

STATE OF NEW YORK

7379

IN SENATE

January 22, 2020

Introduced by Sen. MAY -- read twice and ordered printed, and when printed to be committed to the Committee on Investigations and Government Operations

AN ACT to amend the public officers law, in relation to providing press access to open meetings of an agency or authority

The People of the State of New York, represented in Senate and Assembly, do enact as follows:

1 Section 1. Section 102 of the public officers law is amended by adding
2 a new subdivision 4 to read as follows:

3 4. "Professional journalist" means one who, for gain or livelihood, is
4 engaged in gathering, preparing, collecting, writing, editing, filming,
5 taping or photographing of news intended for a newspaper, magazine, news
6 agency, press association or wire service or other professional medium
7 or agency which has as one of its regular functions the processing and
8 researching of news intended for dissemination to the public; such
9 person shall be someone performing such function either as a regular
10 employee or as one otherwise professionally affiliated for gain or live-
11 lihood with such medium of communication.

12 § 2. The public officers law is amended by adding a new section 103-a
13 to read as follows:

14 § 103-a. Press access. Open meetings of an agency or authority, except
15 for executive sessions as provided for in this article, shall be open
16 and accessible to professional journalists and members of the press. No
17 policies or rules may be adopted restricting such access.

18 § 3. Subdivisions 1 and 2 of section 104 of the public officers law,
19 as amended by chapter 302 of the laws of 2016, are amended and a new
20 subdivision 7 is added to read as follows:

21 1. Public notice of the time and place of a meeting scheduled at least
22 one week prior thereto shall be given or electronically transmitted to
23 the news media and local governments and shall be conspicuously posted
24 in one or more designated public locations at least [~~seventy-two~~ nine-
25 ty-six hours or four business days before such meeting, whichever is
26 greater.

EXPLANATION--Matter in italics (underscored) is new; matter in brackets
[-] is old law to be omitted.

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1 2. Public notice of the time and place of every other meeting shall be
2 given or electronically transmitted, to the extent practicable, to the
3 news media and local governments and shall be conspicuously posted in
4 one or more designated public locations at a reasonable time prior ther-
5 eto.

6 7. A draft agenda for any public meeting shall be conspicuously posted
7 to the agency's website no later than twenty-four hours before any meet-
8 ing scheduled in accordance with subdivision one or two of this section.

9 § 4. This act shall take effect on the thirtieth day after it shall
10 have become a law.