

The Kansas Open Meetings Act

K.S.A. 75-4317. Open meetings declared policy of state; citation of act. (a) In recognition of the fact that a representative government is dependent upon an informed electorate, it is declared to be the policy of this state that meetings for the conduct of governmental affairs and the transaction of governmental business be open to the public.

(b) It is declared hereby to be against the public policy of this state for any such meeting to be adjourned to another time or place in order to subvert the policy of open public meetings as pronounced in subsection (a).

(c) K.S.A. 75-4317 through 75-4320a shall be known and may be cited as the open meetings act.

History: L. 1972, ch. 319, § 1; L. 1975, ch. 455, § 1; L. 1999, ch. 96, § 1; July 1.

4317a. Meeting defined. As used in the open meetings act, "meeting" means any gathering or assembly in person or through the use of a telephone or any other medium for interactive communication by a majority of the membership of a body or agency subject to this act for the purpose of discussing the business or affairs of the body or agency.

History: L. 1977, ch. 301, § 1; L. 1994, ch. 64, § 1; L. 2008, ch. 178, § 1; July 1.

K.S.A. 75-4318. Meetings of state and subdivisions open to public; exceptions; secret ballots; notice; agenda, cameras, photographic lights, recording devices. (a) Subject to the provisions of subsection (g), all meetings for the conduct of the affairs of, and the transaction of business by, all legislative and administrative bodies and agencies of the state and political and taxing subdivisions thereof, including boards, commissions, authorities, councils, committees, subcommittees and other subordinate groups thereof, receiving or expending and supported in whole or in part by public funds shall be open to the public and no binding action by such bodies shall be by secret ballot. Meetings of task forces, advisory committees or subcommittees of advisory committees created pursuant to a governor's executive order shall be open to the public in accordance with this act.

(b) Notice of the date, time and place of any regular or special meeting of a public body designated hereinabove shall be furnished to any person requesting such notice, except that:

(1) If notice is requested by petition, the petition shall designate one person to receive notice on behalf of all persons named in the petition, and notice to such person shall constitute notice to all persons named in the petition;

(2) if notice is furnished to an executive officer of an employees' organization or trade association, such notice shall be deemed to have been furnished to the entire membership of such organization or association; and

(3) the public body may require that a request to receive notice must be submitted again to the body prior to the commencement of any subsequent fiscal year of the body during which the person wishes to continue receiving notice, but, prior to discontinuing notice to any person, the public body must notify the person that notice will be discontinued unless the person resubmits a request to receive notice.

(c) It shall be the duty of the presiding officer or other person calling the meeting, if the meeting is not called by the presiding officer, to furnish the notice required by subsection (b).

(d) Prior to any meeting hereinabove mentioned, any agenda relating to the business to be transacted at such meeting shall be made available to any person requesting the agenda.

(e) The use of cameras, photographic lights and recording devices shall not be prohibited at any meeting mentioned by subsection (a), but such use shall be subject to reasonable rules designed to insure the orderly conduct of the proceedings at such meeting.

(f) Except as provided by section 22 of article 2 of the constitution of the state of Kansas, interactive communications in a series shall be open if they collectively involve a majority of the membership of the body or agency, share a common topic of

discussion concerning the business or affairs of the body or agency, and are intended by any or all of the participants to reach agreement on a matter that would require binding action to be taken by the body or agency.

(g) The provisions of the open meetings law shall not apply:

(1) To any administrative body that is authorized by law to exercise quasi-judicial functions when such body is deliberating matters relating to a decision involving such quasi-judicial functions;

(2) to the prisoner review board when conducting parole hearings or parole violation hearings held at a correctional institution;

(3) to any impeachment inquiry or other impeachment matter referred to any committee of the house of representatives prior to the report of such committee to the full house of representatives; and

(4) if otherwise provided by state or federal law or by rules of the Kansas senate or house of representatives.

History: L. 1972, ch. 319, § 2; L. 1975, ch. 455, § 2; L. 1977, ch. 301, § 2; L. 1978, ch. 361, § 1; L. 1985, ch. 284, § 1; L. 2001, ch. 122, § 1; L. 2002, ch. 162, § 1; L. 2008, ch. 178, § 2; L. 2009, ch. 58, § 1; L. 2012, ch. 16, § 32; July 1.

K.S.A. 75-4319. Closed or executive meetings; conditions; authorized subjects for discussion; binding action prohibited; certain documents identified in meetings not subject to disclosure. (a) Upon formal motion made, seconded and carried, all bodies and agencies subject to the open meetings act may recess, but not adjourn, open meetings for closed or executive meetings. Any motion to recess for a closed or executive meeting shall include a statement of (1) the justification for closing the meeting, (2) the subjects to be discussed during the closed or executive meeting and (3) the time and place at which the open meeting shall resume. Such motion, including the required statement, shall be recorded in the minutes of the meeting and shall be maintained as a part of the permanent records of the body or agency. Discussion during the closed or executive meeting shall be limited to those subjects stated in the motion.

(b) No subjects shall be discussed at any closed or executive meeting, except the following:

(1) Personnel matters of nonelected personnel;

(2) consultation with an attorney for the body or agency which would be deemed privileged in the attorney-client relationship;

(3) matters relating to employer-employee negotiations whether or not in consultation with the representative or representatives of the body or agency;

(4) confidential data relating to financial affairs or trade secrets of corporations, partnerships, trusts, and individual proprietorships;

(5) matters relating to actions adversely or favorably affecting a person as a student, patient or resident of a public institution, except that any such person shall have the right to a public hearing if requested by the person;

(6) preliminary discussions relating to the acquisition of real property;

(7) matters permitted to be discussed in a closed or executive meeting pursuant to K.S.A. 74-8804, and amendments thereto;

(8) matters permitted to be discussed in a closed or executive meeting pursuant to subsection (d)(1) of K.S.A. 38-2212, and amendments thereto, or subsection (e) of K.S.A. 38-2213, and amendments thereto;

(9) matters permitted to be discussed in a closed or executive meeting pursuant to subsection (j) of K.S.A. 22a-243, and amendments thereto;

(10) matters permitted to be discussed in a closed or executive meeting pursuant to subsection (e) of K.S.A. 44-596, and amendments thereto;

(11) matters permitted to be discussed in a closed or executive meeting pursuant to subsection (g) of K.S.A. 39-7,119, and amendments thereto;

(12) matters required to be discussed in a closed or executive meeting pursuant to a tribal-state gaming compact;

(13) matters relating to security measures, if the discussion of such matters at an open meeting would jeopardize such security measures, that protect: (A) Systems, facilities or equipment used in the production, transmission or distribution of energy, water or communications services; (B) transportation and sewer or wastewater treatment systems, facilities or equipment; (C) a public body or agency, public building or facility or the information system of a public body or agency; or (D) private property or persons, if the matter is submitted to the agency for purposes of this paragraph. For purposes of this paragraph, security means measures that protect against criminal acts intended to intimidate or coerce the civilian population, influence government policy by intimidation or coercion or to affect the operation of government by disruption of public services, mass destruction, assassination or kidnapping. Security measures include, but are not limited to, intelligence information, tactical plans, resource deployment and vulnerability assessments;

(14) matters permitted to be discussed in a closed or executive meeting pursuant to subsection (f) of K.S.A. 65-525, and amendments thereto;

(15) matters permitted to be discussed in a closed or executive meeting pursuant to K.S.A. 2013 Supp. 75-7427, and amendments thereto; and

(16) matters permitted to be discussed in a closed or executive meeting pursuant to K.S.A. 2013 Supp. 46-3801, and amendments thereto.

(c) No binding action shall be taken during closed or executive recesses, and such recesses shall not be used as a subterfuge to defeat the purposes of this act.

(d) (1) Any confidential records or information relating to security measures provided or received under the provisions of subsection (b)(13), shall not be subject to subpoena, discovery or other demand in any administrative, criminal or civil action.

(2) (A) Except as otherwise provided by law, any confidential documents, records or reports relating to the prisoner review board provided or received under the provisions of subsection (b)(16) shall not be subject to subpoena, discovery or other demand in any administrative, criminal or civil action.

(B) Notwithstanding any other provision of law to the contrary, any summary statement provided or received under the provisions of subsection (b)(16) shall not be subject to subpoena, discovery or other demand in any administrative, criminal or civil action.

History: L. 1972, ch. 319, § 3; L. 1977, ch. 301, § 3; L. 1981, ch. 344, § 1; L. 1988, ch. 315, § 4; L. 1992, ch. 318, § 9; L. 1993, ch. 286, § 75; L. 1994, ch. 254, § 3; L. 1996, ch. 256, § 23; L. 1999, ch. 96, § 2; L. 2001, ch. 190, § 2; L. 2004, ch. 177, § 2; L. 2005, ch. 126, § 4; L. 2007, ch. 177, § 16; L. 2009, ch. 132, § 14; L. 2012, ch. 16, § 33; July 1.

K.S.A. 75-4320. Penalties. (a) Any member of a body or agency subject to this act who knowingly violates any of the provisions of this act or who intentionally fails to furnish information as required by subsection (b) of K.S.A. 75-4318, and amendments thereto, shall be liable for the payment of a civil penalty in an action brought by the attorney general or county or district attorney, in a sum set by the court of not to exceed \$500 for each violation. In addition, any binding action which is taken at a meeting not in substantial compliance with the provisions of this act shall be voidable in any action brought by the attorney general or county or district attorney in the district court of the county in which the meeting was held within 21 days of the meeting, and the court shall have jurisdiction to issue injunctions or writs of mandamus to enforce the provisions of this act.

(b) Civil penalties sued for and recovered hereunder by the attorney general shall be paid into the state general fund. Civil penalties sued for and recovered hereunder by a county or district attorney shall be paid into the general fund of the county where the proceedings were instigated.

(c) No fine shall be imposed pursuant to subsection (a) for violations of subsection (f) of K.S.A. 75-4318, and amendments thereto, which occur prior to July 1, 2009.

History: L. 1972, ch. 319, § 4; L. 1977, ch. 301, § 4; L. 2004, ch. 177, § 3; L. 2008, ch. 178, § 3; July 1.

K.S.A. 75-4320a. Enforcement of act by district courts; burden of proof; court costs; precedence of cases. (a) The district court of any county in which a meeting is held shall have jurisdiction to enforce the purposes of K.S.A. 75-4318 and 75-4319, and amendments thereto, with respect to such meeting, by injunction, mandamus or other appropriate order, on application of any person.

(b) In any action hereunder, the burden of proof shall be on the public body or agency to sustain its action.

(c) In any action hereunder, the court may award court costs to the person seeking to enforce the provisions of K.S.A. 75-4318 or 75-4319, and amendments thereto, if the court finds that the provisions of those statutes were violated. The award shall be assessed against the public agency or body responsible for the violation.

(d) In any action hereunder in which the defendant is the prevailing party, the court may award to the defendant court costs if the court finds that the plaintiff maintained the action frivolously, not in good faith or without a reasonable basis in fact or law.

(e) Except as otherwise provided by law, proceedings arising under this section shall take precedence over all other cases and shall be assigned for hearing and trial at the earliest practicable date.

(f) As used in this section, "meeting" has the meaning provided by K.S.A. 75-4317a and amendments thereto.

History: L. 1981, ch. 344, § 2; July 1.

K.S.A. 75-4320b. Investigation of alleged violations; powers. In investigating alleged violations of the Kansas open meetings act, the attorney general or county or district attorney may:

(a) Subpoena witnesses, evidence, documents or other material;

(b) take testimony under oath;

(c) examine or cause to be examined any documentary material of whatever nature relevant to such alleged violations;

(d) require attendance during such examination of documentary material and take testimony under oath or acknowledgment in respect of any such documentary material; and

(e) serve interrogatories.

History: L. 2000, ch. 156, § 7; July 1.

K.S.A. 75-4320c. Sunflower Foundation: Health Care for Kansas; subject to open meetings law. The Sunflower Foundation: Health Care for Kansas, established pursuant to the settlement agreement entered into by the attorney general in the action filed by Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Kansas, Inc., in the district court of Shawnee county, Kansas, case no. 97CV608, shall be and is hereby deemed to be a public body and shall be subject to the open meetings law.

History: L. 2001, ch. 122, § 3; April 26.