

Open Public Meeting Act (OPMA) Training

BASIC RULE:

Whenever 3 or more Board members are together, do not discuss Board business unless the public has been notified and can attend the gathering.

Main problem areas

- Conference calls
- E-mails (reply all)
- Informal gatherings

Regular and special meetings

- Regular: can conduct any business
- Special: can only business on the agenda

Executive Sessions

- Public excluded- Board staff can remain
- Not recorded
- Only for reasons set forth in statute
- Mainly to discuss current or pending litigation

Penalties

- Action taken in meeting is void
- \$500 civil penalty against each Commission member in violation; repeat violation \$1000
- Costs and attorney fees

Additional Resources

- Office of the Attorney General -- <http://www.atg.wa.gov/OpenGovernmentTraining.aspx>
- Governor's Office Online appointee training <https://www.governor.wa.gov/boards-commissions/resources-appointees/online-appointee-training>