

INSIGHTS

Texas Governor Allows Temporary Suspension of Certain Open Meeting Statutes

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On March 16, 2020, Texas Governor Greg Abbott granted the Office of the Attorney General's request for a temporary suspension of certain open meeting statutes. This temporary suspension allows for telephonic or videoconference meetings of governmental bodies that are accessible to the public.

The following open meeting statutes are temporarily suspended:

- those that require a quorum or a presiding officer to be physically present at the specified location of the meeting; *provided, however*, that a quorum is present in the telephonic or videoconference meeting;
- those that require physical posting of a notice; *provided, however*, that the online notice must include a toll-free dial-in number or a free-of-charge videoconference link, along with an electronic copy of any agenda packet;
- those that require the telephonic or videoconference meeting to be audible to members of the public who are physically present at the specified location of the meeting; *provided, however*, that (i) the dial-in number or videoconference link provided in the notice must make the meeting audible to members of the public and allow for their two-way communication and (ii) a recording of the meeting must be made available to the public; and
- those that may be interpreted to require face-to-face interaction between members of the public and public officials; *provided, however*, that governmental bodies must offer alternative methods of communicating with their public officials.

These suspensions are in effect until terminated by the Office of the Governor, or until the March 13, 2020 disaster declaration is lifted or expires. For more information, please see the Office of the Governor's press release [here](#). For additional details about the statutes affected, please see the Office of the Attorney General's press release [here](#).

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