VILLAGE OF BUCHANAN, NEW YORK
LOCAL LAW NO. 6 OF 2026

A Local Law to amend the Code of the Village of Buchanan to authorize and regulate the use of videoconferencing for public meetings pursuant to New York State Public Officers Law § 103-a.

BE IT ENACTED by the Board of Trustees of the Village of Buchanan as follows:

SECTION 1: Title and Insertion into Code
The Code of the Village of Buchanan is hereby amended by adding a new Chapter, to be titled **"Chapter 25: Public Meetings and Videoconferencing,"** to read as follows:

§ 25-1. Purpose and Authority.
Pursuant to New York Public Officers Law § 103-a, the Board of Trustees hereby authorizes the Village of Buchanan and all of its public bodies (including but not limited to the Board of Trustees, Planning Board, and Zoning Board of Appeals) to use videoconferencing to conduct public meetings, subject to the requirements of the Open Meetings Law and the provisions of this Chapter.

§ 25-2. Physical Quorum Requirement.
A. **In-Person Quorum Required:** A minimum number of members of the public body equal to a full legal quorum must be physically present in one or more designated physical locations open to the general public.
B. **Quorum Exclusions:** Any member who participates remotely from a private, unannounced location under "Extraordinary Circumstances" shall not count toward the physical quorum required to convene the meeting. Such member is, however, fully permitted to deliberate, vote, and participate once a physical quorum has been established at the public site(s).

§ 25-3. Remote Participation Under Extraordinary Circumstances.
A. **When Allowed:** A member may request to participate from a private, non-public location without disclosing its specific physical address only if they are unable to attend due to extraordinary circumstances.
B. **Defined Circumstances:** Qualifying extraordinary circumstances shall include, but are not limited to:

- Personal illness or disability.
- Caregiving responsibilities for a family member.
- Severe weather disruptions or significant localized travel emergencies.

- Mandatory employment shifts or active duty requirements as a first responder, firefighter, or emergency services commander, where the member's physical work location is a secure facility structurally or legally closed to the general public.
- Any other significant or unexpected factor or event which precludes the member's physical attendance.

C. **Explicit Exclusions:** Voluntary personal vacations, leisure travel, or standard business travel do not constitute extraordinary circumstances.

§ 25-4. Remote Participation During Vacations or Non-Emergency Travel (Traditional POL § 103).

If a member is traveling for non-emergency purposes and wishes to participate remotely, they cannot utilize the privacy provisions of POL § 103-a. Instead, they must comply with traditional Public Officers Law § 103 requirements:

A. **Location Disclosure:** The member must notify the Village Clerk of their exact physical location at least seventy-two (72) hours before the meeting notice is published.

B. **Public Notice Requirement:** The public notice for the meeting must explicitly state the address of the member's remote location as an official satellite meeting site.

C. **Physical Public Access:** The member's remote location must be fully open to the public. Any member of the general public has a legal right to enter that physical space to watch, listen, and observe the meeting.

D. **Quorum Counting:** If a traveling member properly notices their remote location and leaves it accessible to the public, that location counts as an official public site, and the member shall count toward the physical quorum.

§ 25-5. Record Keeping and Public Access.

A. **Public Viewing and Participation:** The videoconference technology utilized must allow the public to see and hear the remote member in real time and must also ensure that the public can view and hear the entire proceeding in real time. Where public comment or participation is authorized, the technological platform must allow the public to participate virtually in real time.

B. **Minutes:** The official minutes of the meeting must explicitly document which members attended in person, which members attended via public-noticed satellite sites, and which members attended privately due to extraordinary circumstances.

C. **Archiving:** Any meeting using videoconferencing must be recorded. The video recording must be posted to the official village website within five (5) business days and retained for a minimum of five (5) years.

D. **Website Posting:** The written procedures governing extraordinary circumstances videoconferencing must be conspicuously posted on the official village website.

SECTION 2: Severability

If any clause, sentence, paragraph, subdivision, or part of this Local Law or the application thereof to any person, firm or corporation, or circumstance, shall be adjusted by any court of competent jurisdiction to be invalid or unconstitutional, such order or judgment shall not affect, impair or invalidate the remainder thereof.

SECTION 3: Effective Date

This Local Law shall take effect immediately upon filing with the New York Secretary of State and shall remain in effect so long as videoconferencing is authorized under New York State Public Officers Law § 103-a.