
Public Meeting Law

Overview

The Oregon form of government requires an informed public be aware of the deliberations and decisions of governing bodies, and the information upon which such decisions are made. It is the intent of the Public Meeting Law that decisions of governing bodies are arrived at openly. Thus, the Public Meeting Law provides that any member of the public must be permitted to attend any meeting of the governing body, except for “executive sessions.”

Key Points

Basic Requirements

- Open to public (executive session exemption)
- Advance notice given
- Minutes taken
- Votes public and recorded

Notice

- “Reasonably calculated to give actual notice to interested persons including news media which have requested notice”
- Notice must include time, place, and agenda (principle topics)
- For executive session, notice must include reference to law authorizing executive session

Minutes

- *Written* minutes must be provided of all meetings
- Contents:
 - All members present
 - All motions, proposals, resolutions, orders, ordinances, and measures and their dispositions
 - The results of all votes and the vote of each member by name
 - The substance of any discussion on any matter (need not be detailed)
 - A reference to any document discussed at the meeting
- Audio recordings of executive sessions generally need not be transcribed

Executive Session

- Must give announcement of statutory authority
- News media must be allowed to attend
- Minutes are required
- No final decisions can be made in executive session

Resources

SWCD Program Contacts:

Eric Nusbaum 503-510-8930
Sandi Hiatt 503-986-4704

Oregon Department of Justice
503-378-4400

<https://oda.fyi/PublicRecordsMeetingsLaw>

Publication: *Attorney General's Public Records and Meetings Manual*

<https://oda.fyi/PublicRecordsMeetingsManual>

Applicable Laws and Rules

Oregon Revised Statutes (ORS)

Chapter 192.610–192.690 can be found at:

<https://oda.fyi/ORS192>

Definitions

Governing Bodies are two or more members of any public body that makes decisions or recommendations.

Public Bodies include committees, subcommittees, and advisory groups that have authority to make decisions for or recommendations to a public body.

A *meeting* is the convening of a governing body for which a quorum is required to make a decision or deliberate toward a decision.

Quorum:

- A majority of board members must be present, whether or not all positions are filled.
- Majority vote of all members of a board must occur to make a decision.