2026 Guidelines for Writing Resolutions for Annual Conventions of the Diocese of Ohio

The Annual Convention of the Diocese of Ohio is more than a business meeting—it is a gathering of the Body of Christ, joined in common worship, discernment, and shared mission. As members of this Beloved Community, we come together to listen for the Spirit's leading, build trust among faith communities, and pursue our common call to be faithful, healthy, effective, and sustainable sharers of the transformative love of Jesus Christ. One way Convention conducts its work is through resolutions.

The Resolution, Constitution, and Canons Committee is committed to helping this process be collaborative, clear, and generative. We invite you to consider not only what actions your resolution proposes, but also how it contributes to the building up of the Church and the realization of our diocesan vision.

If you have any questions or for help in drafting your resolution, please contact the Rev. Bridget Coffey, Chair of the Committee on Resolutions, Constitution, and Canons (secretaryofconvention@dohio.org).

The deadline for resolutions to be included in the handbook is September 11, 2026.

The canonical deadline is October 8, 2026.

Please send proposed resolutions electronically to secretaryofconvention@dohio.org.

Types of Resolutions

There are three forms of resolutions common to Diocesan Convention.

One is a General Convention Resolution for issues of national significance to be brought to the attention of the General Convention. These must conform to the Rules of Order found in the Constitution and Canons of The Episcopal Church. Please note that a Resolution may not direct the vote of Deputies.

Another type of Resolution is known as a "mind-of-the-House" Resolution. It expresses the opinion of the majority of delegates to the Diocesan Convention on some issue, but does not call for any specific action and does not bind any individual member or parish to the opinion being expressed.

A third type of Resolution calls for some action to be taken, either by the Diocesan Convention itself, or by some person or group accountable to the Diocesan Convention. In considering the limits of Convention's jurisdiction, the Resolutions Committee has

concluded that action may be *required* of Diocesan officials, (although some matters are reserved to the authority of the Bishop), of Diocesan Council or some creature of Council, or *requested* of the Vestries who have elected deputies to the Convention. It is *not* possible for the Convention to *require* action of "all Episcopalians" or "all parishes".

How to Propose an Effective Resolution

Formation First, be sure that each Resolution deals with a single issue. People will not support what they do not understand, and understanding is difficult if more than one issue is addressed in a single resolution.

Second, ask yourself what outcome you desire. What do you want the resolution to accomplish or prevent? Specify the action to be taken and by whom. Consider whether the action requires a report, to whom, and by what date. If there are costs, specify how the action would be funded. Some things cannot be legislated no matter how desirable they may be. You can ask Diocesan Council to promulgate a program; you cannot ask "all Episcopalians" to buy into it. Be sure that your proposal is not inconsistent with the theology and practice of The Episcopal Church.

Third, ask yourself who can most effectively accomplish your goal. Is it an individual, a Diocesan body, local parish vestries, a subsequent Convention of the diocese, or the General Convention? There is no point in asking the General Convention to establish a Coffee-Hour Fund for Diocesan employees, or in asking parish vestries to ban the ordination of persons over thirty.

The Resolutions Committee will be glad to provide guidance on drafting resolutions. Our goal is to help you present your interest or concern in the most effective way possible.

Composition Plain language is the best language for a Resolution--don't try to make it sound "legal" and avoid unnecessarily complex or compound sentences. There are specific requirements as to form, and you may wish to use the sample enclosed as a model. The committee will clarify language and format, if necessary, for clarity and consistency.

With the exception of courtesy resolutions, “whereas” clauses are no longer used to introduce resolutions. A resolution begins with the word, “Resolved…” and states the action to be taken. It may be followed by a rationale that includes an explanation of the action, and reasons for it. The rationale will be appended to the resolution but is not itself adopted if the resolution passes. If you would like to include extended supporting material, the Communications Office will do everything possible to include such material in the "blue book" of Convention reports. However, you may want to consider that the more extensive the rationale is, the greater the opportunity for confusion, digression, or disagreement.

When you wish to advocate more than one action, or action by more than one person or body, use more than one resolved clause. This enhances clarity, and allows the Convention to divide the Resolution and consider each action separately.

Make sure the actions you call for are concrete, measurable, well defined and achievable. You might keep in mind that no one likes to feel that some diocesan body is about to micro-manage their parish, so concentrate on the goals to be achieved and leave the "how-to" to the people who have to implement the resolution, if adopted.

Submission Resolutions are to be emailed to secretaryofconvention@dohio.org.

The deadline for Resolutions is 45 days prior to the opening of Diocesan Convention. Between 45 days and 10 days prior to the Convention, the Bishop may waive the deadline for Resolutions whose subject matter the Bishop deems urgent. After 10 days prior to the Convention, a Resolution may be considered only by a suspension of the Rules, which requires an action of the Convention. If you would like help drafting your Resolution, you may submit it in proposed form, and the Resolutions Committee will help you put it in final form.

All proposed Resolutions must carry the name and daytime phone numbers(s) of at least one of the proposers, who must be a delegate to Convention. Please choose someone who can be available for telephone consultation during the initial meeting of the Committee.

Resolutions introduced at Diocesan Convention, if passed by a majority of its members, are said to be Adopted; those which fail to achieve a majority of favorable votes are said to be Lost. In some rare instances, the Committee may decide that a proposed Resolution is egregiously offensive, inflammatory, redundant, or frivolous. In such a case, the Committee may ask to be discharged from further consideration of such proposed Resolution. The Convention then votes on the question, "Shall the Resolutions Committee be discharged from further consideration of the Resolution entitled, “ ”? If the motion is carried, the Resolution receives no further consideration. If the motion fails, Convention proceeds to consider the Resolution in the normal manner.

GENERAL CONVENTION RESOLUTIONS

Resolved, that this Annual Convention of the Episcopal Diocese of Ohio approves the following resolution for submission to the General Convention of The Episcopal Church.

“Resolved, the House of concurring, that…”

MIND-OF-THE-HOUSE-RESOLUTIONS

Resolved, that it is the Mind of this Annual Convention of the Episcopal Diocese of Ohio that…

DIOCESAN CONVENTION RESOLUTIONS

Resolved, that this Annual Convention of the Episcopal Diocese of Ohio directs…; and be it further

Resolved, that the Bishop be encouraged…; and be it further

Resolved, that this Convention requests the Vestry of each of its constituent parishes to… and be it further

Resolved, that Diocesan Council be directed to report on… at the Convention of this Diocese.

Some Points to Note

1. All resolutions begin with the phrase, “Resolved, that…”
2. In cases where more than one action is desired, each "resolved" clause ends with the phrase “and be it further". No comma is used after "further," and the next clause begins "Resolved, that..."
3. A blank line appears between each "resolved" clause.
4. Notice that different verbs are used depending on the context. In the example above, the Convention "directs" the Diocesan Council, which is its creature; it "encourages" the Bishop, as a matter of courtesy; and it "requests" the Vestries of the several parishes, who cannot be compelled to take the desired action in some cases, but may be glad to respond to a "request."
5. If the resolution calls for an expression of opinion on some legislative matter, specific reference should be made to the Bill's official number and title, as well as to the subject matter of the bill.
6. Materials addressing the issues before the Diocesan Convention are not permitted on the floor without the Bishop’s permission. Normally, a table for such material is provided outside the Convention hall.
7. Ask yourself, "What do I really want to accomplish?" If the goal is to ask the Diocese to take a stand on some topic, the best choice is a Mind-of-the-House Resolution. For most other objectives, use a conventional Resolution.
8. When Resolutions are adopted, they are forwarded to the appropriate parties by the Secretary of Convention. Since it is a duty of the office, it is not necessary to instruct the Secretary to communicate a resolution.
9. The Committee on Resolutions, Constitution, and Canons exists to help the Diocesan Convention do its work in an equitable, efficient and effective way. We are available to assist you in bringing a matter before the Convention, and we are eager to see that all debate produce maximum light and minimum heat!

Guidelines Updated June 18, 2026.