

Question: As a news media organization, what should I do to receive advance notice of public meetings?

Editor's Note: This is a monthly column prepared by the Iowa Public Information Board to update Iowans on the IPIB's activities and provide information on some of the issues routinely addressed by the board.



ANSWER: Iowa Code section 21.4 outlines the procedures a governmental body must follow to provide notice of an upcoming public meeting. The notice and tentative agenda must be posted on a “bulletin board or other prominent place...at the principal office of the body holding the meeting, or if no such office exists, at the building in which the meeting is to be held.”

In addition, reasonable notice “shall include advising the news media who have filed a

request for notice with the governmental body....”

It is important that news media organizations file this request for notice and maintain a record of such filing. It is equally important for governmental bodies to retain any request that is filed with the governmental body and have a policy in place to properly notify the news media of each meeting.

Some news media organizations make it a policy to file a request on a yearly basis. This provides an opportunity to re-

mind the governmental body of its duty to notify the news media. It is also a good time for the news media to review the request list – removing bodies that no longer exist, updating contact information, and adding new governmental bodies that have been formed.

The news media request should also include an email address or physical address for the governmental body to send the notice and agenda.

IPIB Facts and Figures

During the month of September 2015, 81 contacts were made with the Iowa Public Information Board office.

<u>TYPE</u>	<u>SEPT. 2015</u>	<u>JAN-SEP 2015</u>
Formal complaints	2	77
Formal opinions	0	7
Declaratory orders	0	0
Informal complaints	23	127
Informal requests	52	408
Misc.	4	15
TOTAL:	81	634