited to three minutes per speaker. Staff monitors time through the use of a timer. When the three minutes expire, the speaker is permitted to complete a sentence but should make no further remarks.
4. Sign-up for public comment is limited to 10 speakers. Once registration has reached capacity, individuals may be placed on a waiting list. Individuals on the waiting list will be notified up to one day prior to the regular Board meeting if a space becomes available.
5. The speaker may not discuss personnel matters or comment on issues pending in appeals to a local board or to the State Board.
6. Comments shall be directed to the Board, not to an individual Board member. Questions will not be entertained and no discussion will ensue.
7. No signs or posters may be displayed by the public during meetings of the State Board. In lieu of signs, individuals are permitted to submit written comments to the State Board. Written statements may be provided to the State Librarian to be distributed to Board members.
8. If any individual fails to comply with these procedures, the State Board Chairman may order the person to leave the public meeting and may take such further action as necessary to ensure compliance with these procedures.