

Complying with new Open Meeting Law

There are two major changes to the law, one is that Saturdays do not count towards the 48 hour posting requirement, and the other is the requirement to post agendas along with the meeting notice.

- All Departments/Boards will file their meeting notices to be posted, with Agendas, in duplicate, each Thursday not later than 5:00 P.M., with the Town Clerk, and the Town Clerk will be responsible to handle, as follows:
 - Copy 1 to be posted on Town Clerk's Bulletin Board
 - Copy 2 to be filed in the Town Clerk's Office
 - A 3rd copy may be provided if the Department/Board would like a receipt
- All notices and agendas will also be posted by the appropriate department on the Town's website, which is the main component to 24/7 compliance. Town Clerk staff will assist when necessary
- Town Clerk staff will monitor the website for compliance
- Town Clerk staff will be the only persons allowed to post notices/agendas on the bulletin board as well as the removal of notices after the respective public hearings.
- Any substantive changes to the Agenda must be in the hands of the Town Clerk not later than 48 hours prior to the meeting.
- Yearly notices for all meetings of a particular board or committee is allowable, however, each meeting's agenda must also be submitted to the Town Clerk and posted on the Town Clerk's Bulletin Board and the calendar of the Home Page at least 48 hours prior to the meeting.
- Minutes shall be promptly created and made available within a timely manner. If minutes are requested, they must be provided in draft and/or approved form, as they exist within ten days. Said minutes will be kept on file with that particular Board or Committee. Minutes must contain: (1) the date, time, and place of the meeting; (2) a list of the members present or absent; (3) a summary of discussions on each subject; (4) a list of documents and other exhibits used at the meeting; and (5) the decisions and actions taken at each meeting, including a record of all votes. At reasonable intervals, the board or committee, or its chair or designee, shall review the minutes of executive sessions to determine if their continued non-disclosure is warranted. This determination shall be announced at the next meeting and shall be included in the minutes of that meeting.
- New members of Boards and committees will be notified of the requirements of the Open Meeting Law by directing them to our/and or the *AG's Website for information and by certifying their receipt of the educational materials prepared by the Office of the Attorney General when available.
- It is our intent to ensure that the Chairman of all boards and committees are aware of the new requirements.

*http://www.mass.gov/?pageID=cagoterminal&L=3&L0=Home&L1=Government&L2=The+Open+Meeting+Law&sid=Cago&b=terminalcontent&f=government_oml_GL_c_30A_s_18-25&csid=Cago