



Council Webinar Policy

Advisory Panel and Committee Meetings

Advisory panel (AP) and Committee meetings may be held in person or by webinar. Council staff make every effort to schedule meetings at times and in locations that are convenient for meeting participants and interested members of the public. All AP and Committee meetings are open to the public.

In-Person Meetings: Remote participation via webinar is generally not allowed during in-person AP and Committee meetings unless there are extenuating circumstances, such as when weather conditions prevent several meeting participants from traveling to a meeting. The Executive Director has authority to determine when to allow remote participation via webinar for an in-person meeting. When practicable, the Council provides listen-only webinar access during in-person AP and Committee meetings. Webinar attendees are able to listen to the meeting discussion but typically are not able to participate in any way.

Webinar-Based Meetings: When a meeting is conducted entirely by webinar (i.e. no in-person meeting), members of the public may be given opportunities to provide comments and ask questions as time allows. Everyone is asked to mute their phones/microphones when they are not speaking during webinar meetings to minimize feedback issues.

Webinar connection information for AP and Committee meetings is posted on the relevant meeting page on the Council website.

Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) Meetings

SSC meetings are typically held in person. Remote participation by SSC members is generally not allowed, unless there are extenuating circumstances, such as when weather conditions prevent several members from traveling to a meeting. The Executive Director has authority to determine when to allow remote participation by SSC members in an in-person meeting. Staff members from GARFO or NEFSC may be permitted to participate and/or give presentations remotely after review by the Executive Director on a case-by-case basis.

When practicable, the Council provides public listen-only access to in-person SSC meetings. In listen-only mode, webinar attendees are not able to provide comments or participate in any way. Webinar connection information is posted on the relevant meeting page on the Council website. All SSC meetings are open to the public.

Fishery Management Action Team (FMAT) Meetings

FMAT meetings are working meetings of Council, NOAA Fisheries, and Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission staff. FMAT meetings are technical in nature and may be held in person and/or by webinar. Meetings that are conducted entirely in person are not broadcast via webinar. Information on FMAT meeting locations and how to connect by webinar (if available) may be obtained by contacting Council staff prior to the meeting. This information is not posted to the Council's website. The date and time of FMAT meetings are generally posted to the calendar on the Council's website, sometimes with very little notice. Members of the public may attend FMAT meetings in person, or listen to the meetings if they are broadcast, but should not expect to participate in the discussion unless the FMAT chair invites public input during a specified public comment period to be noted at the beginning of the meeting.

Council Meetings

All Council meetings are broadcast via webinar. Webinar attendees have listen-only access and are not able to provide comments or participate in any way. Connection information is posted on the relevant meeting page on the Council website. All Council meetings are open to the public.

General Note: Council staff makes every effort to ensure high quality webinar access to meetings. However, because meetings are typically conducted in hotels and other locations with variable technological capacities, users may experience intermittent losses of connectivity and/or poor audio quality during webinars.