

Wisconsin Statutes Chapter 19, Subchapter V — Open Meetings of Governmental Bodies

Subchapter V of Chapter 19 of the Wisconsin Statutes governs the open meetings of governmental bodies, including policy, definitions, meeting requirements, public notice, exemptions, and enforcement.

Overview

Subchapter V is part of **Chapter 19: General Duties of Public Officials** and is commonly known as the **Open Meetings Law**. It ensures that governmental bodies in Wisconsin operate with transparency by requiring that meetings be open to the public unless specific exemptions apply.

Key Provisions

- **19.81 Declaration of policy** – States the legislative intent to promote openness in government and public participation.
- **19.82 Definitions** – Defines terms such as “governmental body” and “meeting.”
- **19.83 Meetings of governmental bodies** – Requires that meetings be open to the public unless an exemption applies.
- **19.84 Public notice** – Sets rules for notifying the public of meeting times, locations, and agendas.
- **19.85 Exemptions** – Lists exceptions where meetings may be closed (e.g., certain legal, investigative, or personnel matters).
- **19.851 Closed sessions by ethics or elections commission** – Specific rules for closed sessions in these commissions.
- **19.86 Notice of collective bargaining negotiations** – Requires notice when meetings involve collective bargaining.
- **19.87 Legislative meetings** – Special provisions for legislative bodies.
- **19.88 Ballots, votes and records** – Rules for voting and recordkeeping in meetings.
- **19.89 Exclusion of members** – Conditions under which members may be excluded from meetings.
- **19.90 Use of equipment in open session** – Prohibits use of certain equipment in open sessions without approval.
- **19.96 Penalty** – Penalties for violations.
- **19.97 Enforcement** – Procedures for enforcing compliance.