

**CLERK OF THE COUNCIL**

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**COUNTY COURTHOUSE**

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**COUNCILMEMBERS**

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Barry Buchanan

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**WHATCOM COUNTY COUNCIL**

TO: Whatcom County Board and Committee Members

SUBJ: Open Public Meetings, Records, and Training Requirements

According to Washington State Statute, Whatcom County Board, Commission, and Committee members are required to comply with the State Open Government Training Act.

The goals of the law are to improve trust in government and to help reduce liability through compliance and education about the principles of open government. The law requires training no later than 90 days after the oath of office or assumption of duties. A "refresher" training session is required at intervals of no more than four years to cover any updates on the laws. (RCW 42.30.205) Open Public Meeting Act (RCW 42.30)

To complete the training requirement on line:

1. View the video or PowerPoint presentation at the State Auditor website (link below)
2. Sign and complete the attached training certificate.
3. Return the certificate to your committee's staff facilitator, or Council office. You may mail it to the Council Office at:

Whatcom County Council Office  
311 Grand Avenue, Suite 105  
Bellingham, WA 98225

Please see the County website here for more information:

<http://www.whatcomcounty.us/1623/Open-Government-Training>

You may also contact your committee's facilitator or the County Council Office.

# CERTIFICATE OF TRAINING

(Name) \_\_\_\_\_

*Completed the following training:*

- Open Public Records Act Training (RCW 42.56)**
- Open Public Meetings Act Training (RCW 42.30)**

**Date Training Received:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Committee:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Format:** Online Training (including webinars) OR Presentation Handouts

*I hereby certify that I received this training:* \_\_\_\_\_  
*Signature & Position or Title*



## County Council & County Executive Expectations for Boards & Commissions


Thank you for serving as an appointee and member of one of Whatcom County's Boards & Commissions. You play a vital role by bringing citizens' perspectives to assist us as policy makers by studying critical issues and forming well-developed, thoughtful recommendations to aid us in municipal decision-making. We value the perspectives and services contributed by the many volunteers who contribute to our leadership.

In County government we operate in a complex legal context and follow a series of principles to promote public trust as expectations for your services:

- All board and commission meetings are to be conducted in public session and notice of meetings shall be given in accordance with State law, unless otherwise advised by County legal counsel.
- A majority of members will not deliberate about board or commission work and issues via e-mail or in unnoticed "side meetings" or "gatherings" as these actions may be in violation of open meeting laws.
- Individual board and commission members and the collective group will be fair, impartial, professional, and respectful of the public, staff, and each other.
- Members may not use their position to secure special privileges or exemptions for themselves or others.
- Members may not give or receive any compensation, gifts, or gratuities from entities or individuals who are or have been engaged in items of business under consideration before the board or commission to which they are appointed.
- Members may not formally represent a board or commission unless given express direction to do so by a majority vote of the board or commission.
- Members may not, at any time, formally act as a representative of Whatcom County government unless expressly commissioned to do so in writing by the County Executive or by formal action of the County Council.

Dated this 13th day of February, 2013.

  
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Jack Louws, County Executive

  
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Kathy Kershner, Chair, County Council