



City Clerk Department

Open Government Ordinance Frequently Asked Questions

1. What is an Open Government Ordinance (OGO)?

The Open Government Ordinance (OGO), is a local law that provides additional assurances that community members have access to public meetings and public documents. At its meeting of March 8, 2011, City Council adopted Berkeley's Open Government Ordinance (Ord. No. 7,166–N.S.).

More information regarding the Open Government Ordinance is available from the City Manager's homepage on the City's website: [Click here](#) to visit the Open Government Ordinance homepage.

2. How may I obtain a copy of the Open Government Ordinance?

The text of the OGO is available in Records Online by searching for Ordinance 7,166–N.S. The text of the OGO will also be available in Chapter 2.06 of the Berkeley Municipal Code after its effective date of April 9th. Hardcopies of the OGO may be obtained from the City Clerk Department.

3. When does Berkeley's OGO go into effect?

Most provisions of the OGO go into effect April 9, 2011. Provisions relating to the Council agenda process go into effect for the regular City Council meeting on April 26, 2011.

4. How does the OGO affect the Agenda Committee meeting schedule?

Beginning in April, Agenda Committee meetings will be held fifteen days prior to the regular City Council meeting. This is seven days earlier than previously. [Click here](#) for the 2011 calendar of Agenda Committee meetings.

5. How does the OGO affect Public Hearings?

Except at meetings at which the budget is to be adopted, no public hearing may commence later than 10:00 p.m. unless there is a legal necessity to hold the hearing or make a decision at that meeting or the City Council determines by a two-thirds vote that there is a fiscal necessity to hold the hearing.

6. Where can I find the City Council meeting calendar?

The 2011 calendar of regular City Council meetings is available from the City Council's homepage on the City's website. [Click here](#) for the 2011 calendar of regular City Council meetings. Hardcopies may also be obtained from the City Clerk Department.

7. When will City Council agenda packets be available and where may I view this information?

Pursuant to the OGO, beginning with the April 26, 2011 regular City Council meeting, agenda packets will be available twelve days prior to the regular City Council meeting. As is the current practice, the agenda packet is viewable from the City's website and available in hardcopy in the office of the City Clerk and in the main branch of the Berkeley Public Library.

8. What is the deadline for submitting written communications to for inclusion in the Council agenda packet?

Beginning with the April 26, 2011 regular City Council meeting, written communications addressed to the City Council and submitted to the City Clerk Department by 5:00 p.m. fifteen days before the Council meeting are placed on the next available Council agenda.

Written communications received after the deadline and until 12 p.m. the day of the Council meeting will be presented to Council as supplemental communications only if they pertain to an item on the agenda. After 12 p.m. on the day of the meeting, residents are required to provide 15 copies of the written communication regarding items on the agenda that evening to the City Clerk at City Hall at 2180 Milvia Street or in Council Chambers at 2134 Martin Luther King Jr. Way at the time of the meeting.

9. Where can I watch a Berkeley City Council meeting if I am not able to attend in person?

As is the current practice, for those who cannot attend City Council meetings in person, live video streaming from the City's website is available.

Council meetings are broadcast live by Radio Station KPFB, 89.3 FM and Cable C-TV – Channel 33. Rebroadcasts air on Channel 33 the following Wednesday at 9:00 a.m. and Sunday at 9:00 a.m.

Video, along with MP3 and MP4 files of the City Council meeting are posted to the City's website the day following the meeting. DVDs of City Council meetings are available from the City Clerk Department for \$2 each.

10. I am interested in showing a Power Point presentation during the public comment period of a City Council meeting, what is the process for this?

Power Point presentations relating to items on the meeting agenda of the City Council must be provided to the City Clerk Department no later than seven days before the meeting, or five days before for items carried over from a meeting that occurred the week immediately prior.

Power Point presentations should be in either "ppt" or ".pptx" format and may be emailed directly to the City Clerk Department at Clerk@cityofberkeley.info. Please indicate the agenda item to which the presentation relates in the body of the email. Presentations will be projected during the individual's public comment period. Please note that presentations from the public shall comply with the time limits set forth in the City Council Rules of Procedure.

11. Where can I find information about the Open Government Commission?

Information regarding the Open Government Commission is available from the OGO homepage. [Click here](#) to visit the OGO homepage.

12. Can I access City documents online?

Yes! Many City records can be accessed using Records Online. Records Online is a web feature that enables anyone with access to the Internet to search and access City documents. [Click here](#) to access Records Online.

13. Who can I contact with questions?

Please contact City staff at 311 (or 510/981-2489) with questions.