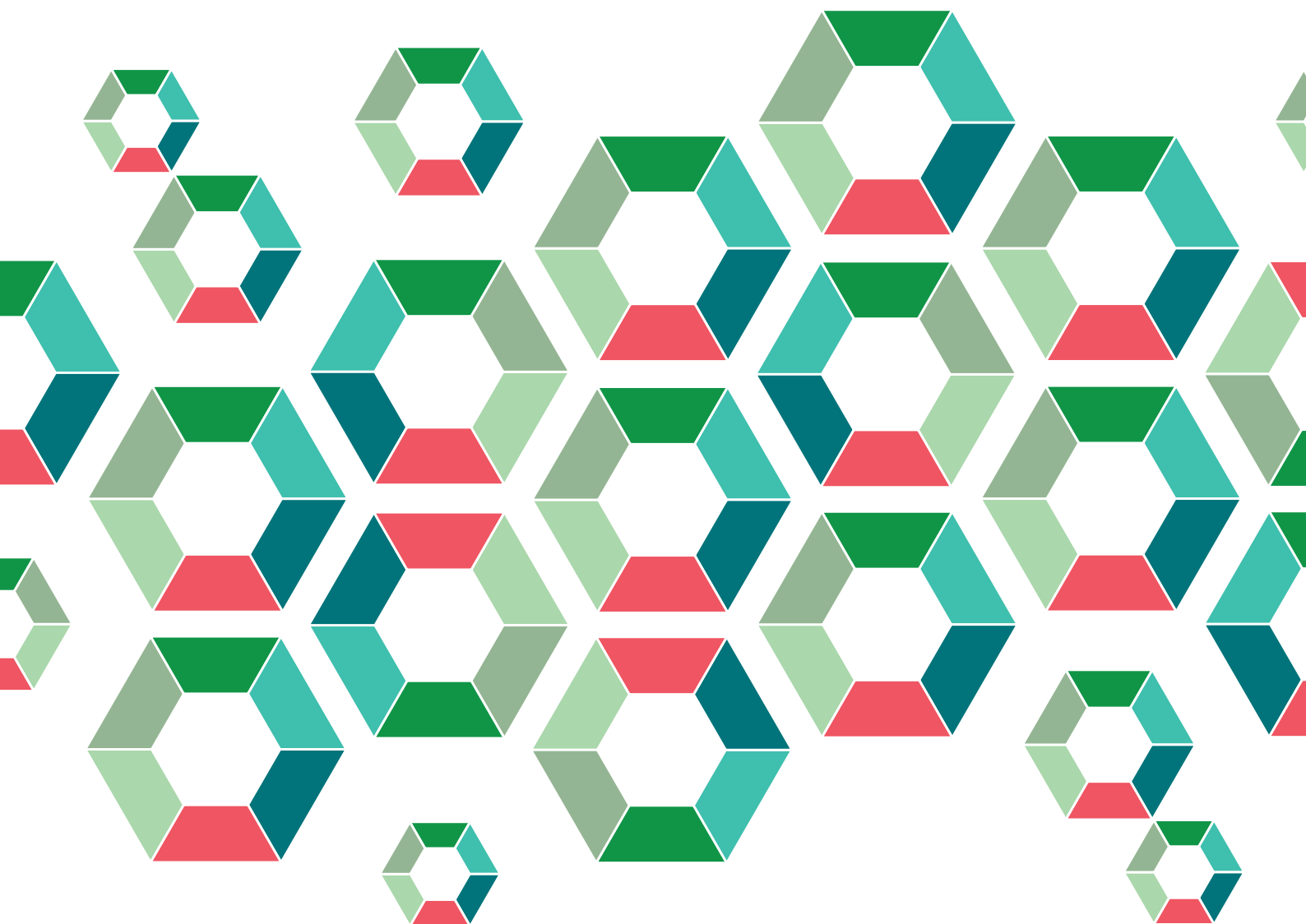# Hosting your AGM online

Business that should be conducted at the AGM

These are the items of business that should be dealt with at the branch AGM:

- Adopt the minutes of the last AGM

- Receive relevant reports from branch officers and officials

- Adopt a financial report from the branch treasurer

- Elect branch officers

- Adopt motions (if any) for submission to divisional or biennial conference (optional)

- Agree nominations (if any) for divisional or national officer and executive positions, for submission to divisional or biennial conference (optional).

Registration

It is advisable to invite all branch members to register for the virtual AGM at least two weeks in advance of the meeting. This will give the branch an indication of roughly how many members to expect, help you assess the best platform for handling the numbers attending and, if necessary, seek technical assistance from the union centrally (see page 4).

You can do this by creating a google form and circulating the link via email to all branch members. For information on how to create a google form, click **here**.

Registration can also be carried out by inviting members to send their details to a pre-determined email address.

The branch should seek the following information from members who register to attend the virtual AGM:

- name
- email address
- workplace
- union number.

You need to be aware of, and follow GDPR requirements when requesting and handling members' personal data (see appendix).

It is strongly advised to use the registration process as an opportunity to remind members to update their contact details, which can be done **here**. It's very important the union has members' most up to date details to be able to reach them in the event of a ballot, either for your AGM or a national pay agreement.

Once registration is closed, the branch committee can decide what platform is most appropriate to accommodate the number of people registered. Registration should ideally close no less than a week in advance of the AGM.

You should also email all those registered with information about how the AGM is going to be conducted. Be clear about what they need to do to access and participate in the meeting. You can ask your Fórsa official for advice.

Platform selection

There are many platforms available to host your virtual AGM, and each has their own pros and cons. All platforms can be accessed via mobile phone, tablet and desktop facilities, but for the purpose of branch AGMs, participation via computer or a large-screened device is advisable.

Here are some of the available options. If the free tiers don't meet your needs, the branch can opt to purchase an expanded package.

Microsoft Teams

Free tier

- Host up to 300 participants*
- Unlimited meeting time duration*
- Recording not available
- Polling available.

Expanded package

- Same allowances as the free version
- Meeting recording available.

*For a limited time only, until further specified by Microsoft.

Read more about expanded Microsoft Teams packages **here**.

Please note that many workplaces have the premium version of Microsoft Teams with Office 365. Be sure to check, as you may already have access to all the Microsoft Teams features.

Zoom

Free tier

- Host up to 100 participants
- 40-minute maximum meeting time
- Recording available
- Polling available.

Expanded package

- Host up to 100 participants
- Unlimited meeting time duration
- Meeting recording available
- Polling available.

Read more about expanded Zoom packages **here**.

Setting up your virtual AGM

Once registration has ended, you can download your data and create an invitation list. If you chose to collect information via google forms, **this article** teaches you how to retreive that data.

Depending on your chosen platform, you can learn how to schedule your AGM and issue virtual invitations in advance by following the links below:

- **Microsoft Teams**
- **WebEx**
- **Zoom**

Managing your online AGM

- Once the meeting commences, it's good practice to advise all participants to mute their microphones when not speaking. This eliminates any feedback and background noise.

- You should inform delegates if the event is being recorded, and tell delegates they do not have permission to record the event.

- As in a normal meeting, the chair needs to keep order. At the outset of the meeting, you should ask participants not to speak unless called. There are a number of ways that participants can indicate their desire to speak:
  - Raise their hand on camera, or by using the virtual raise hand feature, so that the chair can see they want to speak
  - Most platforms have a facility to send written messages, either to the whole meeting or to an individual participant. This can also be used to indicate a desire to speak. (In a large meeting, it might help the chair if someone else keeps an eye on this on their behalf.)

- If you wish to share your screen, it's best to have the content loaded and ready to go before the meeting commences. Make sure there's nothing on your screen that you don't want others to see. Follow the links below to learn how to screenshare on various platforms:
  - **Microsoft Teams**
  - **WebEx**
  - **Zoom**

- Setting time limits for each agenda item helps keep the meeting moving.

- Sometimes participants will drop out during the meeting as a result of failed technology or poor connection. It's best to try continue on where possible and provide a very brief recap of what they missed if they manage to reconnect. This is why good minutes are important, so people can see what they missed out on after.

- Before you wrap up, do a brief recap of the meeting and ensure everyone was happy they had an opportunity to contribute.

- Meeting participants can reduce the risk of problems with WiFi connections by ensuring that all devices in their location (including TVs) are powered off.

- WiFi connections are also often improved by situating your device near a wall or window.

- Virtual backgrounds take up a lot of bandwidth. It helps to turn them off if you're struggling with your WiFi connection.

Appendix: Personal data protection

It's essential that you are aware of, and follow, GDPR requirements when requesting and handling members' personal data. If you fail to do so, you may fall foul of legal personal data protection requirements.

You should:

- Familiarise yourself with the union's **Branch GDPR Guide**

- Seek advice from your Fórsa official

- Use the 'BCC' button (not 'To' or 'CC') when sending group emails to members

- Tell members how you will be using their data, and for how long it will be retained. This is a legal requirement under data protection legislation

- Include a privacy notice on any forms you circulate. See the wording below.

Also:

- Ensure any personal data about branch members is kept confidential and secure. Have sufficient technological safeguards and work processes in place

- Use the Fórsarep.ie email account

- Don't leave confidential paperwork unattended

- Don't share members' contact details without their consent

- Password protect emailed documents that contain personal data

- Be careful opening unusual emails (phishing emails, virus risks)

- If you have concerns over a possible data incident or data breach, contact Fórsa's Data Protection Officer at **dpo@forsa.ie**. The union's DPO must report data breaches to the Data Protection Commission within 72 hours of being made aware of them.

Privacy notice template
(for use in communication with members)

The personal data you provide in this form will be used to process your attendance and voting at the branch AGM and any associated elections. This form will be retained for one year.

Privacy notice template
(for use in communication with election candidates)

Fair data processing notice for Fórsa branch officers, branch executive committees and Fórsa representatives

The role of Fórsa's elected branch officers and members of branch executive committees is vital to the smooth and efficient running of Fórsa branches and the organisation as a whole. Thank you for carrying out these critical roles.

For you to fulfil your role as an elected Fórsa representative, branch officer or branch executive committee member, you will be in contact with members of your particular branch, as it is your role to be the first point of contact for Fórsa.

If Fórsa members in your branch need union representation, they must know who and how to contact their local Fórsa representative, branch officer or branch executive committee members.
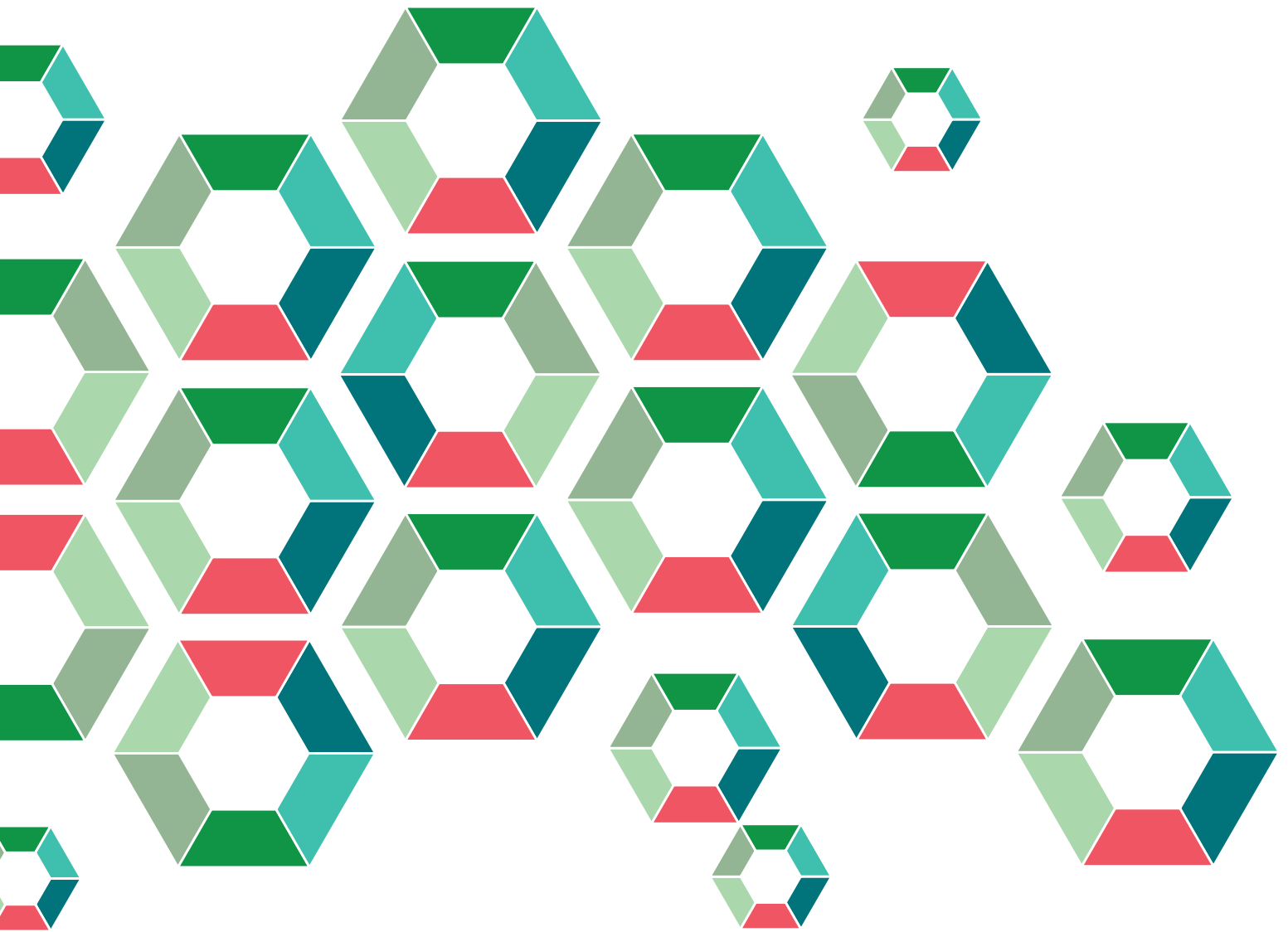
This means that some of your personal data will be shared with members of your own branch. This generally consists of your name, work section, email address and, on occasion, your mobile phone number.

Your data may also be used by Fórsa head office to contact you directly on a range of Fórsa initiatives and work regarding your union role.

Fórsa is committed to processing personal data in accordance with the requirements of data protection legislation, namely the EU General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and Irish Data Protection Act 2018. The union aims to maintain consistently high standards in protecting and securing all of your personal information. Our privacy statement can be viewed **here**.

If you have any data protection concerns please contact Martina O'Leary, Fórsa Data Protection Officer, at dpo@forsa.ie.

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