

OMA TRAINING FOR NEW TRUSTEES AND DESIGNATION OF OMA AND FOIA OFFICERS

May is the month when new library trustees, elected in the April 7, 2015 election, take their oaths of office and begin their duties.

All newly elected (and appointed) trustees must complete electronic Open Meetings Act training, as provided by the Illinois Attorney General's office, within 90 days after the trustees take their oath of office.

Open Meetings Act training is available, free of charge, on the Illinois Attorney General's Public Access Counselor's Office's website at http://foia.ilattorneygeneral.net/electronic_foia_training.aspx. Once Open Meetings Act training is completed, trustees should provide their certificate of completion to their library's director.

Please note, however, that a trustee, who has previously completed the aforementioned training is not required to take it again, unless he or she is the library's designated Open Meetings Act officer.

Designated OMA officers, including trustees designated as OMA officers, must annually complete OMA training. In fact, whenever a new OMA officer is designated, he or she must complete OMA training within 30 days after such designation and annually thereafter.

While on the subject of designated OMA officers, libraries must also designate FOIA officers. Designated FOIA officers, including trustees designated as FOIA officers, must annually complete FOIA training. Like OMA officers, whenever a new FOIA officer is designated, he or she must complete FOIA training within 30 days after such designation and annually thereafter. Like OMA training, FOIA training is available, free of charge, on the Illinois Attorney General's Public Access Counselor's Office's website at the link mentioned above.

Unlike OMA training, new trustees are not required to take FOIA training, unless designated as a FOIA officer.

Finally, while FOIA officers do not have to register with the Illinois Attorney General's Public Access Counselor's Office they may so register when taking the FOIA training. OMA officers, on the other hand, must register with the Illinois Attorney General's Public Access Counselor's office whenever they are newly designated. In the event that you have not provided a new list of your library's OMA designees to the Illinois Attorney General's Public Access Counselor's officer, perhaps now is a good time to do so.

Your attorney can help to prepare new trustees to start their terms with sufficient background regarding library laws and important issues and can also assist you in the designation of OMA and FOIA officers. If you would like additional information, please contact us.



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