

Office of the State Public Defender

Administrative Policies

Subject: Public Participation Guidelines	Policy No.: 235
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1.0 POLICY

These guidelines are intended to ensure that the public has a reasonable opportunity to participate in deliberations and decisions that are of significant public interest. Montana's Constitution and statutes guarantee this right.

2.0 AGENCY PROCEDURES

- 2.1 Post a meeting or hearing notice at least 72 hours in advance of the meeting or hearing.
- 2.2 Post the meeting or hearing notice on the state's electronic calendar, on the agency website, and personally to those who have previously shown an interest in the matter.
- 2.3 Include adequate details of potential or proposed action items.
- 2.4 Give notice of any closed session. Such sessions will be held and conducted in accordance with 2-3-203, MCA.
- 2.5 Include a full agenda for any meeting or hearing with a time allotted for public comment.
- 2.6 Provide a contact name, address, phone number, mailing and emailing addresses, including where to seek special needs or ADA accommodations.
- 2.7 Record minutes of meetings in accordance with 2-3-212, MCA, and make all minutes available for public inspection.

3.0 GUIDELINES FOR PUBLIC COMMENT

- 3.1 Interested persons must be provided a reasonable opportunity to submit their views orally or in writing prior to any action of significant interest to the public.
- 3.2 Oral or written testimony is public information. Oral comments will be summarized in the meeting minutes, and written testimony will be posted on the website.
 - 3.2.1 Provide your name and contact information on the sign-in sheet at the podium if appearing in person, and on any documents that you submit.
 - 3.2.2 Do not use the names of individuals other than your own, including attorneys, offenders, victims, judges or law enforcement personnel.
 - 3.2.3 Remove any private information (health information, addresses, social security numbers, etc.) from any documents that you submit.

4.0 CLOSING

This policy shall be followed unless it conflicts with specific statutes, which shall take precedence to the extent applicable.

Questions about this policy should be directed to:

Office of the State Public Defender
Central Services Division
44 West Park, Butte, MT 59701
(406) 496-6080

5.0 Cross-Reference Guide

Art. II, Sec.8, MT Constitution
MCA 2-3-101, et seq.
ARM 1.3.101