



How To Hold an Emergency Meeting and Comply with the Sunshine Law

Most districts have not had an emergency meeting (a meeting called with less than 24 hours notice to the public) in awhile. Here's how to do it:

1. **Give the public as much notice as possible.** The only notice required by law for face-to-face meetings is posted notice in the central office. If you are having a meeting by email or internet chat, you must also post notice on the district's webpage. But it is wise to do more to notify the public in these situations so that it does not appear that the district is "hiding" its meeting.
2. **Give as much notice to the media as possible.** If your district has one or more media outlets that regularly receive notice of meetings, make sure you send them notice of this meeting as well.
3. **Add a statement to the minutes.** The law requires that you state the "good cause" reason as to why 24-hour notice was "impossible or impractical" in the minutes. A sentence at the beginning of the minutes or at the beginning of an agenda item that was added without 24-hours notice is all that is required. For example, "This meeting was called with less than 24-hours notice to the public because the district has received new information necessary to make school-related decisions regarding the COVID-19 outbreak."
4. **Does the notice of the meeting or the minutes need to include the term "emergency"?** No. This is a district choice. While the term communicates the urgency to the public, please be careful not to unduly concern the public. While some will understand that "emergency" simply means that it is a meeting that has had to be called quickly, others might assume that a fatal event has occurred. Choose your words carefully.