

2024 Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 446

BY REPRESENTATIVES HILFERTY, FREEMAN, AND MANDIE LANDRY

PUBLIC MEETINGS: Provides relative to notifications of public meetings and duties of public bodies and the commissioner of administration relative thereto

1 AN ACT

2 To amend and reenact R.S. 42:19(A)(2)(b) and to enact R.S. 42:19(A)(2)(c) and R.S.
3 49:1305.1, relative to notifications of public meetings; to require public bodies to
4 provide notice of meetings to any person; to require public bodies to give notice of
5 meetings to the commissioner of administration; to provide for the duties of the
6 commissioner of administration relative thereto; and to provide for related matters.

7 Be it enacted by the Legislature of Louisiana:

8 Section 1. R.S. 42:19(A)(2)(b) is hereby amended and reenacted and R.S.
9 42:19(A)(2)(c) is hereby enacted to read as follows:

10 §19. Notice of meetings

11 A.

12 * * *

13 (2) Written public notice given by all public bodies, except the legislature
14 and its committees and subcommittees, shall include, but need not be limited to:

15 * * *

16 (b) ~~Mailing a copy of the~~ Giving notice to any member of the public or the
17 news media who requests notice of such meetings; ~~any such member of the news~~
18 ~~media shall be given notice of all meetings~~ by providing the notice to the requestor
19 at the same time and in the same manner as it is given to members of the public
20 body.

Present law (R.S. 42:19(A)- Open Meetings Law) requires all public bodies, except the legislature and its committees and subcommittees, to give written public notice of any regular, special, or rescheduled meeting no later than 24 hours before the meeting, exclusive of Saturdays, Sundays, and legal holidays. Requires the notice to be posted at the public body's principal office or if no such office exists, at the building in which the meeting is to be held; or by publication of the notice in an official journal of the public body. If the public body has a website, further requires giving notice via the internet on the website. Additionally requires giving notice to the news media who requests it; provides that such notice be given in the same manner as members of the public body.

Proposed law provides instead that the public body shall give notice to any member of the public or the news media who requests notice of such meetings by providing the notice to the requestor at the same time and in the same manner as it is given to members of the public body and otherwise retains present law. Further requires public bodies subject to present law (R.S. 42:19(A)) to submit the notice to the commissioner of administration in the manner provided by present and proposed law (R.S. 49:1303 and 1305.1)

Present law (R.S. 49:1301, et seq.) requires licensing boards subject to the La. Licensing Agency Budget Act, the La. Board of Cosmetology, boards and commissions whose members are required to file personal financial statements pursuant to present law (Tier 2.1-ethics code), and the committees, subcommittees, or panels thereof to provide to the commissioner of administration specified information regarding the board, commission, or like entity, including notice of public meetings, for inclusion on a boards and commissions website the commissioner is required to establish and maintain pursuant to present law.

Proposed law (R.S. 49:1305.1) additionally requires all other public bodies that give notice of meetings pursuant to present law (R.S. 42:19(A)) to submit notice of meetings to the commissioner of administration electronically in the manner required by the commissioner for inclusion on the website in an easily searchable format. Further requires the commissioner to provide for the capability for members of the public to request and receive electronic notifications of meetings.

(Amends R.S. 42:19(A)(2)(b); Adds R.S. 42:19(A)(2)(c) and R.S. 49:1305.1)