

GUIDELINES FOR REQUESTING AND PROCESSING EXCUSED ABSENCE REQUESTS

The following guidelines will delineate how requests for excused absences involving Queens Community Board 6 monthly meetings shall be requested and considered. These guidelines will provide guidance to board members that will promote the smooth implementation to the recent amendment to Article XIII of the board's bylaws that was approved at its October 12, 2022, meeting and revised at its March 13, 2024 meeting.

1. Members seeking an excused absence should submit the request, in writing via email, to the Chair, with a copy provided to the District Manager. The request should be submitted prior to the meeting as early as the reason for the excused absence becomes apparent.
2. In a situation involving an imminent emergency, e.g., a sudden health emergency, the death or birth of a family member, etc., notice of the request is to be, if possible, called into the Boards District Office either on the day of or the day following the meeting. Given the circumstance, the call can be made by the member or by a friend of family member. The telephone notice must, however, be followed-up with a written request submitted, as specified in item #1, within two business days of the board's meeting, if possible.
3. Each request must reference at least one of the items that meets criteria for an excused absence as noted in Section 2(d) of ARTICLE XIII, appearing on board related business properly authorized by the Chair or otherwise mandated that occurs at the same time as the regular monthly meeting; illness, including having a medical, mental or physical ailment that effectively prevents attendance; the need to perform one's military or other compulsory service; the need for such absence due to family emergencies, including childbirth, or death or illness of a family member; the need to attend a significant religious or secularly equivalent event; employment obligations; or planned vacations. The request shall furthermore provide a brief explanation as to why the cited criteria applies in this situation. While not required, supporting documentation of the request, if appropriate, is preferred.
4. Each request shall be referred to the Chair for determination. While the Chair may wish to consult with the board's Parliamentarian in making a determination, doing so is not required.
5. Utilizing the "shall not be unreasonable denied" standard noted in Section 2(d), the Chair shall approve the request unless (1) it does not comply with any of the listed criteria or (2) presents a clearly implausible application of the listed criteria. However, the applicant should receive any benefits of the doubt.
6. The decision of the Chair shall be promptly communicated to the applicant in writing via email with a copy provided to the District Manager; it will also be maintained in the board's confidential file.
7. The Chair's decision can be appealed to the board's First Vice Chair, who shall review the request pursuant to the same standard noted in item #5. The First Chair's decision shall be communicated to the applicant in the same manner noted in item #6 and shall be final.
8. Under no circumstance shall the reasons provided in requesting an excused absence ever appear in the board's public record.