

Sunshine Act Public Meeting Notices

Pennsylvania's Sunshine Act requires that agencies provide advance notice of certain meetings that must be open to the public.

Where an organization is created under law and exercises certain kinds of governmental authority through the joint action of its members, the public has a right to witness the organization deliberating and voting to exercise its authority. Pennsylvania's Sunshine Act guarantees this right by ensuring the organization advertises the date and location of meetings where a quorum of the organization's members will be deliberating and/or voting, so that the public may attend.

Contact your agency's legal office for assistance in determining which meetings are subject to the Sunshine Act.

Timeframes for Notification

The type of meeting will determine how far in advance you must provide public notification*.

- Regular - Public meetings that have a prearranged schedule must be advertised at least 72 hours in advance.
- Special - A meeting scheduled by an agency after the agency's regular schedule of meetings has been established must be advertised at least 24 hours in advance.
- Rescheduled - A meeting that is rescheduled by an agency to be held on a date that is different from the originally scheduled regular meeting date must be advertised at least 24 hours in advance
- Emergency – There is no advance notice required for a meeting called for the purpose of dealing with a real or potential emergency involving a clear and present danger to life or property.
- Non-Public Meetings – Executive sessions, conferences, etc. do not require any advance notice to the public.

Publication of Meeting Notices

The meeting notice must be published in a newspaper in the area where the principal office of the agency is located **or** in the area where the meeting is being held. The newspaper must have a paid circulation that is equal to or greater than any other newspaper in the area.

In the Harrisburg Area, the newspaper with the greatest paid circulation is the Patriot News, Harrisburg. In all other areas, the meeting should be published in the local newspaper with the greatest paid circulation.

* The Patriot News only publishes three days a week, Tuesday, Thursday, and Sunday. OA prefers to publish all notices on Thursday, as it is the least expensive day.

Meeting Notice Information

State agencies provide public notice of the meeting by advertising the following information in a newspaper:

- Host (agency, commission, committee, etc.)
- Date, time and location
- Contact information for the public to request a disability accommodation to attend public meetings.
- If the meeting is of a professional licensing board within the Department of State, each matter involving a proposal to revoke, suspend, or restrict a license.

The Patriot-News only publishes three days a week, Tuesday, Thursday, and Sunday. OA tries to publish all notices on Thursday, as it is the least expensive day.			
Regular Meetings: Notification must be published at least three days in advance of the meeting date.			
Special, Rescheduled and Cancelled Meetings: Notification must be published at least one day in advance of the meeting date.			
Meeting Type	Deadline to Submit to OA	Day of Publication in Patriot-News	Meeting Day
Regular	9 AM Tuesday	Thursday	Sunday or later
Special	9 AM Tuesday	Thursday	Friday or later
Regular	9 AM Thursday	Sunday	Wednesday or later
Special	9 AM Thursday	Sunday	Monday or later
Regular	9 AM Friday	Tuesday	Friday or later
Special	9 AM Friday	Tuesday	Wednesday or later
Note: If you are unable to meet the submission deadline, please enter the meeting information into the system and follow the prompts to contact our office at 717.783.5055 to find out if it can be published. We do not need your agency coding. Please note that OA may reformat meeting information to limit the cost of the advertisement; however, the meeting name, date, and time will not be changed.			