

# **A Guide to the Open Meetings Act (OMA) in Illinois**

What is the Open Meetings Act (OMA)? The Open Meetings Act is a state law that requires meetings of public bodies to be open to the public except in certain, specific situations.

The OMA ensures that the actions of public bodies are conducted in the open, through public meetings, and that the public is able to observe the deliberations behind those actions.

The public must be given advance notice of the time, place and subject matter of meetings of public bodies.

## **What is a “public body?”**

A “public body” covered by OMA includes all legislative, executive, administrative or advisory bodies of the following:

- the state
- counties
- townships, cities, villages or incorporated towns
- school districts
- all municipal corporations

“Public body” also includes all committees, subcommittees and subsidiary bodies of public bodies, such as park district boards, city councils and civic commissions.

## **Are there closed meetings?**

Yes. Meetings can be closed to the public so officials can discuss:

- the appointment, employment, compensation, discipline, performance or dismissal of a specific employee or legal counsel for the public body;
- collective negotiating matters or deliberations concerning salary

- schedules for one or more classes of employees; or
- discipline or removal of an occupant of a public office or appointment of an individual to fill a vacant public office.

## **What do I do if I think a “public body” has violated the OMA?**

Within 60 calendar days from when the alleged violation occurred, you can file a [Request for Review](#) with the Office of the Attorney General.

### **If you need assistance from the Attorney General’s Office:**

Public Access Hotline

1-877-299-FOIA (3642)

[publicaccess@atg.state.il.us](mailto:publicaccess@atg.state.il.us)

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### **Lessons Learned from Watchdog Training**

Michael J. Luke, Counsel to the Attorney General, offered details of this powerful law at a BGA Citizen Watchdog Training session in Springfield, IL. Check out the below series of videos to learn more.

What is the Illinois Open Meetings Act (OMA)?

Rules and Regulations

Violations of OMA