



Open Meetings Act

The Michigan Open Meetings Act ("OMA") is meant to enhance transparency, but it can create confusion for public bodies. Often we find that violations of the OMA are not intentional, but rather occur due to lack of knowledge about the law's requirements. Foster Swift helps public bodies and officials comply with the requirements of the OMA.

Some of the OMA questions and issues that we frequently help our clients confront include:

- How much time must be reserved for public comment?
- What are the rules regarding video and tape recordings?
- Do the OMA rules apply to committees?
- What discussions or deliberations can take place in private or via email?
- What notice requirements must be met to satisfy the OMA?
- What subject-matter exemptions allow for closed sessions?

Our comprehensive OMA services include:

- Drafting and review of OMA policies and procedures
- Assisting in the resolution of OMA disputes
- Representing public entities in litigation involving OMA disputes and alleged violations
- Training officials on OMA requirements
- Counseling clients with OMA questions

While the purpose of the OMA is clear, its application is often not so straightforward. Foster Swift attorneys help public entities and officials to understand the law's requirements, and put in place compliant processes and procedures. Further, we assist our clients to anticipate and resolve OMA issues before they become OMA disputes, helping to reduce strife between government and citizens, save resources, and mitigate risks from noncompliance.

PUBLICATIONS & ALERTS

Recent Developments Require Libraries to Adopt New Procedures and Policies, *Foster Swift Library Law News E-blast*, November 17, 2020

New Requirements for the Open Meetings Act – SB 1108, *Foster Swift Library Law News E-blast*, October 26, 2020

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RELATED PRACTICES

Administrative Law



An Update on OMA Legislation Amendments, *Foster Swift Municipal Law News E-blast*, October 19, 2020

Pending OMA Legislation: What You Need to Know, *Foster Swift Municipal Law News E-blast*, October 14, 2020

Five Ways to Avoid Violating the Open Meetings Act, *Foster Swift Municipal Law News*, February 14, 2020

Recent Court Decisions Make Clear that Municipalities Must Identify Specific Litigation to be Discussed During Closed Meeting, *Foster Swift Municipal Law News*, August 14, 2018

Maintaining Attorney-Client Privilege in Public Meetings, *Foster Swift Municipal Law News*, April 24, 2018

Behind Closed Doors: What Can a Public Body Discuss in Closed Session?, *Foster Swift Municipal Law News*, January 26, 2016

Attorney Fees Awarded Only After Party Obtains Injunctive Relief, *Foster Swift Municipal Law News*, January 27, 2015

Dealing with Employment Issues and Complying with the Open Meetings Act, *Foster Swift Municipal Law News*, March 2013

New Notice Requirements Added to the Open Meetings Act, *Foster Swift Municipal Law Bulletin*, January 10, 2013

HB 5335: A Proposed Change to the OMA to Prohibit Voting by Telephone and Video Conference, *Foster Swift Municipal Law News*, March 2012

Open Meetings Act & Closed Sessions – Beware in Preparing Session of the Open Session, *Foster Swift Municipal Law News*, July 2011

Closed Sessions: What Townships Can Do Behind Closed Doors, *Foster Swift Municipal Law News*, December 2008

The Long List of Michigan Statutes Regulating Townships: Sorting out the Tangled Web, *Foster Swift Municipal Law News*, April 2008

NEWS

Seurynck Listed in Crain's as Notable Woman in Law, *Crain's Grand Rapids Business Journal*, February 21, 2024

Municipal Attorney Courtney Gabbara Agrusa Joins Foster Swift, *Detroit Legal News*, August 21, 2023

Seurynck Recognized as a Notable West Michigan Lawyer, *Grand Rapids Business Journal*, March 20, 2023

Dickinson Receives GRBA 3 in 10 Award, July 21, 2020

Foster Swift Participates at the 2020 MTA Conference, *Foster Swift Municipal Law News*, February 16, 2020

Southfield Office Welcomes Municipal Attorney, December 4, 2018

EVENTS

Meeting Myths, Mysteries and Misconceptions, *Michigan Townships Association (MTA) Conference*, April 21, 2021

Meeting Virtually: Amendments to the Open Meetings Act, *Foster Swift*, November 10, 2020



Now That the Stay at Home Order is Lifted, What do Municipalities Need to Know?, *Michigan Municipal League*, June 8, 2020

Open Meetings Act and Freedom of Information Act: Back to the Basics, *Michigan Municipal League: 2018 Convention*, September 20, 2018

The ABCs of the FOIA, *MTA: Upper Peninsula Municipal Law Seminar*, February 15, 2017

Legal Essentials for Municipal Officials, January 18, 2017

WEBINAR | Open Meetings Act: What Every Municipality Should Know, August 12, 2014

Back to the Basics: OMA & FOIA, *Michigan Municipal League, Training Week*, April 24, 2013

Public Employment and Labor Law – The Basics, *Foster Swift Webinar Series for New Municipal Officials*

Back to the Basics: OMA & FOIA, *Michigan Municipal League, Elected Officials Academy*, February 15, 2013

WEBINAR | Nuts & Bolts of the Michigan Open Meetings Act, *Foster Swift Webinar Series for New Municipal Officials*, December 13, 2012

The Nuts and Bolts of the Open Meetings Act, *Ottawa County Road Commission*, June 2012

Top 10 Open Meetings Act Mistakes & How to Avoid Them, *Michigan Municipal League Annual Convention*, October 5, 2011
