

Ralph M. Brown Act Basics

Meetings under the Brown Act:

A gathering of a majority of the members of the board to hear, discuss, or deliberate on matters within the board's subject matter jurisdiction. No vote or action is required for the gathering to be a meeting.

- Must be open and public
- Serial and Hub & Spoke meetings are illegal
- Can only discuss items that are on the agenda
- If action is taken in violation of open meeting laws, action may be voided

The Brown Act applies to:

Local agencies and legislative bodies of agencies, including boards, commissions, committees, etc.

- Standing committees of a board

The Brown Act does not apply to ad hoc advisory committees consisting of less than a quorum of the covered board.

Meeting posting

72 hours in advance for any regular meeting

24 hours in advance of a special meeting

Do's and Don'ts

Do hold meetings in places accessible to all

Do allow for non-disruptive recording and broadcast of meetings

Do allow the public to address the board at regular or standing committee meetings

Do conduct only public votes (no secret ballots)

Do not require a "sign in"

Do not discuss items that are not on the agenda