

Sunshine Act Changes Coming Soon

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Pennsylvania has amended its [Sunshine Act](#), putting additional onus on government bodies to keep people informed about public meetings and specifically what will be voted on at those meetings.

The amendment requires all government bodies in the state to make the agenda for any public meeting available on its website at least 24 hours before any scheduled, public meeting. It only applies to entities with a website.

At the meeting, the governmental body must make printed copies of the agenda available to all members of the public that attend the meeting. The agenda must include all matters "that will be or may be the subject of deliberation or official action at the meeting," according to the amendment.

Once the agenda is posted on the website, it is considered to be "final," and no items can be added to it. There is a provision that allows agencies to add unadvertised items to the agenda if agreed to by a majority of the governing board.

These amendments are effective August 29 after [Gov. Tom Wolf signed the amendment into law](#) in late June.

For many municipalities, school boards, authorities and county government, this already is standard practice, so there is little-to-no change that has to be made. Proponents of the amendment say this measure isn't aimed at the ones that do this already, but at the ones that have a history of keeping the public in the dark with surprise agenda items that the public didn't have a proper amount of time to prepare for or even know about. But if you are a government that does not follow these rules already, you should have a process in place by the effective date to ensure the amendment is followed. If you have any questions about the amendment to the Amendment or what it could mean for your government entity, please [contact me](#) or any member of the [Barley Snyder Municipal Industry Group](#).

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Keith Mooney

Counsel

Tel: (610) 898-7155

Email: kmooney@barley.com