



**ASSEMBLY STANDING COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENTAL OPERATIONS
ASSEMBLY STANDING COMMITTEE ON LOCAL GOVERNMENTS
ASSEMBLY STANDING COMMITTEE ON CITIES**

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

SUBJECT: The COVID-19 Pandemic's Impact on the Open Meetings Law

PURPOSE: To examine the need for potential changes to portions of the State's Open Meetings Law

Albany, New York
Monday
October 25, 2021
10:30 a.m.
Hearing Room C
Legislative Office Building

New York State's Open Meetings Law serves an essential role in ensuring transparency from public bodies performing the business of the people. The COVID-19 pandemic highlighted the difficulty of conducting business in a safe manner while complying with the law's in-person meeting requirements. In 2020 Executive Order 202.1 was issued by the Governor authorizing public meetings that served a governmental function to be conducted remotely. For over a year, public bodies that were required to comply with the Open Meetings Law were able to meet through the use of video or conference call technology, provided that the meetings were recorded and later transcribed for the public. The Executive Order expired on June 24, 2021. The Legislature recently passed a law temporarily authorizing public bodies to continue to meet virtually until January 15, 2022. Public input is vital to evaluate the current process and any future changes to the Open Meetings Law.

Persons wishing to present pertinent testimony to the Committees at the above hearing should complete and return the enclosed reply form as soon as possible. It is important that the reply form be fully completed and returned so that persons may be notified in the event of emergency postponement or cancellation.

Oral testimony will be limited to five minutes' duration. In preparing the order of witnesses, the Committee will attempt to accommodate individual requests to speak at particular times in view of special circumstances. These requests should be made on the attached reply form or communicated to Committee staff as early as possible.

Ten copies of any prepared testimony should be submitted at the hearing registration desk. The Committee would appreciate advance receipt of prepared statements.

Attendees and participants at any legislative public hearing should be aware that these proceedings are video recorded. Their likenesses may be included in any video coverage shown on television or the internet.

In order to further publicize these hearings, please inform interested parties and organizations of the Committees' interest in hearing testimony from all sources.

In order to meet the needs of those who may have a disability, the Assembly, in accordance with its policy of non-discrimination on the basis of disability, as well as the 1990 Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), has made its facilities and services available to all individuals with disabilities. For individuals with disabilities, accommodations will be provided, upon reasonable request, to afford such individuals access and admission to Assembly facilities and activities.

Kenneth Zebrowski
Member of Assembly
Chair
Committee on Governmental Operations

Fred W. Thiele, Jr.
Member of Assembly
Chair
Committee on Local Governments

Edward C. Braunstein
Member of Assembly
Chair
Committee on Cities

PUBLIC HEARING REPLY FORM

Persons wishing to present testimony at the public hearing on the COVID-19 pandemic's impact on the Open Meetings Law are requested to complete this reply form as soon as possible and email or fax it to:

Brian Williams
Legislative Associate
Assembly Committee on Governmental Operations
Email: williamsb@nyassembly.gov
Phone: (518) 455-4355
Fax: (518) 455-7250

- I plan to attend the following public hearing on the COVID-19 pandemic's impact on the Open Meetings Law to be conducted by the Assembly Committees on Governmental Operations, Local Governments and Cities on October 25, 2021.
- I plan to make a public statement at the hearing. My statement will be limited to five minutes, and I will answer any questions which may arise. I will provide 10 copies of my prepared statement.
- I will address my remarks to the following subjects:

- I do not plan to attend the above hearing.
- I would like to be added to the Committee mailing list for notices and reports.
- I would like to be removed from the Committee mailing list.
- I will require assistance and/or handicapped accessibility information. **Please specify the type of assistance required:** _____

NAME: _____

TITLE: _____

ORGANIZATION: _____

ADDRESS: _____

E-MAIL: _____

TELEPHONE: _____

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