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MEMORANDUM

TO: CTE CENTER DIRECTORS
FROM: Jay Ramsey, CTE Workgroup Coordinator
SUBJECT: Changes to Vermont's Open Meeting Law
DATE: 08/26/2014

The legislature has made changes to Vermont's Open Meeting Law (1 V.S.A. §§ 310-314) which took effect on July 1, 2014.

This purpose of this memorandum is to provide guidance on the effect of the changes on Regional Advisory Boards and Program Advisory Committee meetings.

As a public body, RAB's and PAC's are subject to Vermont's Open Meeting Law and affected by the new changes in the law.

The Open Meeting Law still requires:

1. Public announcement of meetings;
2. Preparation and posting of meeting agendas;
3. Right of the public to attend and comment at meetings; and
4. Minutes are taken of all public meetings and the minutes are matters of public record available for inspection or copies upon request after 5 days from the date of the meeting;

What's new in Vermont's Open Meeting Law:

1. Written correspondence, email and telephone communications between board or committee members to schedule a meeting, organize and agenda or distribute materials to discuss at a meeting is NOT considered a meeting for purposes of the statute. However, written correspondence and email or recordings of conversation shall be available for public inspection and copying under the Public Records Act. 1 V.S.A. § 310(2).
2. Meetings must be conducted in locations that are accessible to individuals with disabilities in accordance with Vermont's Accommodations Act, 9 V.S.A. Chapter 139. 1 V.S.A. § 312(a)(1).

3. Board and committee members may participate in meetings by electronic means without being physically present at the designated meeting location, as long as the member identifies him or herself when the meeting is convened and is able to hear the conduct of the meeting and be heard throughout the meeting. If a quorum or more of the members attend electronically without being physically present, additional requirements of 24 hour advance notice posted in or near the clerk's office, and at least two other places, list the location of a designated place where the public can attend where at least one member of the board or a designated staff person is present. 1 V.S.A. § 312(a)(2)(A)-(D).
4. If the RAB or PAC have an official website, meeting minutes and public notices are required to be posted on the official website. 1 V.S.A. § 312(b)(2). The changes allow for electronic recording of proceedings and create an avenue for individuals to participate through electronic or other means. If the meeting is to be conducted virtually, there is a requirement that at least one physical location be identified where the public can go to participate. This location must have at least one member of the public body (or designee) present. 1 V.S.A. § 312(a)(2)(D)(ii).

More information about Act 143 can be found here: [Vermont Statutes online](#)

For additional information or specific questions regarding the new changes to Vermont's Open Meeting Law, contact the Vermont Agency of Education at (802) 479-1030.