

Brown Act Undergoes Significant Changes with SB 707

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On October 3, 2025, California Governor Gavin Newsom signed into law Senate Bill 707 (Durazo) ("SB 707") making major changes to the Brown Act. Specifically, SB 707 provides new requirements to facilitate increased public participation and access to public meetings. In addition, SB 707 also modifies remote participation rules for members of legislative bodies.

Most amendments and requirements under SB 707 take effect on January 1, 2026. Requirements applicable to "eligible legislative bodies", as defined in the statute, begin on July 1, 2026.

SB 707 introduces several changes to the Brown Act as follows:

- **Social Media Use:** Members may communicate with constituents on social media but must not engage with fellow members about agency business on these platforms.
- **Closed Session Reporting:** Agencies must now provide an oral summary of compensation decisions, including for unrepresented employees and department heads, before final action, including fiscal impact estimates.
- **Brown Act Distribution:** Agencies are now required to provide a copy of the Brown Act to newly elected or appointed legislative body members.
- **Remote Participation:** Remote attendance rules are now permanent, with limits based on meeting frequency of the legislative body. "Just Cause" exceptions have been expanded. Additionally, the new law allows remote participation as an accommodation under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Additionally, the law authorizes remote participation for "eligible subsidiary bodies" and "eligible multijurisdictional bodies" under certain circumstances.
- **Public Access Enhancements:** Removes outdated definitions of recording devices to include any device used to record meetings. Additionally, all agencies must maintain a public webpage.

Changes Applicable to "Eligible Legislative Bodies"

Some new requirements under SB 707 apply only to "eligible legislative bodies" defined as: (1) a city council of a city with a population of 30,000 or more, (2) a board of supervisors of a county, or a city and county, with a population of 30,000 or more, (3) a city council of a city location in a county with a population of 600,000 or more, and (4) a board of directors of a special district based on certain criteria enumerated in the law. Under SB 707, cities, counties, and special districts that fall under the definition of an eligible legislative body will be required to:

- **Remote Public Participation Technology:** Provide a way for the public to attend remotely through a two-way telephonic or audiovisual platform;
- **Disruption to Telephonic/Internet Service:** Adopt a policy addressing the disruption to telephonic or internet service during meetings;
- **Translation Requirements:** Translate agendas into applicable languages;
- **Website Requirements:** Maintain an agency website; and
- **Outreach Efforts to Underrepresented Groups:** Make reasonable efforts to conduct outreach and invite underrepresented and non-English speaking groups of the public to attend meetings and access meeting materials

How This Will Affect Local Agencies

SB 707 has added new, detailed rules for local agencies related to meeting participation and access. All local agencies will need to carefully review their policies and procedures to ensure compliance.

Please do not hesitate to reach out to our team of attorneys at Redwood Public Law to assist your agency with implementing these changes or to answer any questions you may have..

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