

Open Public Meetings Policy

Overview

Workforce Investment Act (WIA) Section 117 (e) requires the Local Board to make available to the public, on a regular basis through open meetings, information regarding its activities. The Arkansas Freedom of Information Act (A.C.A. §25-19-106) provides the parameters for an organization that receives or expends public funds to have open meetings.

The Local Workforce Investment Boards (Local Boards) and the Chief Elected Officials (CEOs) receive and expend public funds. Therefore, all meetings of the Local Boards, the CEOs and any of their subcommittees must abide by the provisions of the Arkansas Freedom of Information Act.

WIA Section 117 (e) requires the Local Boards to make available to the public on a regular basis through open meetings, information about the following:

1. Local Workforce Investment Plan prior to its submission;
2. Designation and certification of One-Stop operators;
3. Grants or contracts awarded to eligible providers of youth activities; and
4. On request, minutes of local board meetings.

Except as otherwise specifically provided by law, all meetings, formal or informal, special or regular, of the Local Boards and CEOs shall be public meetings.

Access to Meetings and Board Records

The time and place of each regular meeting shall be furnished to anyone who requests the information. Local Boards are encouraged to make their meetings as accessible to the public as possible, including to persons with disabilities. Local Boards shall post their meeting dates, locations, times, agenda and minutes of meetings on a local or state website making the information to the public readily available. If the local board does not have a website, they will provide the information timely to the Arkansas Department of Workforce Services for posting on the state website.

Emergency Meetings

In the event of emergency or special meetings, the person calling the meeting shall notify the representatives of the newspapers, radio stations, and television stations, if any, located in the county in which the meeting is to be held and any news media located elsewhere that cover regular meetings of the governing body and that have requested to be so notified of emergency or special meetings of the time, place, and date of the meeting. Notification shall be made at least two (2) hours before the meeting takes place in order that the public shall have representatives at the meeting.

Executive Session

Executive session of the local board or CEOs will be permitted only for the purpose of considering employment, appointment, promotion, demotion, disciplining, or resignation of any public officer or employee. The specific purpose of the executive session shall be announced in public before going into executive session.

Only the person holding the top administrative position in the public agency, department, or office involved, the immediate supervisor of the employee involved, and the employee may be present at the executive session when so requested by the board or other public body holding the executive session.

Any person being interviewed for the top administrative position in the public agency, department, or office involved may be present at the executive session when so requested by the board or other public body holding the executive session.

Executive sessions must never be called for the purpose of defeating the reason or the spirit of this policy or the Arkansas Freedom of Information Act.

No resolution, ordinance, rule, contract, regulation, or motion considered or arrived at in executive session will be legal unless, following the executive session, the board reconvenes in public session and presents and votes on the resolution, ordinance, rule, contract, regulation, or motion.

References: WIA Section 117(e) and the Arkansas Freedom of Information Act A.C.A. §25-19-106.