

COLORADO REVISED STATUTES

\*\*\* This document reflects changes current through all laws passed at the Second Regular and First Extraordinary Sessions of the Sixty-Eighth General Assembly of the State of Colorado 2012 and Constitutional and Statutory amendments approved at the General Election on November 6, 2012 \*\*\*

TITLE 24. GOVERNMENT - STATE  
ADMINISTRATION  
ARTICLE 6. COLORADO SUNSHINE LAW  
PART 4. OPEN MEETINGS LAW

C.R.S. 24-6-401 (2012)

24-6-401. Declaration of policy

It is declared to be a matter of statewide concern and the policy of this state that the formation of public policy is public business and may not be conducted in secret.

**HISTORY:** Source: Initiated 72. L. 73: p. 1666, § 1.C.R.S. 1963: § 3-37-401.L. 91: Entire section amended, p. 815, § 1, effective June 1.

24-6-402. Meetings - open to public - definitions

(1) For the purposes of this section:

(a) "Local public body" means any board, committee, commission, authority, or other advisory, policy-making, rule-making, or formally constituted body of any political subdivision of the state and any public or private entity to which a political subdivision, or an official thereof, has delegated a governmental decision-making function but does not include persons on the administrative staff of the local public body.

(b) "Meeting" means any kind of gathering, convened to discuss public business, in person, by telephone, electronically, or by other means of communication.

(c) "Political subdivision of the state" includes, but is not limited to, any county, city, city and county, town, home rule city, home rule county, home rule city and county, school district, special district, local improvement district, special improvement district, or service district.

(d) "State public body" means any board, committee, commission, or other advisory, policy-making, rule-making, decision-making, or formally constituted body of any state agency, state authority, governing board of a state institution of higher education including the regents of the university of Colorado, a nonprofit corporation incorporated pursuant to [section 23-5-121 \(2\)](#), C.R.S., or the general assembly, and any public or private entity to which the state, or an official thereof, has delegated a governmental decision-making function but does not include persons on the administrative staff of the state public body.

(2) (a) All meetings of two or more members of any state public body at which any

public business is discussed or at which any formal action may be taken are declared to be public meetings open to the public at all times.

(b) All meetings of a quorum or three or more members of any local public body, whichever is fewer, at which any public business is discussed or at which any formal action may be taken are declared to be public meetings open to the public at all times.

(c) Any meetings at which the adoption of any proposed policy, position, resolution, rule, regulation, or formal action occurs or at which a majority or quorum of the body is in attendance, or is expected to be in attendance, shall be held only after full and timely notice to the public. In addition to any other means of full and timely notice, a local public body shall be deemed to have given full and timely notice if the notice of the meeting is posted in a designated public place within the boundaries of the local public body no less than twenty-four hours prior to the holding of the meeting. The public place or places for posting such notice shall be designated annually at the local public body's first regular meeting of each calendar year. The posting shall include specific agenda information where possible.

(d) (I) Minutes of any meeting of a state public body shall be taken and promptly recorded, and such records shall be open to public inspection. The minutes of a meeting during which an executive session authorized under subsection (3) of this section is held shall reflect the topic of the discussion at the executive session.

(II) Minutes of any meeting of a local public body at which the adoption of any proposed policy, position, resolution, rule, regulation, or formal action occurs or could occur shall be taken and promptly recorded, and such records shall be open to public inspection. The minutes of a meeting during which an executive session authorized under subsection (4) of this section is held shall reflect the topic of the discussion at the executive session.

(III) If elected officials use electronic mail to discuss pending legislation or other public business among themselves, the electronic mail shall be subject to the requirements of this section. Electronic mail communication among elected officials that does not relate to pending legislation or other public business shall not be considered a "meeting" within the meaning of this section.

(IV) Neither a state nor a local public body may adopt any proposed policy, position, resolution, rule, or regulation or take formal action by secret ballot unless otherwise authorized in accordance with the provisions of this subparagraph (IV). Notwithstanding any other provision of this section, a vote to elect leadership of a state or local public body by that same public body may be taken by secret ballot, and a secret ballot may be used in connection with the election by a state or local public body of members of a search committee, which committee is otherwise subject to the requirements of this section, but the outcome of the vote shall be recorded contemporaneously in the minutes of the body in accordance with the requirements of this section. Nothing in this subparagraph (IV) shall be construed to affect the authority of a board of education to use a secret ballot in accordance with the requirements of [section 22-32-108 \(6\)](#), C.R.S. For purposes of this subparagraph (IV), "secret ballot" means a vote cast in such a way that the identity of the person voting or the position taken in such vote is withheld from the public.

(d.5) (I) (A) Discussions that occur in an executive session of a state public body

shall be electronically recorded. If a state public body electronically recorded the minutes of its open meetings on or after August 8, 2001, the state public body shall continue to electronically record the minutes of its open meetings that occur on or after August 8, 2001; except that electronic recording shall not be required for two successive meetings of the state public body while the regularly used electronic equipment is inoperable. A state public body may satisfy the electronic recording requirements of this sub-subparagraph (A) by making any form of electronic recording of the discussions in an executive session of the state public body. Except as provided in sub-subparagraph (B) of this subparagraph (I), the electronic recording of an executive session shall reflect the specific citation to the provision in subsection (3) of this section that authorizes the state public body to meet in an executive session and the actual contents of the discussion during the session. The provisions of this sub-subparagraph (A) shall not apply to discussions of individual students by a state public body pursuant to paragraph (b) of subsection (3) of this section.

(B) If, in the opinion of the attorney who is representing a governing board of a state institution of higher education, including the regents of the university of Colorado, and is in attendance at an executive session that has been properly announced pursuant to paragraph (a) of subsection (3) of this section, all or a portion of the discussion during the executive session constitutes a privileged attorney-client communication, no record or electronic recording shall be required to be kept of the part of the discussion that constitutes a privileged attorney-client communication. The electronic recording of said executive session discussion shall reflect that no further record or electronic recording was kept of the discussion based on the opinion of the attorney representing the governing board of a state institution of higher education, including the regents of the university of Colorado, as stated for the record during the executive session, that the discussion constituted a privileged attorney-client communication, or the attorney representing the governing board of a state institution of higher education, including the regents of the university of Colorado, may provide a signed statement attesting that the portion of the executive session that was not recorded constituted a privileged attorney-client communication in the opinion of the attorney.

(C) If a court finds, upon application of a person seeking access to the record of the executive session of a state public body in accordance with [section 24-72-204 \(5.5\)](#) and after an in camera review of the record of the executive session, that the state public body engaged in substantial discussion of any matters not enumerated in subsection (3) of this section or that the body adopted a proposed policy, position, resolution, rule, regulation, or formal action in the executive session in contravention of paragraph (a) of subsection (3) of this section, the portion of the record of the executive session that reflects the substantial discussion of matters not enumerated in subsection (3) of this section or the adoption of a proposed policy, position, resolution, rule, regulation, or formal action shall be open to public inspection pursuant to [section 24-72-204 \(5.5\)](#).

(D) No portion of the record of an executive session of a state public body shall be open for public inspection or subject to discovery in any administrative or judicial proceeding, except upon the consent of the state public body or as provided in sub-subparagraph (C) of this subparagraph (I) and [section 24-72-204 \(5.5\)](#).

(E) The record of an executive session of a state public body recorded pursuant to sub-subparagraph (A) of this subparagraph (I) shall be retained for at least ninety

days after the date of the executive session.

(II) (A) Discussions that occur in an executive session of a local public body shall be electronically recorded. If a local public body electronically recorded the minutes of its open meetings on or after August 8, 2001, the local public body shall continue to electronically record the minutes of its open meetings that occur on or after August 8, 2001; except that electronic recording shall not be required for two successive meetings of the local public body while the regularly used electronic equipment is inoperable. A local public body may satisfy the electronic recording requirements of this sub-subparagraph (A) by making any form of electronic recording of the discussions in an executive session of the local public body. Except as provided in sub-subparagraph (B) of this subparagraph (II), the electronic recording of an executive session shall reflect the specific citation to the provision in subsection (4) of this section that authorizes the local public body to meet in an executive session and the actual contents of the discussion during the session. The provisions of this sub-subparagraph (A) shall not apply to discussions of individual students by a local public body pursuant to paragraph (h) of subsection (4) of this section.

(B) If, in the opinion of the attorney who is representing the local public body and who is in attendance at an executive session that has been properly announced pursuant to subsection (4) of this section, all or a portion of the discussion during the executive session constitutes a privileged attorney-client communication, no record or electronic recording shall be required to be kept of the part of the discussion that constitutes a privileged attorney-client communication. The electronic recording of said executive session discussion shall reflect that no further record or electronic recording was kept of the discussion based on the opinion of the attorney representing the local public body, as stated for the record during the executive session, that the discussion constituted a privileged attorney-client communication, or the attorney representing the local public body may provide a signed statement attesting that the portion of the executive session that was not recorded constituted a privileged attorney-client communication in the opinion of the attorney.

(C) If a court finds, upon application of a person seeking access to the record of the executive session of a local public body in accordance with [section 24-72-204 \(5.5\)](#) and after an in camera review of the record of the executive session, that the local public body engaged in substantial discussion of any matters not enumerated in subsection (4) of this section or that the body adopted a proposed policy, position, resolution, rule, regulation, or formal action in the executive session in contravention of subsection (4) of this section, the portion of the record of the executive session that reflects the substantial discussion of matters not enumerated in subsection (4) of this section or the adoption of a proposed policy, position, resolution, rule, regulation, or formal action shall be open to public inspection pursuant to [section 24-72-204 \(5.5\)](#).

(D) No portion of the record of an executive session of a local public body shall be open for public inspection or subject to discovery in any administrative or judicial proceeding, except upon the consent of the local public body or as provided in sub-subparagraph (C) of this subparagraph (II) and [section 24-72-204 \(5.5\)](#).

(E) The record of an executive session of a local public body recorded pursuant to sub-subparagraph (A) of this subparagraph (II) shall be retained for at least ninety days after the date of the executive session.

(e) This part 4 does not apply to any chance meeting or social gathering at which discussion of public business is not the central purpose.

(f) The provisions of paragraph (c) of this subsection (2) shall not be construed to apply to the day-to-day oversight of property or supervision of employees by county commissioners. Except as set forth in this paragraph (f), the provisions of this paragraph (f) shall not be interpreted to alter any requirements of paragraph (c) of this subsection (2).

(3) (a) The members of a state public body subject to this part 4, upon the announcement by the state public body to the public of the topic for discussion in the executive session, including specific citation to the provision of this subsection (3) authorizing the body to meet in an executive session and identification of the particular matter to be discussed in as much detail as possible without compromising the purpose for which the executive session is authorized, and the affirmative vote of two-thirds of the entire membership of the body after such announcement, may hold an executive session only at a regular or special meeting and for the sole purpose of considering any of the matters enumerated in paragraph (b) of this subsection (3) or the following matters; except that no adoption of any proposed policy, position, resolution, rule, regulation, or formal action, except the review, approval, and amendment of the minutes of an executive session recorded pursuant to subparagraph (I) of paragraph (d.5) of subsection (2) of this section, shall occur at any executive session that is not open to the public:

(I) The purchase of property for public purposes, or the sale of property at competitive bidding, if premature disclosure of information would give an unfair competitive or bargaining advantage to a person whose personal, private interest is adverse to the general public interest. No member of the state public body shall use this paragraph (a) as a subterfuge for providing covert information to prospective buyers or sellers. Governing boards of state institutions of higher education including the regents of the university of Colorado may also consider the acquisition of property as a gift in an executive session, only if such executive session is requested by the donor.

(II) Conferences with an attorney representing the state public body concerning disputes involving the public body that are the subject of pending or imminent court action, concerning specific claims or grievances, or for purposes of receiving legal advice on specific legal questions. Mere presence or participation of an attorney at an executive session of a state public body is not sufficient to satisfy the requirements of this subsection (3).

(III) Matters required to be kept confidential by federal law or rules, state statutes, or in accordance with the requirements of any joint rule of the senate and the house of representatives pertaining to lobbying practices;

(IV) Specialized details of security arrangements or investigations, including defenses against terrorism, both domestic and foreign, and including where disclosure of the matters discussed might reveal information that could be used for the purpose of committing, or avoiding prosecution for, a violation of the law;

(V) Determining positions relative to matters that may be subject to negotiations with employees or employee organizations; developing strategy for and receiving reports on the progress of such negotiations; and instructing negotiators;

(VI) With respect to the board of regents of the university of Colorado and the board of directors of the university of Colorado hospital authority created pursuant to article 21 of title 23, C.R.S., matters concerning the modification, initiation, or cessation of patient care programs at the university hospital operated by the university of Colorado hospital authority pursuant to part 5 of article 21 of title 23, C.R.S., (including the university of Colorado psychiatric hospital), and receiving reports with regard to any of the above, if premature disclosure of information would give an unfair competitive or bargaining advantage to any person or entity;

(VII) With respect to nonprofit corporations incorporated pursuant to [section 23-5-121 \(2\)](#), C.R.S., matters concerning trade secrets, privileged information, and confidential commercial, financial, geological, or geophysical data furnished by or obtained from any person;

(VIII) With respect to the governing board of a state institution of higher education and any committee thereof, consideration of nominations for the awarding of honorary degrees, medals, and other honorary awards by the institution and consideration of proposals for the naming of a building or a portion of a building for a person or persons.

(b) (I) All meetings held by members of a state public body subject to this part 4 to consider the appointment or employment of a public official or employee or the dismissal, discipline, promotion, demotion, or compensation of, or the investigation of charges or complaints against, a public official or employee shall be open to the public unless said applicant, official, or employee requests an executive session. Governing boards of institutions of higher education including the regents of the university of Colorado may, upon their own affirmative vote, hold executive sessions to consider the matters listed in this paragraph (b). Executive sessions may be held to review administrative actions regarding investigation of charges or complaints and attendant investigative reports against students where public disclosure could adversely affect the person or persons involved, unless the students have specifically consented to or requested the disclosure of such matters. An executive session may be held only at a regular or special meeting of the state public body and only upon the announcement by the public body to the public of the topic for discussion in the executive session and the affirmative vote of two-thirds of the entire membership of the body after such announcement.

(II) The provisions of subparagraph (I) of this paragraph (b) shall not apply to discussions concerning any member of the state public body, any elected official, or the appointment of a person to fill the office of a member of the state public body or an elected official or to discussions of personnel policies that do not require the discussion of matters personal to particular employees.

(c) Notwithstanding the provisions of paragraphs (a) and (b) of this subsection (3), the state board of parole created in part 2 of article 2 of title 17, C.R.S., may proceed in executive session to consider matters connected with any parole proceedings under the jurisdiction of said board; except that no final parole decisions shall be made by said board while in executive session. Such executive session may be held only at a regular or special meeting of the state board of parole and only upon the affirmative vote of two-thirds of the membership of the board present at such meeting.

(d) Notwithstanding any provision of paragraph (a) or (b) of this subsection (3) to the contrary, upon the affirmative vote of two-thirds of the members of the governing board of an institution of higher education who are authorized to vote, the governing board may hold an executive session in accordance with the provisions of this subsection (3).

(3.5) A search committee of a state public body or local public body shall establish job search goals, including the writing of the job description, deadlines for applications, requirements for applicants, selection procedures, and the time frame for appointing or employing a chief executive officer of an agency, authority, institution, or other entity at an open meeting. The state or local public body shall make public the list of all finalists under consideration for the position of chief executive officer no later than fourteen days prior to appointing or employing one of the finalists to fill the position. No offer of appointment or employment shall be made prior to this public notice. Records submitted by or on behalf of a finalist for such position shall be subject to the provisions of [section 24-72-204 \(3\) \(a\) \(XI\)](#). As used in this subsection (3.5), "finalist" shall have the same meaning as in [section 24-72-204 \(3\) \(a\) \(XI\)](#). Nothing in this subsection (3.5) shall be construed to prohibit a search committee from holding an executive session to consider appointment or employment matters not described in this subsection (3.5) and otherwise authorized by this section.

(4) The members of a local public body subject to this part 4, upon the announcement by the local public body to the public of the topic for discussion in the executive session, including specific citation to the provision of this subsection (4) authorizing the body to meet in an executive session and identification of the particular matter to be discussed in as much detail as possible without compromising the purpose for which the executive session is authorized, and the affirmative vote of two-thirds of the quorum present, after such announcement, may hold an executive session only at a regular or special meeting and for the sole purpose of considering any of the following matters; except that no adoption of any proposed policy, position, resolution, rule, regulation, or formal action, except the review, approval, and amendment of the minutes of an executive session recorded pursuant to subparagraph (II) of paragraph (d.5) of subsection (2) of this section, shall occur at any executive session that is not open to the public:

(a) The purchase, acquisition, lease, transfer, or sale of any real, personal, or other property interest; except that no executive session shall be held for the purpose of concealing the fact that a member of the local public body has a personal interest in such purchase, acquisition, lease, transfer, or sale;

(b) Conferences with an attorney for the local public body for the purposes of receiving legal advice on specific legal questions. Mere presence or participation of an attorney at an executive session of the local public body is not sufficient to satisfy the requirements of this subsection (4).

(c) Matters required to be kept confidential by federal or state law or rules and regulations. The local public body shall announce the specific citation of the statutes or rules that are the basis for such confidentiality before holding the executive session.

(d) Specialized details of security arrangements or investigations, including defenses against terrorism, both domestic and foreign, and including where disclosure of the

matters discussed might reveal information that could be used for the purpose of committing, or avoiding prosecution for, a violation of the law;

(e) Determining positions relative to matters that may be subject to negotiations; developing strategy for negotiations; and instructing negotiators;

(f) (I) Personnel matters except if the employee who is the subject of the session has requested an open meeting, or if the personnel matter involves more than one employee, all of the employees have requested an open meeting. With respect to hearings held pursuant to the "Teacher Employment, Compensation, and Dismissal Act of 1990", article 63 of title 22, C.R.S., the provisions of [section 22-63-302 \(7\) \(a\)](#), C.R.S., shall govern in lieu of the provisions of this subsection (4).

(II) The provisions of subparagraph (I) of this paragraph (f) shall not apply to discussions concerning any member of the local public body, any elected official, or the appointment of a person to fill the office of a member of the local public body or an elected official or to discussions of personnel policies that do not require the discussion of matters personal to particular employees.

(g) Consideration of any documents protected by the mandatory nondisclosure provisions of the "Colorado Open Records Act", part 2 of article 72 of this title; except that all consideration of documents or records that are work product as defined in [section 24-72-202 \(6.5\)](#) or that are subject to the governmental or deliberative process privilege shall occur in a public meeting unless an executive session is otherwise allowed pursuant to this subsection (4);

(h) Discussion of individual students where public disclosure would adversely affect the person or persons involved.

(5) (Deleted by amendment, L. 96, p. 691, § 1, effective July 1, 1996.)

(6) The limitations imposed by subsections (3), (4), and (5) of this section do not apply to matters which are covered by [section 14 of article V of the state constitution](#).

(7) The secretary or clerk of each state public body or local public body shall maintain a list of persons who, within the previous two years, have requested notification of all meetings or of meetings when certain specified policies will be discussed and shall provide reasonable advance notification of such meetings, provided, however, that unintentional failure to provide such advance notice will not nullify actions taken at an otherwise properly published meeting. The provisions of this subsection (7) shall not apply to the day-to-day oversight of property or supervision of employees by county commissioners, as provided in paragraph (f) of subsection (2) of this section.

(8) No resolution, rule, regulation, ordinance, or formal action of a state or local public body shall be valid unless taken or made at a meeting that meets the requirements of subsection (2) of this section.

(9) The courts of record of this state shall have jurisdiction to issue injunctions to enforce the purposes of this section upon application by any citizen of this state. In any action in which the court finds a violation of this section, the court shall award the citizen prevailing in such action costs and reasonable attorney fees. In the event

the court does not find a violation of this section, it shall award costs and reasonable attorney fees to the prevailing party if the court finds that the action was frivolous, vexatious, or groundless.

(10) Any provision of this section declared to be unconstitutional or otherwise invalid shall not impair the remaining provisions of this section, and, to this end, the provisions of this section are declared to be severable.

**HISTORY:** Source: Initiated 72. L. 73: p. 1666, § 1.C.R.S. 1963: § 3-37-402.L. 77: (1) and (2) amended and (3) added, pp. 1155, 1157, § § 1, 1, effective June 19.L. 85: (2.6) added, p. 644, § 6, effective June 19.L. 87: (1), (2.3)(a), (2.3)(b), and (2.5) amended and (2.3)(f) added, p. 926, § 1, effective March 27.L. 89: (2.3)(f) amended, p. 1004, § 4, effective October 1.L. 91: Entire section amended, p. 815, § 2, effective June 1; (3)(a)(VI) amended, p. 586, § 6, effective October 1.L. 92: (2)(f) added, p. 972, § 1, effective April 23.L. 96: (2)(d)(III) added, p. 1480, § 2, effective June 1; (1)(b), (1)(d), (2)(d), IP(3)(a), (3)(a)(II), (3)(a)(V), (3)(b), IP(4), (4)(c), (5), and (7) amended and (3.5) added, p. 691, § 1, effective July 1.L. 97: (3.5) amended, p. 320, § 1, effective April 14.L. 99: (4)(g) amended, p. 205, § 1, effective March 31.L. 2000: (1)(d) amended and (3)(a)(VII) added, pp. 414, 415, § § 4, 5, effective April 13.L. 2001: (3)(a)(III) amended, p. 150, § 5, effective March 27; (2)(d.5) added and IP(3)(a), (3)(b), IP(4), and (4)(f) amended, pp. 1069, 1072, § § 1, 2, effective August 8.L. 2002: (3)(a)(IV) and (4)(d) amended, p. 238, § 7, effective April 12; (2)(d.5)(I)(A) and (2)(d.5)(II)(A) amended, p. 643, § 3, effective May 24; (3)(a)(VIII) added, p. 85, § 1, effective August 7.L. 2006: (2)(d.5)(I)(A), (2)(d.5)(I)(B), (2)(d.5)(II)(A), and (2)(d.5)(II)(B) amended, p. 9, § 1, effective August 7.L. 2009: (2)(d.5)(I)(B) and (3)(a)(II) amended, ([HB 09-1124](#)), [ch. 94](#), [p. 359](#), [§ 1](#), effective August 5; (4)(g) amended, ([SB 09-292](#)), [ch. 369](#), [p. 1967](#), [§ 74](#), effective August 5.L. 2010: (3)(d) added, ([SB 10-003](#)), [ch. 391](#), [p. 1859](#), [§ 40](#), effective June 9.L. 2012: (2)(d)(IV) added, ([HB 12-1169](#)), [ch. 64](#), [p. 227](#), [§ 1](#), effective March 24.