



### **Debate Rules**

**Invited candidates:** Candidates who qualify through the City of Atlanta to appear on the ballot by name are invited to participate in the debate. Candidates who suspend their campaign or drop out of the race before the debate are no longer eligible to participate.

**Candidates Declining:** Candidates who decline to participate in a debate will be represented by an empty podium.

**Panel:** Each panel is made up of politically neutral journalists - a moderator who leads the debate and panelists who ask the questions. The moderator also may question the candidates. The questions are their own; neither the press club nor the candidates know the questions in advance.

**Debate format:**

Candidates do not make opening statements but the moderator provides a brief introduction for each candidate. Props and electronic devices are not allowed on set, but notes and a notepad are allowed. Candidates are questioned in random order in each round. Candidates do not know the order in advance.

**Round 1:** Each candidate is asked at least one question by a panelist.

**Round 2:** Each candidate asks at least one question to at least of one his/her opponents. Candidates have time for a rebuttal in this round.

**Round 3:** The panelists take turns asking a question to the candidate of his/her choice until time runs out. The moderator determines when a rebuttal is appropriate.

**Closing Statements:** Each candidate makes a closing statement.

**Timing:** Length of time to answer questions and give closing statements varies depending on how many candidates participate and the length of debate.