



Municipal Tele/Video Conferencing Procedures

As you are aware, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, SB 661 temporarily amends the Open Meeting Act to authorize public bodies to meet remotely via “teleconference” and expands the use of videoconferences. 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. If the audio connection is disconnected, the meeting shall be stopped and reconvened once it is restored. The bill will terminate on November 15, 2020, or the Governor declaring the state of emergency to be ended, whichever date first occurs.

As it has been challenging for municipalities to implement the temporary tele/video meetings, we thank the Attorney General for assisting in defining the process. However, the FAQ’s [here](#) and [here](#), have left some unanswered questions. To assist we have put together a proposal to the Attorney General on how video meetings could work for municipalities. We are working with his office to refine the process so that all municipalities can move forward with tele/video meetings.

As you create your plan it is helpful to break down the meeting into three parts and match the appropriate technology for each:

- [Legislative Body](#)
- [Public Access](#)
- [Public Comment \(when applicable\)](#)

By melding the three separate issues together with technology we believe municipal bodies can effectively meet using tele/video conferencing and provide access to public.

Tips for a successful meeting:

Create a simple parliamentary plan incorporating the tools of the meeting platform.

Set up a practice meeting for the Mayor or chair so they become familiar with how to apply sound parliamentary procedures using this new technology.

Work with each member of the board prior to meeting to make certain they have adequate broadband access and hardware.

When possible, establish online video conferencing connections several minutes before the meeting start time.

Have participants mute their microphones if their location has excessive background noise or they will not be speaking.

Always state your name before commenting. Also, state the name of the person to whom you are addressing your comments.

Assign one person to operate the software during the meeting. It is difficult for a Mayor or chairperson to work the technology and run an effective meeting.

Please read full printable document [here](#).