

## Open Meetings Act - COVID-19 Guidance

In order to curtail the spread of the COVID-19 virus, Governor Pritzker has issued the following temporary changes to the Open Meetings Act. Below are just a few of the highlights from this order.

The complete document can be found by clicking here. <https://rmtd.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/OMA-FOIA-Guide-03-17-20-FINAL.pdf>

*Executive Order 2020-07 suspends the in-person presence requirements and eliminates the limitation on remote access. If a meeting is necessary, public bodies are encouraged to utilize remote access as allowed by the Executive Order.*

*Executive Order 2020-07 prohibits all public and private gatherings of 50 or more people beginning on March 18, 2020. With this directive, public bodies are encouraged to cancel any public meetings in which they expect more than 50 people to attend.*

*For a public body that determines it must hold a meeting during the COVID-19 pandemic, the Executive Order 2020-07 suspends the in-person attendance requirement for members of the public body and allows for remote participation*

*If a meeting is necessary, public bodies are encouraged to provide video, audio, and/or telephonic access to maintain openness and transparency to members of the public.*

*OMA requires public bodies to allow for public comment. The public may not be able to attend an open meeting because of compliance with quarantine or isolation orders or general efforts to remain at home during the pandemic. Public bodies are urged to provide remote access to members of the public and to update their websites and social media with the goal of openness and transparency during this time. Further, public bodies should consider taking public comment by email or written submission and reading those public comments at the public meeting. If members of the public attend meetings in-person, social distancing is essential as outlined above. For more information, please contact RMTD at 815.961.9000.*