

## Sunshine Law Agenda Checklist

### How to Use This Checklist

Use this checklist to review a public meeting agenda. The checklist is based on Hawaii Revised Statutes chapter 92 and the Office of Information Practices (OIP) Agenda Guidance for Sunshine Law Boards (Rev. Aug. 2025). If you can answer “yes” to each question, the agenda meets the basic requirements. If you answer “no,” the agenda may not comply with the Sunshine Law.

### 1. Basic Meeting Information

- Does the agenda show the date of the meeting?
- If a day of the week is shown, does it match the date?
- Does the agenda show the start time?
- Does the agenda list at least one physical place where the meeting will be held?
- If the meeting is by Zoom, Teams, or other video conference technology, is there a link the public can use to watch and to give spoken testimony?
- Is there a phone number people can use to listen to the meeting if they do not have internet?

### 2. Contact Information

- Does the agenda give a postal mailing address for sending in written testimony?
- Does the agenda give an email address for sending in written testimony?
- Does the agenda give a general contact (a phone number AND an email address) that members of the public can use to ask questions about the agenda or the meeting?

### 3. Accommodation for People with Disabilities

*The agenda must explain how to ask for help if a person has a disability. Some people cannot use a telephone (for example, people who are deaf or hard of hearing). Some people cannot easily type or use email (for example, people with mobility disabilities). Both options must be available.*

- Does the agenda explain how to ask for an aid, service, or accommodation due to a disability?
- Does the accommodation information include BOTH a phone number AND an email address?
- Does the agenda give a specific date by which the request should be made?
- Does the agenda state that last-minute requests will be accepted, but that it may be difficult to provide the requested accommodation?

#### **4. Meeting Packet**

*A board may or may not prepare a packet of materials for the meeting. If there is no packet, the agenda still must stand on its own. If there is a packet, the public must know where to find it.*

- If a meeting packet is being prepared, does the agenda say where the public can look at it (a website address and a physical address)?
- If no packet will be prepared, does the agenda make this clear so the public is not looking for something that does not exist?

#### **5. The Agenda Items Themselves**

*Each item on the agenda must give enough information so that an ordinary member of the public can understand what the board will discuss. The “neighbor test”: If you showed the agenda to a neighbor, could the neighbor tell what the board is going to talk about? If not, the agenda is not specific enough.*

- Can a member of the public understand each item without having to look up another document?
- Are all short forms (acronyms) explained the first time they are used? (For example: HAR, HRS, DLIR, MAT, RME.)
- If a bill is mentioned, does the agenda give the bill number, the title, and a short description of what the bill would do?
- If a rule or law is mentioned, does the agenda say which section and what subject the rule or law covers?
- If a letter or document is mentioned, does the agenda say what the letter or document is about?
- Does the agenda avoid empty placeholders like “New Business,” “Announcements,” or “Correspondence” without anything specific listed under them?

#### **6. Reports**

*If a board member, staff member, or guest will give a report, the agenda must say what topics will be covered in the report. “Chair’s Report” or “Director’s Report” by itself is not enough.*

- If a board member will give a report, does the agenda list the specific topics?
- If staff or a guest speaker will give a report, does the agenda list the specific topics they will cover?

## **7. Executive Session (Closed Meeting)**

*Boards are sometimes allowed to meet in private (executive session). When this is planned, the agenda must say so.*

- If the board plans to go into executive session, does the agenda say what subject will be discussed?
- Does the agenda cite the part of HRS section 92-5 that allows the executive session and briefly explain why that section applies?

## **8. Public Testimony**

- Does the agenda explain how to give written testimony?
- Does the agenda explain how to give spoken testimony in person and online?
- If the board has a general comment period for topics not on the agenda, does the agenda make clear that those topics cannot be discussed at this meeting?

## **9. Final Check**

- Was the agenda posted at least six calendar days before the meeting?
- Are the section numbers (I, II, III, etc.) used correctly without gaps or duplicates?
- Could a person with no special knowledge of this board read this agenda and decide whether to attend the meeting?