

An Act

ENROLLED SENATE
BILL NO. 1298

By: Rader of the Senate

and

Pfeiffer of the House

An Act relating to the Oklahoma Open Meeting Act; amending 25 O.S. 2021, Sections 307 and 307.1, which relate to executive sessions and videoconference exceptions; authorizing the Oklahoma Tax Commission to hold executive session for certain purposes; updating statutory language; providing exceptions; authorizing taxpayers to attend executive session with the Commission via videoconference; and providing an effective date.

SUBJECT: Oklahoma Open Meeting Act

BE IT ENACTED BY THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF OKLAHOMA:

SECTION 1. AMENDATORY 25 O.S. 2021, Section 307, is amended to read as follows:

Section 307. A. No public body shall hold executive sessions unless otherwise specifically provided in this section.

B. Executive sessions of public bodies will be permitted only for the purpose of:

1. Discussing the employment, hiring, appointment, promotion, demotion, disciplining or resignation of any individual salaried public officer or employee;

2. Discussing negotiations concerning employees and representatives of employee groups;

3. Discussing the purchase or appraisal of real property;

4. Confidential communications between a public body and its attorney concerning a pending investigation, claim, or action if the public body, with the advice of its attorney, determines that disclosure will seriously impair the ability of the public body to process the claim or conduct a pending investigation, litigation, or proceeding in the public interest;

5. Permitting district boards of education to hear evidence and discuss the expulsion or suspension of a student when requested by the student involved or the student's parent, attorney or legal guardian;

6. Discussing matters involving a specific handicapped child;

7. Discussing any matter where disclosure of information would violate confidentiality requirements of state or federal law;

8. Engaging in deliberations or rendering a final or intermediate decision in an individual proceeding pursuant to Article II of the Administrative Procedures Act;

9. Discussing matters involving safety and security at state penal institutions or correctional facilities used to house state inmates;

10. Discussing contract negotiations involving contracts requiring approval of the State Board of Corrections, which shall be limited to members of the public body, the attorney for the public body, and the immediate staff of the public body. No person who may profit directly or indirectly by a proposed transaction which is under consideration may be present or participate in the executive session; or

11. Discussing the following:

- a. the investigation of a plan or scheme to commit an act of terrorism,

- b. assessments of the vulnerability of government facilities or public improvements to an act of terrorism,
- c. plans for deterrence or prevention of or protection from an act of terrorism,
- d. plans for response or remediation after an act of terrorism,
- e. information technology of the public body but only if the discussion specifically identifies:
 - (1) design or functional schematics that demonstrate the relationship or connections between devices or systems,
 - (2) system configuration information,
 - (3) security monitoring and response equipment placement and configuration,
 - (4) specific location or placement of systems, components or devices,
 - (5) system identification numbers, names, or connecting circuits,
 - (6) business continuity and disaster planning, or response plans, or
 - (7) investigation information directly related to security penetrations or denial of services, or
- f. the investigation of an act of terrorism that has already been committed.

For the purposes of this subsection, the term "terrorism" means any act encompassed by the definitions set forth in Section 1268.1 of Title 21 of the Oklahoma Statutes.

C. Notwithstanding the provisions of subsection B of this section, the following public bodies may hold executive sessions:

1. The State Banking Board, as provided for under Section 306.1 of Title 6 of the Oklahoma Statutes;

2. The Oklahoma Industrial Finance Authority, as provided for in Section 854 of Title 74 of the Oklahoma Statutes;

3. The Oklahoma Development Finance Authority, as provided for in Section 5062.6 of Title 74 of the Oklahoma Statutes;

4. The Oklahoma Center for the Advancement of Science and Technology, as provided for in Section 5060.7 of Title 74 of the Oklahoma Statutes;

5. The Oklahoma Health Research Committee for purposes of conferring on matters pertaining to research and development of products, if public disclosure of the matter discussed would interfere with the development of patents, copyrights, products, or services;

6. The Workers' Compensation Commission for the purposes provided for in Section 20 of Title 85A of the Oklahoma Statutes;

7. A review committee, as provided for in Section 855 of Title 62 of the Oklahoma Statutes;

8. The Child Death Review Board for purposes of receiving and conferring on matters pertaining to materials declared confidential by law;

9. The Domestic Violence Fatality Review Board as provided in Section 1601 of Title 22 of the Oklahoma Statutes;

10. The Opioid Overdose Fatality Review Board, as provided in Section 2-1001 of Title 63 of the Oklahoma Statutes;

11. All nonprofit foundations, boards, bureaus, commissions, agencies, trusteeships, authorities, councils, committees, public trusts, task forces or study groups supported in whole or part by public funds or entrusted with the expenditure of public funds for

purposes of conferring on matters pertaining to economic development, including the transfer of property, financing, or the creation of a proposal to entice a business to remain or to locate within their jurisdiction if public disclosure of the matter discussed would interfere with the development of products or services or if public disclosure would violate the confidentiality of the business;

12. The Oklahoma Indigent Defense System Board for purposes of discussing negotiating strategies in connection with making possible counteroffers to offers to contract to provide legal representation to indigent criminal defendants and indigent juveniles in cases for which the System must provide representation pursuant to the provisions of the Indigent Defense ~~System~~ Act;

13. The Quality Investment Committee for purposes of discussing applications and confidential materials pursuant to the terms of the Oklahoma Quality Investment Act; ~~and~~

14. The Oklahoma Municipal Power Authority established pursuant to Section 24-101 et seq. of Title 11 of the Oklahoma Statutes and in its role as an electric utility regulated by the federal government, for purposes of discussing security plans and procedures including, but not limited to, cybersecurity matters; and

15. The Oklahoma Tax Commission for purposes of discussing confidential taxpayer matters as provided in Section 205 of Title 68 of the Oklahoma Statutes, and in compliance with subsection E of this section.

D. Except as otherwise specified in this subsection, an executive session for the purpose of discussing the purchase or appraisal of real property shall be limited to members of the public body, the attorney for the public body and the immediate staff of the public body. No landowner, real estate salesperson, broker, developer or any other person who may profit directly or indirectly by a proposed transaction concerning real property which is under consideration may be present or participate in the executive session, unless they are operating under an existing agreement to represent the public body.

E. No public body may go into an executive session unless the following procedures are strictly complied with:

1. The proposed executive session is noted on the agenda as provided in Section 311 of this title;

2. The executive session is authorized by a majority vote of a quorum of the members present and the vote is a recorded vote; and

3. Except for matters considered in executive sessions of the State Banking Board and the ~~Oklahoma Savings and Loan Board~~ Oklahoma Tax Commission, and which are required by state or federal law to be confidential, any vote or action on any item of business considered in an executive session shall be taken in public meeting with the vote of each member publicly cast and recorded.

F. A willful violation of the provisions of this section shall:

1. Subject each member of the public body to criminal sanctions as provided in Section 314 of this title; and

2. Cause the minutes and all other records of the executive session, including tape recordings, to be immediately made public.

SECTION 2. AMENDATORY 25 O.S. 2021, Section 307.1, is amended to read as follows:

Section 307.1. A. Except as provided in subsections C and D of this section, a public body may hold meetings by videoconference where each member of the public body is visible and audible to each other and the public through a video monitor, subject to the following:

1. a. except as provided for in subparagraph b of this paragraph, no less than a quorum of the public body shall be present in person at the meeting site as posted on the meeting notice and agenda,

b. a virtual charter school approved and sponsored by the Statewide Virtual Charter School Board pursuant to the provisions of Section 3-145.3 of Title 70 of the Oklahoma Statutes shall maintain a quorum of members

for the entire duration of the meeting whether using an in-person site, videoconference sites or any combination of such sites to achieve a quorum~~7,~~ and

- c. each public meeting held by videoconference or teleconference shall be recorded either by written, electronic, or other means;

2. The meeting notice and agenda prepared in advance of the meeting, as required by law, shall indicate if the meeting will include videoconferencing locations and shall state:

- a. the location, address, and telephone number of each available videoconference site, and
- b. the identity of each member of the public body and the specific site from which each member of the body shall be physically present and participating in the meeting;

3. After the meeting notice and agenda are prepared and posted, as required by law, no member of the public body shall be allowed to participate in the meeting from any location other than the specific location posted on the agenda in advance of the meeting;

4. In order to allow the public the maximum opportunity to attend and observe each public official carrying out the duties of the public official, a member or members of a public body desiring to participate in a meeting by videoconference shall participate in the videoconference from a site and room located within the district or political subdivision from which they are elected, appointed, or are sworn to represent;

5. Each site and room where a member of the public body is present for a meeting by videoconference shall be open and accessible to the public, and the public shall be allowed into that site and room. Public bodies may provide additional videoconference sites as a convenience to the public, but additional sites shall not be used to exclude or discourage public attendance at any videoconference site;

6. The public shall be allowed to participate and speak, as allowed by rule or policy set by the public body, in a meeting at the videoconference site in the same manner and to the same extent as the public is allowed to participate or speak at the site of the meeting;

7. Any materials shared electronically between members of the public body, before or during the videoconference, shall also be immediately available to the public in the same form and manner as shared with members of the public body; and

8. All votes occurring during any meeting conducted using videoconferencing shall occur and be recorded by roll call vote.

B. ~~No~~ Except as provided for in subsection E of this section, no public body shall conduct an executive session by videoconference.

C. Upon the effective date of this act and until February 15, 2022, or until thirty (30) days after the expiration or termination of the state of emergency declared by the Governor to respond to the threat of COVID-19 to the people of this state and the public's peace, health and safety, whichever date first occurs, the provisions of this subsection and subsection D shall operate as law in this state.

1. A public body may hold meetings by teleconference or videoconference if each member of the public body is audible or visible to each other and the public, subject to the following:

- a. for a virtual charter school approved and sponsored by the Statewide Virtual Charter School Board pursuant to the provisions of the Oklahoma Statutes, the public body shall maintain a quorum of members for the entire duration of the meeting whether using an in-person site, teleconference, or videoconference or any combination of such sites to achieve a quorum, and
- b. if the meeting is held using either teleconference or videoconference capabilities, and at any time the audio connection is disconnected, the meeting shall be

stopped and reconvened once the audio connection is restored;

2. The meeting notice and agenda prepared in advance of the meeting, as required by law, shall indicate if the meeting will include teleconferencing or videoconferencing and shall also state:

- a. each public body member appearing remotely and the method of each member's remote appearance, and
- b. the identity of the public body member or members who will be physically present at the meeting site, if any;

3. After the meeting notice and agenda are prepared and posted as required by law, public body members shall not be permitted to alter their method of attendance; provided, however, those members who were identified as appearing remotely may be permitted to physically appear at the meeting site, if any, for the meeting;

4. The public body shall be allowed to participate and speak, as allowed by rule or policy set by the public body, in a meeting which utilizes teleconference or videoconference in the same manner and to the same extent as the public is allowed to participate or speak during a meeting where all public body members are physically present together at the meeting site;

5. Any documents or other materials provided to members of the public body or shared electronically between members of the public body during a meeting utilizing teleconferencing or videoconferencing shall also be immediately available to the public on the website of the public body, if the public body maintains a website; and

6. All votes occurring during any meeting utilizing teleconference or videoconference shall occur and be recorded by roll call votes.

D. Public bodies are permitted to conduct an executive session by teleconference or videoconference. For such executive sessions, no public body member is required to be physically present so long as each public body member is audible or visible to each other. The

meeting notice and agenda prepared in advance of the meeting as required by law shall indicate if the executive session will include teleconferencing or videoconferencing and shall also state the identity of each public body member appearing remotely, the method of each member's remote appearance, and whether any member will be physically present at the meeting site, if any, for the executive session.

E. The Oklahoma Tax Commission may conduct executive sessions with the taxpayer at issue attending using videoconference technology to discuss confidential taxpayer matters as provided for in Section 205 of Title 68 of the Oklahoma Statutes. During executive sessions, the Commission is required to be physically present while taxpayers may appear using videoconference technology. The technology selected and utilized by the Commission shall ensure taxpayer confidentiality including compliance with safeguards as provided for in Internal Revenue Service Publication 1075.

SECTION 3. This act shall become effective November 1, 2022.

Passed the Senate the 15th day of February, 2022.

Presiding Officer of the Senate

Passed the House of Representatives the 28th day of April, 2022.

Presiding Officer of the House
of Representatives

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

Received by the Office of the Governor this _____

day of _____, 20_____, at _____ o'clock _____ M.

By: _____

Approved by the Governor of the State of Oklahoma this _____

day of _____, 20_____, at _____ o'clock _____ M.

Governor of the State of Oklahoma

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF STATE

Received by the Office of the Secretary of State this _____

day of _____, 20_____, at _____ o'clock _____ M.

By: _____