

CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION



Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations



World Health
Organization

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CL 2025/34-GP
April 2025

TO: Codex Contact Points
Contact Points of international organizations having observer status with Codex

FROM: Secretariat, Codex Alimentarius Commission,
Joint FAO/WHO Food Standards Programme

SUBJECT: Request for comments on proposed updates to Section 3.4 of the Codex Procedural Manual, Criteria and procedural guidelines for Codex committees and ad hoc intergovernmental task forces working by correspondence

DEADLINE: 23 May 2025

BACKGROUND

1. The 87th session of the Executive Committee of the Codex Alimentarius Commission (CCEXEC87) (2024) noted that:¹
 - a. There were questions about whether the current provisions for committees working by correspondence were sufficiently clear and robust, or whether a more detailed review was necessary to align them with evolving practices.
 - b. The transition from correspondence to virtual modes required clarification, as at the time the Criteria and procedural guidelines for Codex committees and ad hoc intergovernmental task forces working by correspondence were developed, procedures for use of virtual tools were not available. Nowadays, there was an opportunity to integrate various technologies to enhance the work process.
 - c. The thirty-fourth session of the Codex Committee on General Principles (CCGP34) (2025) was seen as an appropriate opportunity to address the above concerns and establish clearer procedures for reactivating committees and effectively using virtual tools, drawing on the experiences to date of Committees working by correspondence (CWBC).
 - d. A circular letter (CL) had already encouraged host secretariats and Members to review outdated sections of the Codex Procedural Manual, and the section on reactivating committees and use of modern tools had been identified as an area requiring attention, as current practices had begun to diverge significantly from the provisions in the *Codex Procedural Manual*.
2. CCEXEC87 and the forty-seventh session of the Codex Alimentarius Commission (CAC47) (2024)² requested CCGP34 to review the application of the provisions in the *Codex Procedural Manual* relating to CWBC, informed by experiences to date, and make recommendations for consideration by CCEXEC89 and CAC48.
3. In [CX/GP 25/34/9](#), amendments are proposed to the Criteria and procedural guidelines for Codex committees and ad hoc intergovernmental task forces working by correspondence, Section 3.4, in the *Codex Procedural Manual* to provide the flexibility to address specific issues using simultaneous presence by virtual means, should this modality be considered by the Chairperson in consultation with the Codex Secretariat necessary for the efficient conclusion of the item.
4. Additional editorial amendments concerning Section 3.4 related to the CCGP34 working document: *Codex Procedural Manual: Review of the procedures in Section 3: Guidelines for subsidiary bodies* ([CX/GP 25/34/4](#)) are also proposed for consistency purposes.³
5. For detailed background information, please refer to [CX/GP 25/34/9](#).

REQUEST FOR COMMENTS

6. Codex Members and Observers are invited review and comment on the proposed updates to Section 3.4 of the Codex Procedural Manual as presented in Appendix I of [CX/GP 25/34/9](#).

¹ REP24/EXEC2 paragraph 74

² REP24/CAC paragraph 22iv

³ *Codex Procedural Manual* paragraphs 65, 73, 74, 76, 85 and footnote xix

7. The proposed updates are uploaded to the Codex Online Commenting System (OCS): <https://ocs.codexalimentarius.org/>, as per the guidance below.

GUIDANCE ON THE PROVISION OF COMMENTS

8. Comments should be submitted through the Codex Contact Points of Codex Members and Observers using the OCS.
9. Contact Points of Codex Members and Observers may log in to the OCS and access the document open for comments by selecting “Enter” in the “My reviews” page, available after logging into the system.
10. Other OCS resources, including the user manual and short guide, can be found at the following link: <http://www.fao.org/fao-who-codexalimentarius/resources/ocs/en/>.
11. For any query on OCS, please contact Codex-OCS@fao.org.