

OPEN MEETINGS LAW COMPLIANCE

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I. OPEN MEETINGS LAW - WIS. STAT. § 19.81 THROUGH § 19.98

A. NOTICE REQUIREMENTS.

1. Every meeting of a governmental body must be preceded by a public and press notice. All meetings should be convened in open session and may be adjourned from closed session, but if any action is contemplated the closed session should be adjourned and action taken in open session.
2. Notice all meetings and be as specific as possible.
3. Twenty-four hour advance notice.
4. Posting - media who filed written requests, official newspaper, post copies in courthouse, other public building or website.
5. ADA compliance.
6. A committee of the county board may meet during a county board recess regarding a subject of the meeting if announced by the county board chair at beginning of county board meeting.
7. Schedule new topics that arise during the course of the meeting for the next meeting. Include an agenda item: "Discussion of potential items for next meeting".
8. Notice any meeting where a majority of committee/board members are attending to gather information for decision-making. If the topic requires a 2/3 vote the law presumes a meeting where the number of members present can block action.

B. CLOSED SESSIONS – WIS. STAT. § 19.85.

1. Before adjourning to a closed session, the chair must announce that the committee intends to go into closed session, state the specific statutory subsection which allows the closed session and state the general subject matter of the closed session. A majority vote is required with all individual votes being recorded. Roll-call.
2. Corporation Counsel annual review of all closed session minutes.
3. Statutory exemptions include deliberations of a quasi-judicial body, employee discipline or performance evaluation, purchasing public properties or investing public funds when competitive or bargaining reasons require closed session and conferring with legal counsel.

C. MISCELLANEOUS.

1. Citizens have a right to attend meetings, but unless the meeting is a public hearing or there is a public comment or input agenda item, do not have a right to speak.
2. Walking quorums violate the law.
3. Telephone conference calls can be used, subject to 2.04.310 B., County Code.
4. Social or chance gatherings are not covered.
5. Use of e-mail may violate the law. (see Electronic Mail)
6. Violation may result in individual forfeitures and voiding of any action taken.

For further information see "[Wisconsin County Supervisor's Handbook](#)".