
**Exceptions for
Closed Meetings**

Attorney
Consultation

The board may conduct a closed meeting for the purposes described in the following provisions.

The board may conduct a private consultation with its attorney only when it seeks the attorney's advice about pending or contemplated litigation or a settlement offer or on a matter in which the duty of the attorney to the board under the Texas Disciplinary Rules of Professional Conduct of the State Bar of Texas clearly conflicts with the requirement for open meetings. [See BE for permissible methods of communication for attorney consultations] *Gov't Code 551.071*

Real Property

The board may conduct a closed meeting to deliberate the purchase, exchange, lease, or value of real property if deliberation in an open meeting would have a detrimental effect on the board's position in negotiations with a third person. *Gov't Code 551.072*

Prospective Gift

The board may conduct a closed meeting to deliberate a negotiated contract for a prospective gift or donation to the ESC if deliberation in an open meeting would have a detrimental effect on the board's position in negotiations with a third person. *Gov't Code 551.073*

Personnel Matters

The board is not required to conduct an open meeting to deliberate the appointment, employment, evaluation, reassignment, duties, discipline, or dismissal of a public officer or employee or to hear a complaint or charge against an officer or employee. However, the board may not conduct a closed meeting for these purposes if the officer or employee who is the subject of the deliberation or hearing requests a public hearing. *Gov't Code 551.074*

The closed meeting exception for personnel matters does not apply when the board discusses an independent contractor who is not an ESC employee, such as an engineering, architectural, or consultant firm, or when the board discusses a class or group of employees, not a particular employee. *Atty. Gen. Op. MW-129 (1980), Atty. Gen. Op. H-496 (1975)*

Medical or
Psychiatric Records

A board that administers a public insurance, health, or retirement plan is not required to conduct an open meeting to deliberate:

1. The medical records or psychiatric records of an individual applicant for a benefit from the plan; or
2. A matter that includes a consideration of information in the medical or psychiatric records of an individual applicant for a benefit from the plan.

Gov't Code 551.0785

Security	<p>The board is not required to conduct an open meeting to deliberate:</p>
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li data-bbox="558 373 1419 443">1. The deployment, or specific occasions for implementation, of security personnel or devices; or<li data-bbox="558 464 834 499">2. A security audit.
	<p><i>Gov't Code 551.076</i></p>
	<p>A board is not required to conduct an open meeting to deliberate:</p>
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li data-bbox="558 630 1419 699">1. Security assessments or deployments relating to information resources technology;<li data-bbox="558 720 1382 789">2. Network security information as described by Government Code 2059.055(b); or<li data-bbox="558 810 1419 884">3. The deployment, or specific occasions for implementation, of security personnel, critical infrastructure, or security devices.
	<p><i>Gov't Code 551.089</i></p>
Emergency Management	<p>The board is not required to conduct an open meeting to deliberate information confidential under Government Code Sections 418.175–418.182, relating to Homeland Security. However, the board must make a tape recording of the proceedings of a closed meeting held to deliberate the information. <i>Gov't Code 418.183(f)</i></p>
Economic Development Negotiations	<p>The board is not required to conduct an open meeting:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li data-bbox="558 1205 1430 1375">1. To discuss or deliberate regarding commercial or financial information received by the board from a business prospect that the board seeks to have locate, stay, or expand in or near the ESC and with which the board is conducting economic development negotiations; or<li data-bbox="558 1396 1419 1472">2. To deliberate the offer of a financial or other incentive to such a business prospect. <i>Gov't Code 551.086</i>
Procedures for Closed Meetings	<p>If a closed meeting is allowed, the board shall not conduct the closed meeting unless a quorum of the board first convenes in an open meeting for which proper notice has been given [see BE] and the presiding officer has publicly announced that a closed meeting will be held and has identified the section or sections of the Open Meetings Act or other applicable law under which the closed meeting is held. The board shall reconvene the open meeting after a closed meeting prior to adjourning the meeting. <i>Gov't Code 551.101</i></p>

Vote or Final Action	A final action, decision, or vote on a matter deliberated in a closed meeting shall be made only in an open meeting for which proper notice has been given. [See BE] <i>Gov't Code 551.102</i>
Certified Agenda or Recording	<p>The board shall either keep a certified agenda or make a recording of the proceedings of each closed meeting, except for private consultation with the ESC's attorney. The certified agenda must include a statement of the subject matter of each deliberation, a record of any further action taken, and an announcement by the presiding officer at the beginning and end of the closed meeting indicating the date and time. The presiding officer shall certify that a certified agenda is a true and correct record of the proceedings. If a recording is made, it must include announcements by the presiding officer at the beginning and end of the meeting indicating the date and time. <i>Gov't Code 551.103</i></p> <p>"Recording" means a tangible medium on which audio or a combination of audio and video is recorded, including a disc, tape, wire, film, electronic storage drive, or other medium now existing or later developed. <i>Gov't Code 551.001(7)</i></p> <p>Closed meetings may not be recorded by an individual board member against the wishes of a majority of the board. <i>Zamora v. Edgewood ISD, 592 S.W.2d 649 (Tex. App.—San Antonio, 1979, writ ref'd n.r.e.)</i></p>
Preservation	The board shall preserve the certified agenda or recording of a closed meeting for at least two years after the date of the meeting. If a legal action involving the meeting is brought within that period, the board shall preserve the certified agenda or recording while the action is pending. <i>Gov't Code 551.104(a)</i>
Public Access	A certified agenda or recording of a closed meeting is available for public inspection and copying only under a court order issued as a result of litigation involving an alleged violation of the Open Meetings Act. <i>Gov't Code 551.104(b), (c)</i>
Prohibitions	<p>No board member shall participate in a closed meeting knowing that neither a certified agenda nor a recording of the closed meeting is being made. <i>Gov't Code 551.145</i></p> <p>No individual, corporation, or partnership shall without lawful authority disclose to a member of the public the certified agenda or recording of a meeting that was lawfully closed to the public. <i>Gov't Code 551.146</i></p> <p>No board member shall knowingly call or aid in calling or organizing a closed meeting that is not permitted under the Open Meetings Act, close or aid in closing a regular meeting to the public except as permitted under the Open Meetings Act, or participate in a</p>

closed meeting that is not permitted under the Open Meetings Act.
Gov't Code 551.144(a)

Affirmative Defense

It is an affirmative defense to prosecution under Subsection 551.144(a) that the board member acted in reasonable reliance on a court order or a written interpretation of the open meetings law contained in an opinion of a court of record, the attorney general, or the board's attorney. *Gov't Code 551.144(c)*