

JOINT RULES (124th LEGISLATURE)

Part 5

Legislative Confirmations

Rule 501. Partisan Staff Assistants for Nominations.

The members of the Legislative Council representing each party shall, within 7 legislative days after the convening of the first regular session, appoint a partisan staff assistant for nominations. Each of these assistants serves at the pleasure of the appointing authority during the biennium for which the assistant is chosen. A vacancy in either of these positions must be filled for the remainder of the biennium in the same manner as the original appointment. Partisan staff assistants for nominations shall provide all necessary assistance to each joint standing committee required by law to recommend action on a gubernatorial nominee.

Rule 502. Notice of Gubernatorial Appointments.

The procedures for legislative confirmation are established in the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 3, chapter 6. Upon receipt by the President of the Senate and Speaker of the House of notification from the Governor of the name of a nominee and of the office to which that person is nominated, the President of the Senate and Speaker of the House shall, without delay, forward that notice and copies of accompanying materials to the chairs of the joint standing committee that is charged by law with reviewing nominations to that office, to the Legislative Information Office and to the 2 partisan staff assistants for nominations. The Legislative Information Office shall establish an official file for each nominee.

Rule 503. Committee Preconference Hearing.

The joint standing committee must hold a prehearing conference within 21 days of the notification from the Governor unless the committee decides otherwise. The prehearing conference must be consistent with the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 3, section 156.

Rule 504. Committee Public Hearing.

The joint standing committee shall hold a public hearing on the nomination in Augusta at a time convenient to the public within 30 days, or 35 days for judicial officers, from the date of the Governor's notice of the nomination to the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House. At least 7 days before the hearing, the Legislative Information Office shall publish in the state paper and in a newspaper of general circulation in the area where the nominee resides a notice of that hearing, which must contain the time and place of the hearing, the name of the nominee, the office to which that person has been nominated and a general description of the duties of that office. The notice must also contain a statement that written comments relevant to the qualifications of the nominee together with supporting materials may be filed with the Legislative Information Office by 9 a.m. on the hearing date. At the hearing, the committee shall take written or oral testimony limited to relevant comments and questions regarding the qualifications of the nominee. Notwithstanding the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 3, section 157, for the purposes of reviewing nominations pursuant to this rule, the joint standing committee has

the power to administer oaths and to take testimony under oath. All testimony taken at the hearing must be recorded and testimony and other materials received by the committee must be preserved according to the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 3, section 159. The 2 partisan assistants for nominations shall provide the committee with a written report of their investigations before the committee votes to recommend or deny confirmation.

Rule 505. Committee Vote.

Within 35 days, or 40 days for judicial officers, from the date of the Governor's notice of the nomination to the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House, the committee shall recommend confirmation or denial by majority vote of the committee members present and voting. The vote of the committee may be taken only upon an affirmative motion to recommend confirmation of the nominee, and a tie vote of the committee is considered a recommendation of denial. A vote may not be taken sooner than 15 minutes after the close of the public hearing unless by agreement of all committee members present. The committee vote must be by the yeas and nays. The chairs of the committee shall send written notices of the committee's recommendation to the President of the Senate.

Rule 506. Senate Vote.

Within 45 days, or 50 days for judicial officers, from the date of the Governor's notification of the nomination to the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House, the Senate shall review the recommendation of the committee on the nomination and, after review, shall vote by the yeas and nays on that recommendation.

After vote by the Senate, the committee's recommendation becomes final action of confirmation or denial unless the Senate by a vote of 2/3 of those members present and voting overrides the committee's recommendation. If the committee recommends to deny confirmation and the Senate votes by a vote of 2/3 or greater of those members present and voting to override the committee's recommendation, the nomination is considered confirmed. Following Senate confirmation or denial, notice of the action taken must be given to the Speaker of the House.

Rule 507. Withdrawal of Nomination.

If the Governor withdraws a nomination at any time prior to the Senate vote by sending a written notice of withdrawal to the President of the Senate, the Legislature may not take any further action on that nomination.

Rule 508. Nomination Made Within 30 Days of Adjournment.

If the Governor posts a nomination within 30 days preceding the statutory date of adjournment, a legislative committee to which a nominee is referred for confirmation review may by 2/3 vote request the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House to delay this review in order to complete the committee's legislative work. If the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House approve the request, the time periods for legislative action begin on the date the Legislature adjourns.