

GENERAL SYNOD PRESENCE CANON 2022

Canon 16, 2022 as amended by Canon 1, 2025

The General Synod prescribes as follows:

Title

1. This canon is the General Synod Presence Canon 2022.

Interpretation

2. In this canon **videoconference** means a form of electronic communication that enables contemporaneous audio and visual communication between persons physically located at different places.

Sessions of General Synod may be by videoconference

3.
 - (1) The Standing Committee may by resolution determine that an ordinary session of Synod is to be held wholly by videoconference.
 - (2) The Primate may in convening a special session of Synod determine that it is to be held wholly by videoconference.
 - (3) A member of Synod may attend a session held wholly by videoconference while in the same place as another member of Synod.

Participation in General Synod by videoconference of members prevented from attending in person

4.
 - (1) This section applies when –
 - (a) in the case of a clerical or lay representative of a Diocese, the Bishop of that diocese;
 - (b) in the case of a Bishop of a diocese who is not the Metropolitan, the Metropolitan of that Bishop;
 - (c) in the case of a Metropolitan or the Bishop of an extra-provincial diocese, the Primate –

certifies to the General Secretary that that representative or Bishop, by reason of the laws of, or lawful directions given under the laws of, the Commonwealth, a State or a Territory or by reason of their disability or serious medical condition¹ –

¹ Amended by Canon 1, 2025.

- (d) is prevented from; or
 - (e) will face significant and onerous impediments in—
travelling to or from, or being at, the place at which a session of the General Synod is to be held.
- (2) When this section applies—
- (a) the General Secretary must make available to the person the subject of the certificate the opportunity to participate in the Synod by videoconference; and²
 - (b) the person the subject of the certificate may participate in the Synod by videoconference.
- (3) A person the subject of a certificate under sub-section (1) may be present in person at the meeting of the Synod.

Videoconferencing requirements

5. (1) A member of Synod participating by videoconference must be allowed to participate as if present at a venue at which the President is chairing the meeting.
- (2) At a meeting of the Synod in which members are participating by videoconference—
- (a) the Primate may appoint such persons as considered necessary to assist in the chairing and orderly conduct of the meeting and the equal and full participation of members of Synod; and
 - (b) an electronic system approved by the Provisional Business Committee must be used for the purpose of allowing those members to vote on the business before the meeting, rise in their places, or otherwise communicate a position in relation to the business before the meeting as fully as those members who are present in person at that meeting.

Member participating by videoconference to be considered as present

6. (1) At a meeting of the Synod in which members are participating by videoconference a member who is participating by videoconference is present for the purposes of the Constitution and any canon or rule that makes provision for members who are present.
- (2) For the purpose of determining the number of members present at any time during a meeting of the Synod in which members are participating by videoconference, the number of members present is the total number present in person and by videoconference.

² Amended by Canon 1, 2025