

Top 10 Tips for Municipal Officials

1. Know and follow the *Municipal Act, 2001* and your procedure by-law's open meeting requirements.
2. Make sure you have a procedure by-law that complies with the *Municipal Act* – every municipality and local board is required to have one.
3. Give adequate advance public notice of all meetings, including the time and location of all meetings.
4. Keep meetings open to the public unless closure is specifically authorized under the *Municipal Act* and there is a real need to exclude the public.
5. Pick the right s. 239 exception before closing a meeting.
6. Pass a resolution in public that includes meaningful information about the issue to be considered (not just the exception) – *before* closing the doors.
7. Record the meeting, including all decisions, by taking minutes, and preferably also by recording audio or video.
8. Stay on topic – don't stray from the subject stated in the resolution.
9. Do not hold a vote in closed session unless it is for a procedural matter or to give directions to staff or officials.
10. To the extent possible, report back publicly in open session about what occurred in closed session. [Accessible PDF of the Ombudsman's "Open Meetings - Guide for Municipalities"](#)

