

To the Clerk and Council,

Re: Open Meetings: Guide for Municipalities

I am pleased to send you the latest edition of the Ontario Ombudsman's open meeting guide for municipalities. This guide offers tips and information about Ontario's open meeting rules, based on our Office's past 15 years of experience in investigating complaints about closed municipal meetings.

We have designed this portable, bilingual guide to serve as a handy reference for council members and other municipal officials when dealing with questions about the open meeting exceptions in the *Municipal Act, 2001*, as well as various common procedural issues. It includes frequently asked questions, excerpts from relevant legislation and best practice suggestions. This version includes updated case examples from our investigations and reflects the legislative change that permits councils, local boards, and committees to hold fully electronic or virtual meetings.

As we have done since 2008, our Office is providing this guide for free to all municipal clerks and council members across the province, whether they use the Ombudsman as their closed meeting investigator or not. We do this in the spirit of the open meeting rules – to promote transparency in local governments across the province.

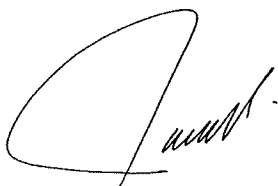
If you require additional printed copies, please contact us at thewatchdog@ombudsman.on.ca. You can also print more copies directly from our website, or view the accessible PDF version, at www.ombudsman.on.ca/resources/brochures-and-posters/municipal-resources.

This link will also take you to our other municipal resources, including tip cards, best practice guidelines, and our online resource, **Open Meetings: Case Digest**, where you can search hundreds of our decisions on open meeting cases by topic, keyword, or municipality.

We hope these resources will be useful to you and the public we all serve.

We welcome your feedback, or any questions you might have about any aspect of our work: Please feel free to contact us at info@ombudsman.on.ca or 1-800-263-1830.

Sincerely,



Paul Dubé
Ombudsman of Ontario

Encl.