



# Public Comment Policy

## Public Participation Policy for Board Meetings

Public participation at meetings of the Board of Commissioners (“Board”) Macon Housing Authority (MHA) is intended to provide residents and interested persons with the opportunity to comment on issues or topics that are within the purview of the Board. The role of the Board is to set local discretionary policy as permitted by HUD and Federal Regulations. The Board welcomes public input and comments on the programs and operations of MHA. This input is valued and appreciated. It is essential that this input be provided in a manner that supports effective communication and understanding for all parties.

Public participation shall occur in accordance with the procedures set forth below:

1. Although the public has the right and is invited to attend meetings of the Board, no individual or group has the right to enter into the deliberations of the Board. With respect to Board meetings, unless the input is solicited by the Board for a public hearing or similar event, communications by members of the public will be limited to the portion of the meeting designated on the agenda as the time for “non-agenda items, “other business” or recognition of visitors”, at the discretion of the Board.
2. Speakers will appear individually and will be afforded attention and respect. When called upon, the person shall state his/her name; and if speaking for an organization or other group, identify the group represented. Groups must select a maximum of one speaker. No person may speak without first being recognized by the Chairperson.
3. Each speaker has five (5) minutes to speak. Speakers are not allowed to cede their time to any other speaker.
  - The Board has the discretion to restrict comments that are repetitive or redundant.
  - The Board will restrict comments that are inappropriate or not relevant to the business of the Board.
4. Courteous, respectful, and civil behavior is expected from all speakers and all persons attending a Board meeting. Personal attacks, abusive, or intemperate language, and unsubstantiated allegations leveled at Commissioners, staff, property managers, resident leaders, or other residents are prohibited. Individuals who are disruptive may be given a warning and will, if necessary, be removed from the

meeting. If any individual is removed from the meeting the individual may forfeit his or her right of re-entry to future Board meetings.

5. Written comments and/or literature may be accepted at Board meetings from:

- Speakers who are unable to complete their comments in the allotted time.
- Individuals who wish to speak but are unable to address the Board. As is the case with respect to oral communications, written materials will not be accepted if they are outside the purview of the Board; contain personal attacks, abusive or intemperate language or unsubstantiated allegations; or relate to current or prospective bids.

6. All persons attending a Board meeting shall turn off or silence their cell phones while the meeting is in session. No cell phone use is permitted.

7. Current or prospective vendors wishing to present products or services for purchase may not use the public participation portion of a Board meeting for this purpose. Vendors will, as appropriate, be referred to procurement or finance staff.

8. Residents with specific property concerns will be referred to the appropriate Authority staff person present at the meeting.

9. The Board will have the discretion to withdraw a speaker's right to address the Board if any of the above requirements are violated.

10. MHA observes the privacy rights of all residents and applicants. Therefore, the Board will not discuss the status of any resident or applicant. Such matters will be referred to appropriate legal counsel, HUD officials, or MHA staff.