



OVERVIEW OF THE OPEN MEETINGS ACT

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- A. All meetings of a public body (i.e., school board) must be open to the public.
1. A “meeting” is defined as the convening of a public body at which a quorum is present for the purpose of deliberating toward or rendering a decision on a public policy.
 2. The Act does not apply to a social or chance gathering or conference where a quorum is present as long as the board members in attendance do not collectively discuss matters of public policy.
 3. An advisory committee composed of less than a quorum of the full board can also be a “public body” subject to the Act’s requirements.
- B. All decisions of a public body must be made at a meeting open to the public.
- C. All deliberations of a public body constituting a quorum of its members must take place at a meeting open to the public unless a closed meeting exception applies.
- D. Closed meeting exceptions to the open deliberations requirement:
- Considering the dismissal, suspension, or disciplining of an employee or student if a closed meeting is requested by the employee or student;
 - Hearing complaints or charges brought against an employee or school board member per his or her request for a closed meeting;
 - Considering a periodic personnel evaluation of an employee if he or she requests a closed session;

- Conducting strategy and negotiation sessions connected with a collective bargaining agreement (does not cover individual contracts);
 - Considering the purchase or lease of property;
 - Consulting with legal counsel regarding pending litigation;
 - Reviewing applications for employment or appointment when the applicant requests confidentiality; and
 - Considering material exempt from discussion or disclosure by law.
- E. A public body cannot hold a meeting without first giving public notice of the meeting at its principal office.
- F. Minutes must be kept of all meetings, whether open or closed, and regardless of whether the meeting is identified as a regular or special meeting, study session, committee of the whole, or by some other name.
- G. Members of the public have the right to attend all open meetings and to address the board during the meeting according to rules adopted by the board.